

**Participation of Women in municipal decision-making positions: A Case Study of the
Mtubatuba Local Municipality, KwaZulu-Natal Province**

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ABSTRACT

Gender equality is intrinsically linked to sustainable development and is globally accepted as a necessary aspect of human rights. In the context of local government, gender equality is vital because women and men face different challenges (The Hague Academy for Local Governance, 2015). Women's experiences in relation to full participation, representation and decent work opportunities are not the same as that of men in similar positions and, therefore, "equitable access to resources and basic services are necessary to obtain inclusive and gender-responsive governance" (ibid). Since 1994, South Africa has been a constitutional democracy based on progressive values that include freedom, human dignity, equality, non-racialism and non-sexism. However, this research indicates that patriarchy still remains deeply entrenched in local government decision-making processes.

This research further revealed that at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, although aspects of the leadership roles and functions of female and male councillors are the same, there is still an under-representation of women (27 males and 13 females). Additionally, there is a gender gap that exists in terms of council leadership and the portfolios that men and women hold on the council executive. A consideration of the qualitative evidence collected show no table differences in how female and male councillors perceive their leadership roles and styles, and the implications thereof for the substantive representation of women in local government.

Furthermore, this study shows how more women in senior administrative leadership positions at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality translates into positive returns for the bottom line, increased financial viability, improved performance, better delivery of services, and better outcomes in general. Considerable evidence exists showing that having more women in municipalities and in the public administration improves service delivery for all (including men), and promotes better governance and inclusive development (Lateef, 2014). Recent research reveals that gender diversity in leadership has advantages for local government's quality in delivery as well as integrity. The findings are in line with this. As Lateef (2014) explains, "Leveraging women's talents and leadership, while harnessing the diversity of perspectives, will generate better and more inclusive outcomes and more equitable access to economic and social opportunities." This research also shows that striving for gender equity in local government will support increased attention to gender equality and women's empowerment issues in general.

DECLARATION REGARDING PLAGIARISM

I, Rev. Siphon Eric Manqele, declare that this research is my original work. This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination at any other university. The dissertation does not contain other persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information unless specifically acknowledged.

REV. SIPHO ERIC MANQELE

Signature

Date

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LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATION

AGDI	African Gender and Development Index
AIC	African Independent Congress
ANC	African National Congress
BPFA	Beijing Platform for Action
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women
CFO	Chief Financial Officer
CGE	Commission on Gender Equality
COGTA	Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs
DA	Democratic Alliance
EFF	Economic Freedom Fighters
Exco	Executive Committee
GAD	Gender and Development
GAP	Gender Advocacy Programme
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council
IDP	Integrated Development Programme
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MEC	Member of the Executive Community

MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grants
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
PR	Political Representative
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SALGA	South African Local Government Association
SDBIP	Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
WCAPD	Women, Children and People with Disabilities
WDF	Women's Development Foundation
WID	Women in Development

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The question for participation of women in community development especially in Executive positions they occupy, is a major issue on discussions around the country's improvement in South Africa. Municipalities are the institutions closest to communities, and they provide basic services that affect the lives of women on a daily basis. This study aims to assess the state of women representation, authority and influence in local government leadership and Executive positions. The South African National government had approved with no reservation, international human rights mechanisms with reference to, as amended in 2008; the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW, 1995); the Beijing Platform for Action (BPFA, 1995); the SADC Gender Protocol (1997), and the African Gender and Development Index (AGDI, 2011), among others. The research is directly based on local sphere of government. Thus, the Local Government Gender Policy Framework (2006) and the Women and Gender Equality Bill (2011) are valuable to this study. Furthermore; this research examines a related question: As more women get into positions of power and participate at various levels of decision-making, do they make an impact?

The study area for this research was the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. It has twenty wards and is situated along the northern coastal belt of KwaZulu-Natal, in the south-eastern corner of the uMkhanyakude District Municipality. Mtubatuba is located roughly 300km north of Durban and 55km north of the Richards Bay/Empangeni metropolis along the N2 National Route. Now the largest town in the uMkhanyakude District Municipality, Mtubatuba developed from a railway siding into a strong sub-regional commercial, service, transport and administrative centre for the entire north-eastern Zululand region" (Main, 2017: 140). The two maps below show the location of the Mtubatuba uMkhanyakude District Municipality in the KwaZulu-Natal Province of South Africa (Figure 1.1) and the composition of the Municipality itself (Figure 1.2).



Figure 1.1: Map of KwaZulu-Natal with the Mtubatuba uMkhanyakude District Municipality highlighted in red (Unknown author, 2011)



Figure 1.2: Map of uMkhanyakude Local Municipality (Main, 2017: 138)

In 2012, the then Minister of Women, Children and People with Disabilities in South Africa (WCAPD), Ms Lulu Xingwana, reflected that South Africa has performed well in political decision-making for women: “We presently have 44 percent women representation in parliament and 43 percent at the level of Cabinet ministers” (Republic of South Africa (RSA), 2012: 134). Furthermore, she said “indeed, there is consensus across the board that South Africa has some of the most progressive policies that are aimed at advancing women empowerment and gender equality. However, the challenge remains the capacity to translate such policies into implementation” (RSA, 2012: 134).

A similar opinion was expressed by the chairperson of the Commission on Gender Equality (CGE), Commissioner Beatrice Ngcobo in Barclay (2011) a year earlier, when she stated that “there are women in Parliament and good laws to protect women, but when it comes to implementation, people at the frontline are mostly men. They won't give up power so easily.”

The two sighted examples above, acknowledged by two significant organisations of government (WCAPD and CGE) whose principal function is; driving, promoting and instituting the women’s empowerment and gender equality agenda, needs exploration. These organisations are applicable to the cause of this research, given that, shown in the CGE’s Gender Barometer (CGE, 2009), local municipalities display a disturbingly poor representation of women in leadership positions. The above-mentioned statements show that the South African government, after more than 20 years of democracy failed as a lead agency for empowering women and equal gender opportunities in local government.

Heller (2001: 131) notes that “The political spectrum, decentralization has been favoured as a mechanism for improving accountability and transparency, and for improving state-society relations.” Heller (ibid) further said, “In other words, strengthening local government has been justified not only as a means of making government more efficient, but as a way of increasing democratic participation.”

Insufficient evidence is available on the impact of decentralisation on women, and that which exists offers little encouragement as prejudices against women are often more strongly held at local levels

compared to at higher levels (Manor, 1999). This study agrees with the Gender Advocacy Programme (GAP, 1997: 24) that:

Local Government is the level of government closest to the people. It has particular importance for women, because of its responsibility for the delivery of goods and services that impact directly on the necessities of social reproduction, a sphere in which women have disproportionate responsibility. Its direct interface with the community puts Local Government in a unique position to understand the contextual dynamics that shape and regulate women's lives. Through its location, Local Government has the potential to contribute to greater gender equity.

This study is based on feminist theory as a political movement, which “works to fight inequality and the social, cultural, economic, and political subordination of women” (Tucker, 2014).

1.2 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Feminist scholars have raised concern over the unclear ability of the transference process to positively contribute to the advancement of women's rights and interests (Beall, 2005). The local sphere of governance:

often characterised by more unequal gender relations than at the national level. Patriarchal cultural systems and masculine constructs of political authority are often dominant at the local level, strongly influencing the nature of institutions and are closely defended by local elites. These systems tend to offer little or no space for women's authority and agency, and by making it difficult for women to participate or raise controversial gender issues, they serve to exclude or minimise the effective participation of women in development processes (Williamson and Sithole, 2006).

1.2.2 KEY QUESTIONS

The major questions now centre on how individuals' diverse experiences and needs can be addressed in the municipal decision-making process. The questions posed in this section are partly based on those posed at a UN expert group meeting on the "Impact of women's participation and leadership on outcomes" (Miranda, 2005: 3). Firstly, how can we ensure that men and women have equitable opportunities to participate in our local governance, for example, in election processes and in our municipal councils? And, secondly, are women less prone to corruption and do they have a stronger sense of fairness and justice because they usually have a greater role in rearing children, specifically through their influence on young people in terms of the moral values of society? Furthermore, do women try to be models of good behaviour or is this a gender binary assumption?

1.2.3 THE OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this research operate in the context of debates about the impacts of the participation of women in decision-making positions and whether it will have an actual influence on decisions and outcomes. What women do when they are in such positions is of particular concern. Do women with influence champion issues of concern to women, including gender equity? Specifically, the objectives of this study are to:

- Examine the gender representation of women in leadership positions in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.
- Determine gender equality or inequality in the participation of women and men in decision-making and leadership.
- Determine the level of institutional readiness in relation to practices, policies and structures that support women in decision-making and leadership positions, including in competing for such positions or access thereto.

1.2.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- What is the nature of women's participation in local government at the level of the council and executive management in the Mtubatuba Municipality?
- What impact does participation by women have on local government decision-making in the Mtubatuba Municipality?
- What are the challenges regarding the participation of women in local government in the Mtubatuba Municipality?

1.2.5 BROADER ISSUES TO INVESTIGATE

Matoane (2015: 7-8) maintains that “there is a disjuncture between the policy and legislative environment, and the real, practical, day-to-day experiences with regard to gender transformation in the local sphere of government. “This research takes a similar view. The Mtubatuba Local Municipal area, which is situated in the uMkhanyakude Municipal District, is more rural and its roots are steeped in Zulu cultural character. This culture has spilled over into the local sphere of governmental institutions which shapes and informs the community who are deep-rooted in patriarchal gender stereotypes and follow values and norms influenced by perceptions of female subordinate position and male dominance in society. Since local government is closer to the people, the structures, institutions, systems, procedures and processes are influenced by these entrenched patriarchal values and norms within that community (Matoane, 2015).

This study deals with the degree in which the women working at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality are empowered. If there are women placed in decision-making positions, the study wants to explore the impact they made to the society. The study, therefore, explores if women are able to influence a municipal council to take positive resolutions about issues affecting all women. This research is trying to find out whether or not women working in the Mtubatuba municipality take advantage of empowerment to benefit themselves instead of representing other women from the community. The purpose of this research project is to contribute to changing municipal consultation practices and policies so that Mtubatuba Local Municipality has gender diversity in its leadership and women have a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives (Pick, 2012).

1.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

The design of the study is qualitative. Qualitative research “is a research strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2004: 266). Accordingly, Holliday (2007) states that, qualitative research method, addresses the qualitative areas in social life, such as broader social awareness; and in the case of this study, specifically the observation of women in leadership. The focus of this research is based on females in leadership positions in the Mtubatuba Local Government. The research sample was selected by means of purposive sampling and included 11 females and male in political and administrative senior executive positions in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.

Data collection methods used are manuscript analysis, individual in person interviews and observations. The combination of data collection methods allows for triangulation which is vital for an in-depth understanding of the phenomena being investigated (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The advantage of the use of the triangulation method is to optimise validity and reliability of the data collected in this study. The analysis will be done through coding by involving assigning a word, phrase, number or symbol to each coding category; will go through all textual data (interview transcripts, direct notes, field observations, etc.) in a systematic way. The ideas, concepts and themes are coded to fit the categories.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The objective of the literature review aims to locate the present condition of women's participation in community development within the larger framework of theories surrounding gender in order to provide the basic understanding of gender issues as observed and documented in the research. The chapter will survey the South African gender transformation programme, specifically, its legislative framework and its application to the example of the local government of the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. The research is based on a feminist opinion with respect to the participation of women from institutions and executive positions. It critically indicates what is questioned by Lovenduski (2005), which is, whether the inclusion of women can result in better performance and provide more positive results.

This study expands into the history and background of a traditionally male dominating local government (Lovenduski, 2005). According to Mouton (2001), a literature review can be organised by date (chronologically), theme, hypothesis, case study or method. The researcher chose to classify the literature review by theme to show the relationship between the themes as building materials of the research and to interrogate the relationship between each of the research questions.

In this chapter, the researcher demonstrates knowledge about the field of research. It identifies the most important issues and their relevance to the research, as well as some controversies and areas being neglected, and it allows for anticipation as to where the situation is headed. All this allows the researcher to map the field and position the research within the relevant context. This chapter also supplies the researcher's justification for the research and establishes the theoretical framework and methodology.

2.2 LOCAL GOVERNMENT DEFINED

Robson (1937: 574) states:

In general, local government may be said to involve the conception of a territorial, non-sovereign community possessing the legal right and the necessary organization to regulate its own affairs. This, in turn, presupposes the existence of a local authority with power to act independent of external control as well as the participation of the local community in the administration of its own affairs.

Gomme (1987: 1-2) defines local government as the:

part of the whole government of a nation or state which is administered by authorities subordinate to the state authority, but elected independently of control by the state authority, by qualified persons resident, or having property in certain localities, which localities have been formed by communities having common interests and common history.

In other words, local government is an integral part of the political mechanism for governance in a country. Then, as a body corporate with juristic person, it represents a legal concept (Muttalib and Akbar, 1983). The ultimate roles of local government are setting forth sight planning and ensuring the end result is achieved. Planning namely, council plans, financial plans, municipal plans and strategic statements are some of the roles. To achieve their plans, local government takes responsibility for managing and delivery of services; offering good quality Public health, recreational facilities, local road maintenance and providing public libraries. In keeping with National and Provincial government, Local Government makes laws which are called Local Laws. These Local Laws include activities permitted on public land, animal management and infrastructure use. Legislative authority to Local Government to make decision is based on the area jurisdiction and is responsible for enforcing local laws. Their activities are guided by policies which are developed and implemented as key functions. Their mandate is to take matters of concern from their local communities and constituencies and advocate to National and Provincial government, relevant authorities and other sectors on their behalf. (Exiner, 2016)

Sikander (2015: 171) says that “Local government institutions have come to play an important role not only in promoting democratic values, but also in accelerating the pace of development. Being elective in nature, they have allowed effective participation and involvement of the local people in the development of the local areas.” Social, Political, Economical development can only be meaningful and real when it is approached from “bottom up and not “top bottom” - so called “Grass-roots” level. Strengthening this level of Government will ensure democracy is established in the Country. Local Government is a platform for the citizens to express and have some form of control over local issues, especially when they are affected with policies of the National Government. The highest level of Government namely, Parliament, decides the matters of Local Importance, however, implementation is done by Provincial Government but Local Government is where matters concerning the people living in a particular locality are dealt with; as it represents the microscopic interests leading to the broader concept of welfare and happiness to the people of that locality. Thus, Local government should be administered by local bodies, which are controlled by National government.

The representation of women in local government leadership and decision-making positions is vital because is where most of the service delivery issues that affect women, such as water, electricity, roads and more, are considered. (Hunt, 2014) This means that effective equal participation of women is most important to ensure that needs and issues affecting women are prioritized, discussed, get into a budget and implemented. Women’s representation in leadership and decision-making positions enhance government to empower women by skills development such as policy development and understanding, basic service delivery and good governance. (Smee & Woodroffe, 2013) The representation of women in local government leadership and decision-making position can also be used as measurement to the country’s level of development (Jayal, 2005). According to Phillips, local government is more open and interesting to women than National government. He indicated that “women are extremely well equipped for local government. They have a vested interest in, and immediate knowledge of, the schools, services, housing, child care and the environment, which are the responsibilities of local government” (quoted in Phillips, 1998: 112)

The inclusion of women in leadership and decision-making positions is justice fulfilment. Phillips (1991) support the justice argument by pointing that, “just as it is unjust that women should be

cooks and not engineers, so it is unjust that they should be excluded from the central activities in the political realm.” The Constitution “says nothing about what women will do if they get into politics” (Phillips, 1991: 62). “A balanced representation of women and men at all levels of decision-making, guarantees better government. Because of their history as a group, women have their own and unique perspective. They have different values and ideas and behave differently. Increased participation of women in decision-making will create a new culture and shed new light on how power should be exercised. Women attach great importance to the quality of contact between people and are less individualistic than men. The validity and trustworthiness of democracy will be in question if women continue to be absent from different institutions of society.” (The European Network of Experts, 1997: 8) The participation of women in formal local government political structures is vital. Any country claim to have justified democracy cannot exclude its female population from fully represented and participating in political institutions. (Sawer, 2002) Phillips argues that Women all over the world have different experiences and interest than men. She stated that, “there are particular needs, interests and concerns that arise from women’s experiences and these will be inadequately addressed in a politics that is dominated by men. Equal rights to vote have not proved strong enough to deal with this problem. There must also be equality amongst those elected to office” (Phillips, 1995: 66). Therefore women representation and full participation in local government leadership and decision making positions is essential.

2.3 SHIFTS FROM WOMEN IN DEVELOPMENT (WID) TO GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT (GAD)

The term women in development were coined in the early 1970s by a Washington-based network of female development professionals (Tinker, 1990). A major formative influence on WID was the resurgence of the women’s movement in northern countries in the 1970s. In addition to the WID agenda, there was the simultaneous effort by liberal feminists to get equal rights, employment, equity and citizenship for women in the United States, in other words, the idea of getting a just political system in place for American women. The liberal feminist approach has been very important globally, and was critical in determining the language of political strategy used by WID advocates. Central to liberal feminism was the idea that women’s disadvantages stem from stereotyped customary expectations held by men and internalised by women, and promoted

through various agencies of socialisation (Connell, 1987). Razavi and Miller (1995: 3) said that it has been postulated that “women’s disadvantages can, in principle, be eliminated by breaking down these stereotypes: for example by giving girls better training and more varied role models, by introducing equal opportunity programmes and anti-discrimination legislation, or by freeing labour markets. “An outcome of this approach has been that little focus has been placed on men and on power relations between men and women (ibid).

According to Razavi and Miller (1995:12), “Many influential writings appeared in the 1970s on the distinction between biological sex and social gender... Feminist anthropology gave increasing attention to the cultural representation of the sexes.” On the other hand, the sociology of gender examines how society influences our understandings and perception of the differences between masculinity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a man) and femininity (what society deems appropriate behaviour for a woman). In this research, we examine how this, in turn, influences identity and social practices. Maleness and femaleness have been “understood as the outcome of cultural ideologies, rather than of inherent qualities or physiology. The value of a symbolic analysis of gender, it was argued, lies in understanding how men and women are socially constructed, and how those constructions are powerfully reinforced by the social activities that both define and are defined by them” (Razavi and Miller, 1995: 12). The Gender and Development (GAD) approach focuses on what is socially constructed and was influenced by scholars such as Oakley (1972) and Rubin (1975), who emphasise the social relationship between men and women.

2.4 GENDER AS AN INSTITUTION

Baker and Le Tendre (2005) stated that gender is a social institution. Social institutions are defined as formal and informal laws, social norms and practices that shape or restrict the decisions, choices and behaviour of groups, communities and individuals (Jütting et al., 2008). “Social institutions set the parameters of what decisions; choices or behaviours are deemed acceptable or unacceptable in a society and, therefore, play a key role in defining and influencing gender roles and relations” (OECD, 2012). According to Savage and Witz (1992), gender operates within institutions at both a nominal and substantive level. With regard to the nominal gender aspect, they argue that men’s dominance within institutions, in terms of both their numerical strength and access to positions of

power, is significant because they are able to use their positions strategically to exclude women from improving their institutional standing (ibid).

Our work links organisational change, institutional change and gender equality. Our conception of institutional change is multi-factorial and holistic. It is concerned with the individual psychology of women and men, their access to resources and the social structures in which they live. From the point of view of an organization intervening to change gender-based institutions, change must happen in two places outside the organisation and within. The study construes the above assertion affirms that gender attitudes, beliefs and other related stereotype within society are easily taken into the workplace and becomes the culture of the organisation.

2.5 PATRIARCHY AND ITS DOMINANCE

The dominance, values and norms of patriarchy influence the position of women in society. According to Johnson (2001), patriarchy elevates the male superiority with more privilege, self-centeredness, dominating and controlling as its key components. This key component extends over, resources, opportunities, positions and women. This behaviour is well rooted from generation to generation within the society whereby all benefits and privileges belonged to the male gender. The world is only seen from the male point of view, what Johnson refers to as “patriarchal mirroring” (Johnson, 2001:172). Foucault and Sawicki state that patriarchal domination is an ethical thought, written and prescribed for and by men. It advocates for men to set men free. Scanzoni and Hardesty (1992:1) wrote that “patriarchy with sexism constitutes the systematic oppression of women”. Van Leeuwen (1993:121) states that “patriarchy is androcentric and male-centered and that men are the bearers of authority and power and that they deprive women of any authority or power.” Van Leeuwen (1993:136-137) further said, “In a patriarchal society men are powerful and women are inferior, defective and less fully human.” Hull (1987:97) indicates that patriarchy “fosters discrimination and abuses human rights.” Ruether (1983:61) states that “patriarchy is found where society is father-ruled and where it reinforces the subordination of women, as well as where weak and marginalised groups are held subordinate to the rich and powerful.”

Patriarchal societies propagate the ideology of motherhood which restricts women's mobility and burdens them with the responsibilities to nurture and rear children. Bearing children is "linked to the social position of women's responsibilities of motherhood: nurturing, educating and raising children by devoting themselves to the family" (Ray, 2014: 2). Heywood (2003, cited in Ray, 2014: 2) says that "Patriarchal ideas blur the distinction between sex and gender and assume that all socio-economic and political distinctions between men and women are rooted in biology or anatomy". Further, because patriarchy has a firm foundation, the balance of power remains "skewed and continues to determine the extent and levels of access to and participation in decision-making and leadership positions". Suranjita Ray (2014: 1) states:

Patriarchy is based on a system of power relations which are hierarchical and unequal where men control women's production, reproduction and sexuality. It imposes masculinity and femininity character stereotypes in society which strengthen the iniquitous power relations between men and women. Patriarchy is not a constant and gender relations which are dynamic and complex have changed over the periods of history. The nature of control and subjugation of women varies from one society to the other as it differs due to the differences in class, caste, religion, region, ethnicity and the socio-cultural practices.

2.6 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT FOR GENDER EQUITY

The approach on making women more powerful tends to focus more on practical needs, which in turn complements to their basic needs, reflected in the situational analysis (Office on the Status of Women, 2000)

Kabeer (2005) argues that power should be defined and understood as the tool which gives ability to make choices. He further argues that "to be disempowered means to be denied choice, while empowerment refers to the processes by which those who have been denied the ability to make choices acquire such ability" (Kabeer, 2005: 13). Today's inequalities are translated into the inequalities of tomorrow as daughters inherit the same discriminatory structures that oppressed their mothers (Kabeer, 2005).

This study, therefore, is interested in transformative forms of agency that do not simply address immediate inequalities but are used to initiate longer-term processes of change in the structures of patriarchy (Kabeer, 2005). This is because of the deeply rooted patriarchal dominance of the male gender, which has become the precedence in local government after a while. (Nkwana, 2011).

2.7 THE SUBORDINATE POSITION OF WOMEN IN SOCIETY AND IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

National and Provincial government are responsible for policy development and control of the electoral systems for local government; and these systems are biased, but are planned to benefit some and disadvantage others. These policies and electoral systems can prevent women being elected and can disallow them to have access to power. Phillips (1995) asserts that this reflecting of structural inequality is necessary to support the gender equity argument in formal politics on the basis of human rights and justice. Ruth and Henig (2001: 99-100) point out, “electoral systems were not designed in a political vacuum” and their outcomes “are likely to be those that appeal to the dominant forces in society.” They argue that even in the first world countries, policies and electoral systems are “a means to an end, simply a proxy for the prevailing closed political culture, which by definition would aim to keep women out of politics” (ibid).

Women are marginalised in decision making and leadership by a variety of processes that begin in infancy. Corner (1997: 4) states:

In most societies, women lack experience of decision making and leadership in the public arena because girls, in contrast to boys, are socialized to play passive roles and given little opportunity to make decisions or develop leadership skills outside the family context. In most traditional societies girls are kept largely within the confines of the household and family where they are protected and taught to accept the decisions that others parents, teachers, brothers make on their behalf. As a result of this lack of experience in a public context, girls tend to the lack self-confidence and skills needed to function effectively in positions of formal leadership. An added handicap for many is their lack of capacity due to discrimination in access to

education and training: in most countries, women have higher levels of illiteracy and fewer years of schooling than men.

The BPFA thus calls on all involved to:

create a gender balance in government and administration; integrate women into political parties; recognize that shared work and parental responsibilities promote women's increased participation in public life; promote gender balance within the system; work toward equality between women and men in the private sector; establish equal access for women to training; increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership; and increase women's participation in the electoral process and political activities (Corner, 1997: 5).

2.8 POLITICAL REPRESENTATION

According to Squires, "Orthodox political theory suggests that elected represent beliefs, constituencies, interests or identities" (Squires, 1999, 203), which Marsh and Norris (1997, 154) "describe as ideological, geographic, functional and as social representation respectively. Representation of beliefs suggests a conception of representation as ideological, reflected in the membership of political parties and support for contrasting political platforms through electoral campaigns". Marsh and Norris (1997, 154) refer to this as "representation from above." "They contrast this with geographical representation of constituencies, where representatives act in ways consistent with the opinions of their citizens with low levels of party discipline and minimal ideological manifestos, which they describe as representation from below" (Marsh and Norris, 1997:154-155). "They imitate an orthodox and mainly liberal ideology which assumes that gender and other factors such as race and class are, or should be, irrelevant, therefore ignoring the question of who the representatives are" (Marsh and Norris, 1997:154-155).

Squires further explore that "in contrast to these conceptions, representation of identities or descriptive representation generates a conception of social representation where representatives represent social groups, such as those based on gender, race and sexuality, with which they share common experiences, common commitments and values" (Squires, 1999, 203). "Such a conception draws attention to the composition of representative bodies. Representation of interests

generates a conception of functional representation, where representatives are members of, and act as spokespersons for interest groups and social movements whose members are distinct from those of political parties and constituency dwellers” (Squires, 1999: 203).

Hanna Pitkin (1967, 209) argues that “focusing on the composition of elected bodies is irrelevant and gives undue weight to orthodox conceptions of representation. She conceives representation as meaning that representative’s act in the interests of the represented, in a manner responsive to them thus it is what the representative’s do that is more important” (ibid). Pitkin further state that “all the women in my study perceive themselves as representing their communities although they express this in different ways” (Pitkin, 1967:209) “As leaders in local governments or political party groups, it could be expected that they would say this, and indeed research on local government representatives indicates that they perceive themselves as representing their communities regardless of gender” (Beck, 2001, 49). “The participants in this study consistently discuss the needs, rather than the opinions, of their constituents. This supports earlier research on women in politics generally and would please many feminists” (Beck, 2001, 50). Others would argue that although needs have a “stronger moral basis than interest or opinions, it has paternalistic overtones and lends itself more readily to decision by experts on behalf of the need group” (Phillips, 1995).

2.9 PERSPECTIVES ON WOMEN’S LEADERSHIP

One research study among 201 Norwegian companies found that leadership styles differed between the sexes for specific tasks and situations. In this study, it was found that women and men do not differ in their ability to perform operational tasks. Rather, they bring a different perspective to strategic decision-making through their increased sensitivity towards the needs of others. Respondents were requested to rate men and women based on criteria for 16 competencies. The study found in favour of women in aspects including taking the initiative, practising self-development, integrity and honesty, and driving for the best results. (Groysberg, 2013) Another study found that there is no gender difference in the effectiveness of board members, but there are gender differences in certain behaviours (Groysberg, 2013).

According to Eagly (2007, 1), in the USA, “women compared to men are increasingly considered as having excellent skills for leadership which contributes to enhanced performance. However, irrespective of women’s excellent skills as leaders, most employees prefer male to female bosses” (ibid). A women’s survey conducted in by Inter-Parliamentary Unit (IPU) in 1999 comprised of 187 women from 65 different countries, demonstrated that 89% of women in politics believe that they have exceptional task to look and respond to the interest and needs of women. (IPU, 2000). Women are perceived to be more transformative in their political leadership. Their leadership style is non-hierarchical and participatory. Their style of leadership is more inclusive, collaborative and consultative. It is more centered on the women’s problems than individual’s behaviors. (Morna and Tolmay, 2010). Drage said, women in local government senior positions “accelerate the pace of change, promote collaborative styles of leadership and decision-making, broaden perspectives and move communities forward.”(Drage, 1997:88) Symbolically, women in politics are role models because they institute, motivate and aspire women political behavior in the societies. (Sawer, 2006). This is seen when women in politics occupied positions which were traditionally known as for men and shaping priority issues for women, like maternity leave and equal payment at work in similar positions. (Evertzen, 2001).

Survey conducted by World Bank in 2001, shows that women are not as opportunisticly as men do, therefore getting more women in local government can generate more improvement and positive impact. The research closed by indicating that, “additional support for having more women in politics and in the labour force – since they could be an effective force for good government and business trust.” (World Bank, 2001: 96) The Indian local government councils (panchayats) headed by women have fewer incidences of bribery than those headed by men. Research in Rwanda confirms that women are perceived to be less corrupt, particularly at the local level. These findings suggest that women could reduce corruption and increased faith in government (World Bank, 2001).

According to Chaney et al, there is proof from the Welsh Assembly which was made of 47% women in 2007 that women members were leading in raising gendered issues and discussed, there were 62% for child care, 74% for domestic violence and 65% for equal payment. (Chaney et al, 2007)

2.10 BACKGROUND OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA AS MALE DOMINATED

South African Women are faced with many challenges that relate to representation in society and in general have no voice. They are socially, economically, politically disempowered by the social attitudes and gendered norms which obstruct their meaningful access to opportunities, world employment and social institutions. Politically, women lack the numbers in elected representation to effect the changes related to their economic and social status. Without equitable representation, there cannot be a meaningful policy and social commitment to empowering women (South African Local Government Association women's association, 2017, SALGA) Traditional gender hierarchies and norms which prevail in family and society prevent women from attaining success and to persevere in the work environments which are historically male- dominated. In spite of Gender Equality and Empowerment, household units proves to be very much, male-dominated and traditional. These traditional stereotyped role expectations spill over to organisational policies and practices to maintain women's marginalized work roles and become entrenched in a gender-based organisational culture. Historically, men have dominated policy development. Organisations are still structured and function in ways that do not always support women's career patterns and their need to integrate work with family responsibilities (Martin and Barnard, 2013).

The process of Transformation, since 1994, has culminated in the 2000 Local Government elections. This has been seen in the amended Municipal Structures Act (Government of South Africa, 1998, which provides for New Municipalities to seek balance development-oriented objectives with liberal, market-driven ideas being achieved. Thus, local government is now expected to play a pro-active role in the social, economic and material development of the local communities making it assessable to be the platform for women in general and gender equity and has the potential to transform the livelihood by providing the necessary services such as water, sanitation, roads, transport, clinics and child facilities. There are organisations working towards ensuring Women are strongly represented in the Local Government. Two such are the SALGA Gender working group, formed in 1996, to ensure the strategic presence of women and gender issues in local government and the Women's Development Foundation (WDF), a non-governmental (NGO), preparing women to take on positions of political leadership and give them support whilst in office. (Jordon, 2004)

According to Van der Walt, “Both Western and African cultures seem to be deeply influenced by the idea of the supremacy of the fathers, since patriarchy is irrevocably part of both Eurocentric and Afrocentric cultures in South Africa” (Van der Walt, 1994:160). Patriarchy is “one of the strongest ideologies in cultures world-wide, and in the context of modern Western culture, it is operative on more or less the whole spectrum of hyper-normative discourses” (Visagie & Pretorius, 1999:7) “It is a sad fact that one of the few profoundly non-racial institutions in South Africa is patriarchy ... indeed, it is so firmly rooted that it is given a cultural halo and identified with customs and personalities of different communities. Thus to challenge patriarchy, to dispute the idea that it is men who should be dominant figures in the family and society, is to be seen not as fighting against the male privilege, but as attempting to destroy African tradition, or to subvert Afrikaner ideals or undermine civilized and deemed British values ... Patriarchy brutalizes men and neutralizes women across the color line.” (The Commission on Gender Equality, 1998:10) “There is sufficient evidence to prove that women in South Africa have grown to accept these views as facts, and for this reason they feel themselves to be inferior and unable to assume their rightful place in society.” (Louw, et al, 1998:292).

This study, investigate the status quo of South Africa local government that, since there are allegations that women are more than men in number in South Africa, local government is the closest and most accessible level of government to them and is traditionally provide services needed by every women from each and every households such as electricity, waste disposal, public transport, water, schools, health clinics and other social services their input in policy decision making positions is very important. Their voice must be fully represented in local government democratic system.

2.11 NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS

According to Ellen Kornegay, “South Africa’s engagement with gender issues at regional, subregional and international levels is informed by its constitutional commitment to gender equality. The Constitution is a key national instrument which determines South Africa’s compliance with issues of gender equality at the national governance level. Of particular importance

was the participation by the South African government and NGOs in the Fourth World Conference on Women held by the UN in Beijing in September 1995. While this was the first official participation by the South African government at an international women's conference, South African liberation movements had consistently participated in international women's conferences since 1975". (Kornegay, 2014: 3-4).

In January 1996, the South African Government ratified the international Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This step legally bound Parliament and the Executive to work actively towards the abolition of gender discrimination in the governance of the country. Kornegay further mentioned that, "In September 1997, the Heads of States in the Southern African Development Community (SADC), including South Africa, signed a declaration committing their governments and countries, inter alia, to: embedding gender firmly into the agenda of the SADC Programme of Action and Community Building Initiative; ensuring the equal representation of women and men at all levels of the decisionmaking structures of member states as well as in SADC structures; promoting women's full access to and control over productive resources; repealing and reforming all laws and changing social practices which subject women to discrimination". (Kornegay, 2014:4).

The African National Congress (ANC), coming into power in the first democratic elections in 1994, adopted a non-sexist Constitution and National Strategy for the advancement of gender equality which placed South Africa at the cutting edge of Governmental initiated Gender Policies and Structures. (Goetz and Hassam, 2003), resulting in South Africa having one of the most progressive policy framework for improving the condition and representation of women (Albertyn, 1995), for the structures and procedures developed. Since local government is closest to the women's lifestyle, making it easier to combine with rearing children and family responsibilities, it can become the springboard to involvement in National and Provincial Politics, as they would have gained experiences and developed capacities by getting involved in Local Politics which in turn interest women more as they are the ones who are well versed when it comes to their communities and are the major role-players who know the importance of the use of space, water, electricity, waste disposal, health clinics and other social services. (Beall, 2004)

Compounded gender dynamics takes place at this level of government, (Haywood and Mac an Ghail, 2003), regard these as hidden assumptions that shape the gendered organisation of

reproduction and production. Carli (2001:275) says that “people typically perceive men to have higher levels of competence than women and that women themselves can internalise that perception and consequently devalue their own effectiveness”. Ganguly-Scrase (2000:86) says that “women in government in India are powerful and influential, and enjoy the privileges and benefits of their class position.”

This study recognises the input of South Africa’s feminist pressure groups in laying a good foundation by bringing women’s issues to attention. Since the early 1980s, a number of processes have been initiated to integrate the development of women’s concerns, not only in the political arena but also with regard to academic representation (Lues, 2005).

2.12 THEORETICAL APPROACH

In this study, feminist theory was adopted because it connected with women’s experiences through the intersection of diverse forms of oppression which are based on gender, race, class, politics, age, ethnicity, religion, citizenship, ability and appearance. Feminist theory played a major role in the struggle against gender inequalities and highlighted their agency to consolidate democracy and social justice and to challenge traditional thinking and oppressive, sexist practices of governance. Feminism promoted women’s emancipation, participation, and social mobilisation. They encouraged women’s empowerment and participation in decision-making and in public affairs. They have enabled women to critically assess their own situation and shape a transformation of society (Ennaji, 2016).

Equality feminists observe that the domination of all women is based on sexism and that the way of rectifying its potential impact is to remove it as a consideration. They argue that gender should be irrelevant politically, and they seek equal rights for women and men. Despite the obvious physiological differences between women and men, equality feminists perceive the notion of women as being different from men equates to women being of lesser value or inferior to men, which is inseparable from sexism and hence damaging to women (Fraser, 1997). In other words, this conception rests on the assumption that difference means inequality, which is contestable. Equality theorists support a strategy of inclusion or pursuing engagement in political institutions, whereby women participate on the same terms and in the same numbers as men (Lovenduski,

2005: 29) in seeking to transcend gender differences (Squires, 1999). Furthermore, they argue that “political institutions are not only patriarchal, but that seeking inclusion in existing political institutions as currently constituted would mean that women representatives become political men and indistinguishable from male representatives” (Lovenduski 2005:30). In other words, difference feminists assume that “equality means sameness which, therefore, devalues what is feminine and ultimately reproduces sexism” (Fraser 1997:100). Apart from this contestable assumption, the implication that women in political institutions are necessarily co-opted by men also denies women’s agency, reflecting a perspective of women as almost powerless.

2.13 SUMMARY

This study is largely based on South Africa’s obligation to deliver socio-economic rights within the context of adopting Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 1 and 3 to promote women’s empowerment, gender equality and the eradication of poverty (UN). That was a successive commitment the country made at the regional level by the SADC and internationally through critical protocols and declarations. The participation of women in local government decision-making positions is one of those significant parts that South Africa has been entrusted with improving upon.

The study assessed the effectiveness of policy and legislation on the actual implementation. Lastly, the study investigated the actual lives of women in local government and shared information about knowledge and obstructs that may prevent gender equality in local government at the Mtubatuba Municipality. The study also conducted strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats analysis (SWOT) in the Mtubatuba Municipality about gender empowerment and development.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY, DESIGN AND RATIONALE

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The chapter presents the use of research methodology and design applied in this study. This research design was needed because it facilitated the smooth sailing of the research. It stood for “advance planning of the methods to be adopted for collecting the relevant data and the techniques to be used in their analysis, keeping in view the objective of the research and the availability of resources” (Kothari, 2004). The purpose is to discover answers to research questions through the application of scientific procedures. According to Kothari (2004), “thoughtlessness in designing the research project may result in rendering the research exercise futile.” An efficient and appropriate design should be prepared before starting the research activities. The design helps the researcher to organise ideas in a form whereby it will be possible to “look for flaws and inadequacies. Such a design can even be given to others for their comments and critical evaluation. In the absence of such a course of action, it will be difficult for the critic to provide a comprehensive review of the proposed study” (Kothari, 2004).

The research design selected is descriptive. Descriptive research studies are concerned with describing the characteristics of an individual, or of a group, as in this research, which is about the participation of women in community development. As the intention of this study is to find all-inclusive correct information, the procedure in place was carefully planned. The research design made provision for protection against bias and for ensuring maximised reliability (Kothari, 2004).

The study was designed to focus attention on the following:

- Formulating the objective of the study (what is the study about and why is it being conducted?)
- Designing the methods of data collection (what techniques of gathering data will be adopted?)
- Selecting the sample (how much material will be needed and where or who should it be gathered from?)

- Collecting the data (where can the required data be found and with what time period should the data be related?)
- Processing and analysing the data
- Reporting the findings (Kothari, 2004).

The chapter ends by emphasising the limitations observed in the data compilation process and the research study's intended use and worth (Kothari, 2004).

3.2 THE RESEARCH PLAN AND PROCESS

The research plan is a plan that outlines the research's aims and objectives; the researcher's justification for doing the work; how and when they intend to conduct it; the resources required; and what the researcher expects to produce as a result of having completed the study. The process of planning requires focusing on thoughts, to decide not only what researcher may wish to do, but also what is realistic, given the constraints of work and life. Importantly, the research plan is the blueprint for a project. A well-articulated plan can be referred to again and again, keeping researcher on track throughout the project and even occasionally reminding him or her of why he or she wanted to do the research in the first place(Pickton, 2013).

The researcher is clear about the subjects of the study and specific about the types of people needed. The people, for example, who attend in groups or on their own, or, those who attend for specific purposes. The more specific research can be in defining the types of people the researcher wants to research and draw conclusions about, the easier it is to ensure the research is effective and provides the required information (All about Audiences, 2012). Before embarking on this study, the researcher tried to find out whether some or all the information needed is available from other sources. The researcher learned that a significant amount of research is currently available free of charge from a number of websites and library sources.

The intention of this chapter is to give a good reason for choosing qualitative feminist research as a methodology and the location of the research problem within a framework of feminist political theory, to outline the research methods employed and to define the limitations of those methods.

3.3 EPISTEMOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

The conception of “epistemology” has been defined from different points of view, depending on the author’s orientation. According to Auerswald (1985: 1), and for the purpose of this study, epistemology is “a set of imminent rules used in thought by large groups of people to define reality” or, “thinking about thinking” and further said, “It is the study or theory of the nature and grounds of knowledge.” Epistemology concerns itself with ways of knowing and how we know. Historically, it has dealt with fundamental questions of: What is knowledge? What do we mean when we say that we know something? What is the source of knowledge and how do we know if it is reliable? And what is the scope of knowledge and what are its limitations? Epistemology provides answers to questions which have been the focus of attention for a very long time. More recently, a proposed solution to the definition of knowledge is that knowledge is justified true beliefs (Wenning, 2009). This study was conducted by a sole researcher, but with assistance from the participants at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. The researcher studied and analysed all information collected from the participants, interpreted it, and developed meanings and understanding. Generally, meaning was developed from the research process. In terms of the interpretative method, the researcher ensured sufficient discussion between himself as the observer and the participants.

In this study, the epistemological framework is vital because it reveals how a researcher obtained knowledge and how assessed and learned from that knowledge. Epistemology deals with questions of knowledge: What is truth? What are the sources of knowledge? How do we know? Concerns of this sort probe into the nature and validity of human knowledge (Rietschel, 2006; Halvorson, 2012). Finally, this knowledge system forms and influences how a person views the world and reality.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Bogdan and Biklen, qualitative research is defined as “an approach to social science research that emphasizes collecting descriptive data in natural settings, uses inductive thinking, and emphasizes understanding the subject's point of view” (Bogdan and Biklen, 2007: 274) And Glesne (2011: 283) defined it as “a type of research that focuses on qualities such as words or observations that are difficult to quantify and lend themselves to interpretation or deconstruction.”

Matoane, mentioned, “Qualitative research addresses qualitative areas in social life, such as for example, broader social perceptions, which – as gendered perceptions of women in leadership – is the focus in this study. Qualitative research tries to examine unmanageable social variables rather than reducing their effect”. (Matoane, 2015, 12). In the study, unmanageable variables were examined, without changing, were gender issues. In the research, it is stated, whenever gender issues are spoken about, feminism and feminists’ views on gender are variable. The same thing applies to this research, having consulted feminist theories through a literature review (in Chapter Two) of this research; the researcher had the intention to arrange this in a feminist viewpoint.

3.5 A CASE FOR FEMINIST-ORIENTED QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

This article explores issues associated with conducting qualitative research from a feminist perspective. According to Lindsey, feminist researchers have noted a special compatibility between feminist research and the principles and methods associated with qualitative research. Feminism and qualitative methods, share a number of common elements; like emphasising status, by placing importance on experiences and voices of the person; a vivid belief in different realities; being involved in the process gives value of research, importance of the researcher’s flexibility, the predictability of the researcher’s topic and hence, the need to make that topic obvious during all stages of a project. Both feminist and qualitative research challenges the dominant definition of valid research as being quantitative, positivistic and objective (Lindsey, 1997).

Given the desire to give voice to the subjective experiences of women, and because women’s frame of reference has been characterized as relational and contextual, qualitative research approaches, such as the in-depth interview, have been argued to be the only appropriate methods for feminist investigation. Further, it has been argued that the complexities of women’s lives cannot be isolated

and quantified and that attempts to do so can result in misleading and exploitative outcomes. Quantitative methods, such as those used in survey research, have been criticized in many feminist debates (McDonough, 2011)

Sprague and Kobrynowicz (1999:29) discuss four aspects of feminist epistemology related to family research:

First concrete experience and the wisdom developed out of everyday experience are valued in evaluating knowledge claims. Second, knowledge claims are not hierarchically imposed by elite but rather worked out through dialogue with everyday social actors. Third, emotions such as empathy and attachment are incorporated into the notion of intellect. Finally, part of the assessment of an idea is via what is known about the character and biography of the person advancing it.

This study explores that one of the most distinctive features of feminist qualitative research is the emphasis placed on reflexivity or engaging in reflection about the research process. “Scholars recognize the importance of being reflexive about how we interpret our data, our role in the analytic process, and the pre-conceived ideas and assumptions we bring to our analysis” (Wambui, 2013: 3). Respondents do not speak on their own, but are filtered by the researcher “who makes choices about how to interpret these voices and which transcript extracts to present as evidence” (ibid).

This research was based on feminist qualitative research which is:

concerned with issues of broader social change and social justice and committed to changing the condition of women... It is concerned with asymmetrical power relationships including hierarchical power relationships in the research process and the relationship between the researchers and the researched. The role of the researcher is thus to produce useful knowledge which contributes to global gender justice, to changing women’s subordination and to stopping all forms of social inequalities (Wambui, 2013: 2).

In this research, the audit trail must be in place, that is, the research question, methods, data collection, analysis and interpretation need to be clear, systematic and explicit (Oakley, 1996).

3.6 RESEARCH DESIGN

The research design can be seen as actualisation of logic in a set of procedures that optimises the validity of data for a given research problem (Thomas, 2010). According to Mouton (1996: 175), the research design serves to “plan, structure and execute” the research to make the most of the “validity of the findings.” It gives directions from the underlying philosophical assumptions to research design and data collection (Thomas, 2010). Yin (2014:19) says, “colloquially a research design is an action plan for getting from here to there, where ‘here’ may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered and ‘there’ is some set of conclusions or answers.” This study as feminists-informed, engage both the theory and practice of research, beginning with the formulation of the research question and concluding with the reporting of the findings. Feminist research encompasses the full range of knowledge building that includes epistemology, methodology and method (Nagy and Baber, 2001).

The feminist researcher of this study was strategic about the mission and goals and how to arrange the research at the Mtubatuba Municipality with the final aim of social change for women. The feminist researcher was strategic about the mission and goals and in how to arrange research at the Mtubatuba Municipality toward social change for women. Issues of difference in the research process were carefully addressed as the discussion proceeded. Engagement on the issues of power and control, both within the research process and methodologies, and in discussions with participants were productive and energetic.

The researcher is male and served in decision-making and leadership positions in local government for many years, and is thus interested on obtaining an in-depth understanding of the gender dynamics confronting women involved in decision-making and leadership positions and to diversify his knowledge around gender issues and situations confronting women in similar positions and environments all over.

3.7 ADVOCACY AND PARTICIPATORY PERSPECTIVE

According to Cresswell (2000:9), advocacy and the participatory perspective are part of “a transformative worldview [that] holds that research inquiry needs to be intertwined with politics and a political change agenda to confront social oppression at whatever levels it occurs.”

“Moreover, specific issues need to be addressed that speak to important social issues of the day, issues such as empowerment, inequality, oppression, domination, suppression, and alienation” (ibid). Research which seeks to be transformative provides a platform for participants, raising their consciousness or advancing an agenda which may improve living standards, among other benefits. It thus becomes a united voice for social reform and advancement (Creswell, 2000). Advocacy and a participatory perspective focal point were used to liberate participants from any fear to voice their challenges, including challenges in the conditions they experienced and changes according to their priorities. The most critical challenge is the marginalisation and isolation of poor people.

For example, in this research, the researcher wanted to discover if women's equal access to and full participation in power structures and decision-making is taking place in communities and, secondly, to assess institutional mechanisms and strategies available or being used to increase women's capacity to participate in decision-making and leadership.

3.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS OF ENTRY AND ACCESS IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

The relationship between researchers and participants in qualitative studies can lead to various ethical issues being raised, and qualitative researchers face issues such as respect for privacy, the establishment of honest and open interactions, and avoiding misrepresentations (Warusznski, 2002). Ethically challenging situations may arise if researchers have to deal with contradictory issues and choose between different methodological strategies when conflict arises. In such cases, disagreements among participants, researchers, researchers' discipline, the funding body and the society may be inevitable (Punch, 1994). Certain prominent ethical issues that should be taken into consideration when doing qualitative research are anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent (Med, 2014).

Yin (2011) warns that qualitative research involves studying the meaning of people's lives, under real-world conditions; differs because of its ability to represent the views and perspectives of the participants in a study and covers contextual conditions, the social, institutional, and environmental conditions within which people's lives take place.

Certain prominent ethical issues that should be taken into consideration when doing qualitative research are anonymity, confidentiality and informed consent.

Permission to enter was obtained from the Acting Municipal Manager with clear plans for data management. In this research, the acting Municipal Manager, of Mtubatuba Local Municipality who served as the accounting officer was approached for permission (Appendix 1). A meeting with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Speaker and Chief Whip took place to explain the study, what it seeks to achieve, and all related processes. It was well received by the individuals at the meeting. Successive letters to consolidate the discussions were sent to the Mayor's Office (Appendix 2). Parallel to this process was a meeting with the Acting Municipal Manager and her management team, and it was facilitated through the Acting Municipal Manager's office in the same way. Letters to this effect were sent through to confirm access which was granted (Appendix 3). Gaining access through these municipal leaders was important, but proved to be difficult. Access indicated agreement and cooperation, and ensured a foundation for good relationships between the researcher and the participants at Mtubatuba Municipality.

3.9 RESEARCH POPULATION

The population of this study included women in leadership positions within the Mtubatuba Local Government. The inclusion of men would have helped in the understanding of the gender dynamics which, by implication, would probe men's attitudes, views and perceptions of women in decision-making and leadership positions. Generally, the idea of "gender" refers to men and women. The most important population of the study consists of men and women in decision-making positions at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. The researcher also believes that women would refer to their male counterparts. The sample consisted of 11 research participants from different departments and important stakeholders within the municipality including the Acting Municipal Manager, the heads of departments, such as the Chief Financial Officer (CFO), relevant NGOs, and the Mayor and Councilors who form the political leadership and are custodians of the political oversight function. . Here is the list of the participants in table 3:1:

Table 3:1

Participant	Sex
A	Male
B	Male
C	Female
D	Female
E	Female
F	Female
G	Female
H	Female
I	Female
J	Female
K	Male
TOTAL	11

3.10 A SYNOPSIS OF SAMPLING IN QUALITATIVE RESEARCH

In this research, even if it were possible, it is not necessary to collect data from everyone in the community which falls under Mtubatuba Municipality in order to arrive at valid findings. In qualitative research, only a sample (that is, a subset) of a population is selected for any given study. The study’s research objectives and the characteristics of the study population (such as its size and diversity) determine who and how many participants to select (Family Health International, 2017). Marshall and Rossman (2011: 103) warn that, in justifying a sample, “One should know the

universe of the possible population and its variability and then sample according to all of the relevant variables.”

The research sample comprised of 11 women and men in political and administrative decision-making and leadership positions in Mtubatuba Local Municipality selected by means of purposive sampling. The sample included councillors serving as Mayors, Speakers and Chief Whips, or as Members of the Executive Committees (MECs), ward committee members and Directors, and/or Managers in Mtubatuba Local Municipality to ensure that a more comprehensive account of the gendered voices, views and opinions was captured.

3.11 BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH POPULATION

The rationale specifies the reasons for conducting research in light of current knowledge. It should include a well-documented statement of the problem that is the basis of the project, the cause of this problem, and its possible solutions. Issues of funding and time constraints had a direct impact on the sampling (Marshall and Rossman, 2011) and needed to be taken into consideration. In this research for the sake of locating the study’s debate within a broader context of municipal competence, both the administrative and the political inputs were significant. This research was conducted 22 years after a democratic government, led by the ANC, was born and took crucial steps towards the adoption and enactment of important policies and legislation. Among those were the National Policy Guidelines on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality (2000), the Local Gender Policy Framework (2006), the Employment Equity Act (1996), affirmative action policies and the Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality Bill (2011).

Firstly, this research contributes to a deeper understanding of women in local government as experienced by women leaders who practice in the South African context. It might enable other women to decide whether to continue to be or become involved in local government. Secondly, it also provides insight into whether the presence of women leaders can make for a more inclusive and less hostile culture. If this is true, the researcher is interested in how this happens and what it means for women, for local government and for the communities in the future. These issues are of particular importance at this stage in our history. Apart from what happens at the national level, there is evidence that more women than men leave the employment of local government. On a

daily basis, we observe conflicts between local governments and those people elected to represent them. If women who are currently practising politics inside local government leave in substantial numbers, little will change, and women entering it in the future will face the same hostile environments and challenges that women currently face (Freeman and Bourque, 2001). Lastly, this research weighs theory with practice from the perspectives of women working in the field and thereby contributes to a theoretical understanding of women in local government.

3.12 DATA COLLECTION METHODS

According to Giorgi (2009: 122), “what one seeks from a research interview in is as complete a description as possible of the experience that a participant has lived through.” The face-to-face interview is often longer and thus richer in terms of nuances and depth. The goal of further data analysis is to describe the psychological meaning, which includes describing that of the participant’s self-interpretations (Giorgi, 1997). In the data collection process, the study has adopted datasource triangulation, using evidence from different types of data sources, such as primary and secondary research. These are articulated below.

3.12.1 PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary sources are first-hand accounts, they offer a personal point of view and are created by witnesses of, or participants in, an event. Interviews will be used in this study. Marshall and Rossman (2011) state that “the interview as a method of data collection has significant benefits in that it yields data in larger quantities and more quickly. The researcher is mindful of and also acknowledges the limitations of interviews, for example, that they are dependent on trust. The researcher has trust relationships with the participants, based on guidance that these trust relationships are time-bound and participants’ might be unwilling or uncomfortable to share all of what the interviewer intends to explore”. (Marshall and Rossman, 2011:136).

3.12.2 SECONDARY SOURCES

“Secondary sources are information sources that interpret, include, describe, or draw conclusions based on works written by others. Secondary sources are used by authors to present evidence, back

up arguments and statements, or help represent an opinion by using and citing multiple sources” (Lehn, 2013)

The secondary sources comprised of the municipalities’ official and archival documents such as the respective municipalities’ Integrated Development Plan (IDP) documents as the main master plans with communities’ inputs, annual reports, spatial development frameworks, gender policies and related publications.

. 3.12.3 INTERVIEWS

A researcher has a qualitative purpose and a qualitative research question. He seeks knowledge of the content of the experience, often in depth, to seek the meaning of a phenomenon, not how many people who have experienced such phenomena.

The participants were the Mayor (male), Deputy Mayor (male), Speaker (female), one Chief Whip (male), two executive councillors (female), Acting Municipal Manager (female), Acting CFO (female), Corporate Manager, one official from Cooperative Government and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) and one from a NGO, and honesty while admiring the political and administrative high positions they hold in these institutions.

Hall (2010: 2) refers to these leaders as “elites”, and said says that interviews with them “are a special case of interviewing that focuses on a particular type of interview partner.” As these participants are among top management, in decision-making positions, and have an understanding of processes and policy impacts, it is advantageous to engage with them on research. “Elite interviews” present considerable conceptual, epistemological, methodological, practical, ethical and prescriptive challenges. Consequently, research that is explicitly focused on interviewing “elites” is relatively scant when compared to those on “non-elites”, despite their recognised importance with respect to the broader impacts of business and policy decision-making (Marshall and Rossman, 2011).

In this research, interviews were based on semi-structured, open-ended questions. According to Creswell (2009), they should be few in number intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants. Marshall and Rossman (2011) advise that with guided interviews the researcher

should explore general topics, in this case, on gender dynamics with regard to women in decision-making and leadership positions in the Mtubatuba local government.

3.13 OBSERVATIONS

Marshall and Rossman (1989: 79) define observation as “the systematic description of events, behaviors, and artifacts in the social setting chosen for study.” Observations are a fundamental and highly important method of data collection in qualitative inquiries (Marshall and Rossman, 2011:79). Observations enable the researcher to describe existing situations using the five senses, providing a written photograph of the situation under study (Kawulich, 2005). Research requires “active looking, improving memory, informal interviewing, writing detailed field notes, and perhaps most importantly, patience” (De Walt and De Walt, 2002: vii).

In this research, certain observation methods were useful to the researcher in a variety of ways. The qualitative observations were conducted in important forums such as Council meetings, ward committee establishment and community outreach programmes. In some of these meetings Council, officials and community meet to strategize together. Observation helped the researcher to identify and guide relationships with informants, to learn how people in the setting interact and how things are organised and prioritised in that setting, to learn what is important to the people in the social setting under study, to become known to participants, and to learn what constitutes appropriate questions, how to ask them, and which questions may best help the researcher to answer the research question (Kawulich, 2005).

These are gatherings in which the politicians and administration interface with the community and other important stakeholders such as traditional structures, business, churches and more. The main data collection techniques used in this research study were the literature reviews, interviews, and observation.

3.14 DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION AND PRESENTATION

To complete this research, it is significant to analyse, interpret and present data collected. According to Marshall and Rossman (1990: 111), data analysis is “the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to the mass of collected data. It is a messy, ambiguous, time consuming,

creative, and fascinating process. It does not proceed in a linear fashion; it is not neat. Data analysis is a search for answers about relationships among categories of data.” Hitchcock and Hughes (1995: 295) take this one step further: “the ways in which the researcher moves from a description of what is the case to an explanation of why what is the case is the case.”

Marshall and Rossman (2006:111) emphasise that “constant comparative data analysis helps in the development of grounded theories on particular phenomena”. This is what is referred to by Welman and Kruger (2001) as content analysis. The interpretive approach which involves deduction from the data obtained relies more on what it feels like to be a participant in the action under study, which is part of the qualitative research. Very often, researchers rely on their experience in particular settings in interpreting the information provided by the subjects involved in the study (Vosloo, 2014).

The researcher proceeded with this section hand-in-hand with other parts of the developing qualitative study, namely data collection and the write-up of findings. While interviews happen, for example, the researcher was analysing and interview collected earlier, writing memos that may ultimately be included as a narrative in the final report, and organising the structure of the final report (Creswell, 2014). Because text and image data was so dense and rich, not all of the information could be used in the qualitative study.

Thus, in the analysis of the data, researchers needed to “winnow” the data (Guest, Macqueen and Nmaey, 2012). As qualitative research, the impact of this process was to aggregate data into a small number of themes, seven themes (Creswell, 2013). Following all of this in this study researcher had to make sure that the data were appropriate for the analysis to be carried out. This required investigation of a wide range of details such as whether the targeted population of the data source was sufficiently related to the targeted population of the analysis, whether the source variables and their concepts and definitions were relevant to the study, whether the longitudinal or cross-sectional nature of the data source was appropriate for the analysis, whether the sample size in the study domain was sufficient to obtain meaningful results and whether the quality of the data, as outlined in the survey documentation or assessed through analysis, was sufficient.

3.15 ENSURING RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY IN DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Validity: The accuracy with which a method measures what it is intended to measure (Schopperet al., 1993) and yields data that really represents “reality” (Goodwin et al., 1987). Validation does not belong in some separate stage of the investigation, but instead as an ongoing principle throughout the entire research process. Qualitative validity refers to checking for the accuracy of the findings by employing certain procedures, while qualitative reliability indicates that the researcher’s approach is consistent across different researchers and different projects (Gibbs, 2007). The researcher has also implemented validity procedures suggested by Cresswell (2009) which are: “ensuring that transcripts do not contain obvious mistakes; cross-checking the codes for consistency and thus ensuring that a different coder would arrive at the same codes used for the same passage, sometimes called intercoder agreement or cross-checking” (also see Guest et al. 2012).

Reliability: The consistency of the research findings ensuring reliability requires diligent efforts and commitment to consistency throughout interviewing, transcribing and analysing the findings. (Kvale, 1996). Validity is one of the strengths of qualitative research and is based on determining whether the findings are accurate from the standpoint of the researcher, the participants, or the readers of an account (Cresswell and Miller, 2000). This means that researcher, participants and readers of the completed study must be convinced about the accuracy of the findings. According to Cresswell (2009), the researcher has triangulated different data sources and used that data to build a coherent justification of the themes. A detailed account to convey the findings was used to try to give readers insight into the real setting. Assessing the reliability of study findings required the researcher to make judgments about the soundness of the research in relation to the application and appropriateness of the methods used and the integrity of the final conclusions. The researcher had to consider the appropriateness of the tools, processes and data; whether the research question was valid for the desired outcome; the choice of methodology as appropriate for answering the research question; the design’s in relation to the methodology, sampling and data analysis; and finally, the validity of the results and conclusions for the sample and context.

3.16 SUMMARY

The intention of this study was to investigate the views, experiences and beliefs of the community leaders at Mtubatuba Municipality on a specific aspect, which is the participation of women in decision-making positions in local government. The researcher used a qualitative method, that is, interviewing, because it allows for a better understanding of underlying reasons and it provided insight into the problem. Qualitative methods are investigative in nature. As there was little information known about the subject of the study and information was required from the participants, interviews were used. Sample selection was based on a smaller number, not the representative cases. It provided the researcher with different techniques for data development, like interviewing, documents and observation.

The researcher has used qualitative methods because it is an exploratory research, it used open-ended questions which allow the respondent to convey an opinion without being influenced by the researcher and allowed the flexibility to the researcher to investigate participant's answers to get more clarity, for example, by asking "why" or "how" questions.

The researcher listened carefully to what participants said, engaged with them according to their individual personalities and styles and encouraged them to elaborate on their response.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this study is to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding about the impact of the involvement of the female gender in leadership and executive posts in the Mtubatuba Municipality. The researcher wanted to ascertain whether women's political and socio-economic status will improve when women become more involved in executive and policy development in the local government through their active involvement in community work and women's movements, given that women in local politics are fully aware of the issues faced by women in their communities and are uniquely positioned to address them. In order to achieve this, data was collected through in-depth interviews with a sample of nine senior male and female councillors from the Mtubatuba Local Municipality and three participants from other stakeholders within the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. These individuals include the most senior management from the Mtubatuba Local Municipality: one member from COGTA, the second member from a Mtubatuba NGO, and the third from the business sector. The literature review provided a better perspective and a basis for analysing the information obtained through the interviews with the targeted population.

The questionnaire used to collect data is found in Appendix 4 and included 70 open-ended interview questions. The questionnaire had six themes which were each dealt with in sections. The first section was about the participant's personal and education history, their background (before undertaking their current position), what motivated them in the positions they held, and their future career development plan. The second section related to the participants' current occupation. The third section looked at the theme of issues and ideologies about gender. The fourth theme was about issues surrounding the working environment as compared to the current norm in respect of each individual at Local Municipality. The fifth and the last theme were both about institutional mechanisms for gender mainstreaming. The last theme also dealt with concluding confirmatory questions. Through these questions, the aim is to determine the standard of official readiness in relation to systems, procedures and organisations which support female in executive and leadership roles, including in competing for such positions or access thereto in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.

This section draws you near to the data extracted and formulated through the use of desktop findings, dialogue and surveillance because these approaches typically focus on the lives of individuals as related to their own stories. The focus of this research is gender-based but it is dependent on individual men and women who have been engaged in local government for a considerable period of time and who are leaders of the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.

It is significant to indicate that apart from desktop interviews, observation methods were also implemented. In this research, observation methods were used by the researcher in a variety of ways. The qualitative observations were arranged in forums such as Council meetings such as Council meetings, ward committee establishment and community outreach programs. In some of these meetings council officials and the community met to strategize together. Through observation, the researcher noticed nonverbal behaviours including posture, gestures, eye gaze, facial expressions and tone of voice.

In this chapter, the researcher presents the data captured, analysed, described and interpreted in a systematic manner following the steps of the research process. The aim is to present the well-analysed data in an intelligible and interpretable description in order to identify trends and relations in accordance with the objectives of the research, which are to empower women to the point whereby they can compete fairly with men in appointments to decision-making positions, and to put in place policy development framework systems to reinforce cooperation for the support of women in local government.

4.2 SELECTION OF PARTICIPANTS

There are two elements in municipalities, are political affairs and management. These two sectors make up a Municipality. The majority of women and men in executive positions of authority, interviewed, were from both sectors of the Mtubatuba Municipality.

The political affairs sector with executive positions of leadership within the Municipality comprises of one Mayor, one Deputy Mayor and one Speaker (who are all appointed to serve as full-time councillors in community development services offices), as well as one Chief Whip and two Executive Councillors (who are appointed to serve as part-time councillors). There are no minimum educational requirements to become a councillor in a municipality in South Africa as

these are political positions. Provided an individual belongs to a certain political party, is loyal in the eyes of the political party, and actively serves in the structures of that political party, the person is deemed suitable. Finally, the educational requirement varies from a formal tertiary qualification to none. There are those councillors who hold high-ranking, executive leadership positions with no formal education, whilst other councillors with degrees and diplomas. They are active and popular within the political sector and therefore deployed to these positions.

Table 4.1: Mtubatuba Local Council political leadership structure

Mayor	Deputy Mayor	Speaker	Chief Whip	Executive Member No. 1	Executive Member No. 2
Male	Male	Female	Male	Female	Female

In South Africa, municipalities have an administrative component which consists of the Manager of the Municipality, Executive Managers, Directors, or Officers. This is the individuals constitute the study from the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.

In this Municipality, there are four Departments, excluding the office of the Municipal Manager, which gives us a total of five executive administration management positions, but two were vacant. Therefore, only three individuals could be interviewed. These are the Acting Municipal Manager, Acting CFO and Director of Human Resources Management. The minimum qualification for a Municipal Manager and senior managers in most municipalities in South Africa is a formal higher education qualification and a post-graduate qualification. Two more participants are professionals from COGTA in KwaZulu-Natal, and ‘Eddie’, the NGO. All participants are black Africans.

Table 4.2: Most senior administration members at Mtubatuba Local Municipality

Acting Municipal Manager	Acting CFO	Human Resources Management Director	COGTA	NGO
Female	Female	Female	Female	Female

4.3 ANALYSIS OF MTUBATUBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY DOCUMENTS

The entirety documents mentioned in chapter three as secondary sources requested from the Mtubatuba Local Municipality like the IDP, budget, municipality policies about women and others were readily available to the researcher. The Mtubatuba Local Municipality, like others in rural areas, was left underdeveloped and largely underserved. The new approach to local government has to be developmental and aim to prevent poor planning as it happened before 1994. In the past, IDP and budget processes were not integrated but and now the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA) (Government of South Africa, 2003), orders the Mayor to coordinate a review of the IDP and budget as one process, and formulate the required reconciliation of the budget with the IDP. The IDP is the strategic plan of the municipality established in consultation with the community and other available resources. To ensure that the IDP of the municipality is achieved, the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) of the municipality must be directly linked to the municipality's IDP. Municipalities will need to keep abreast of development in the various sectors to ensure their budget for water, sanitation, electricity and more that are well informed. Municipal IDPs and budgets should inform and be informed by development plans from the national and provincial government departments to ensure a coordinated approach to infrastructure planning and service delivery.

The budget is a plan for financial as well as non-financial performance. It is used by line stakeholders. In the past, IDPs were not required to be aligned to the resources available and were, therefore, often merely a wish list with little hope of being implemented. However, now, through the integration of the IDP and budget processes, IDPs are required to realistically take into account the managers as an implementation tool and as a reference point for monitoring and evaluation. It

gives effect to the IDP priorities for the municipality. A properly implemented budget should incorporate community input, encourage discussion, promote a better understanding of community needs, provide feedback and promote accountability. Section 21 of the MFMA requires the mayor to table a budget in council by 31 August, which is ten months before the start of the budget year. The accounting officer is required by Section 68 of the MFMA to assist the mayor in budget planning and implementation process. According to Section 37(2) of the MFMA, the accounting officer may publish a summary budget to notify the relevant municipality of project allocations for the next three budget years 120 days prior to the start of the budget year (Government of South Africa, 2003).

The format used by the Mtubatuba Local Municipality for the IDP and budgeting is similar to all other municipalities in South Africa, as determined by the Provincial and National Government. These documents offer considerable insight into women's position in leadership and in decision-making positions in municipalities of the same level.

4.4 GENDERED SHORTFALLS IN MUNICIPALITIES' IDPS AND BUDGET PLANS

The insufficiency of projects and activities for women in the IDP and the budget at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality was noted and resulted in challenges and this demonstrates the importance of the female in representation in executive and leadership positions in order for their voices to not get lost in final prioritisations. As mentioned before, the IDP is a critical tool for addressing issues predominantly impacting on poor women. Accordingly, several key international commitments are undertaken by the State, through obligations outlined in the CEDAW, the MDGs and the Beijing Platform for Action which have direct implications for municipalities. For example, the following gendered aspects of the MDG targets should be addressed in municipal IDPs: the provision of energy resources, access to safe drinking water and sanitation, and the living standards improvements for those in informal settlements (CGE, 2009). It will be necessary that during the tabling of the budget, a gender budget statement be included stating how gender was considered when planning the budget; what gender issues are addressed in the budget and how.

According to Participant G, the Mtubatuba Municipality currently has a problem in fulfilling the constitutional mandate of sustainable service delivery to the community. Issues of water,

sanitation, local economic development, municipal roads and other services in general are in a state of crisis. This creates a situation whereby the issue of women's empowerment is not considered a priority and it is not even discussed during the IDP review processes.

The findings of this research indicate that few municipalities in KwaZulu-Natal realise the importance of mainstreaming gender in the design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of their programmes. Few consider gender in their operational plans, noting, for instance, how the particular needs of vulnerable groups and women, in particular, will be addressed through service provision of electricity, water and sanitation. Overall, IDPs do not address gender empowerment and gender mainstreaming in service delivery planning; they do not refer to the National Gender Policy Framework, the Gender Policy Framework for Local Government, or any municipal gender policy; and they do not refer to gender equality or women's empowerment. Targets set and data captured are not gender disaggregated. For example, no targets are set for the number of households and beneficiaries, disaggregated by gender, or targeted for district poverty alleviation interventions. This makes it difficult to conduct monitoring and evaluation of any relevant interventions.

From the documents, like the IDP, budget and SDBIPs, there appears to be few programmes and little budgeting for women's empowerment and gender equality awareness rising at the Mtubatuba Municipality level. The equal representation of women and their participation in the political arena is essential to changing the patriarchal nature of political and governance structures and approaches to policy formulation. It is also necessary to enable diverse views and solutions for the many challenges besetting democracy and development in South Africa. These problems keep women marginalised, out of decision-making processes, at the receiving end of poorly executed "empowerment" programmes (where these exist), and locked in unequal power relations that determine access to resources and the achievement of human dignity.

4.5 SUBJECT OF PORTFOLIO COMMITTEES, EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES AND COUNCIL MEETINGS

The Mtubatuba Local Municipal Council appointed standing committees, elected from among its members, which are called portfolio committees. These include a financial committee, portfolio

committees such as technical services which are responsible for water, sanitation, electricity and human resources portfolio committee looking after the issues of ethics and the code of conduct. **The Executive Committee (Exco)** is elected by the council and provided with executive powers, and it is the principal committee of the council of the municipality. Exco receives reports from other committees and makes recommendations to the council before final resolutions are made. From among themselves, they elect a Mayor as their chairperson, although this individual has equal powers to other executive members. Exco also identifies the needs of the municipality; reviews and evaluates those needs in order of priority; recommends to the Municipal Council strategies, programmes and services to address priority needs through the IDP; estimates revenue and expenditure, taking into account any applicable national and provincial development plans; and recommends or determines the best methods, including partnerships and other approaches, to deliver those strategies, programmes and services to the maximum benefit of the community (see the Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, as amended (Government of South Africa, 1998)).

Exco must be composed so that parties and interests represented in council are also represented in the committee in the same proportions as they are represented in council. The Exco of Mtubatuba Local Municipality is made up of eight councillors, of whom only two are women. Women are thus underrepresented in the Exco.

The Municipal Council has a set of financial executive obligations which are imposed on every municipal council in South Africa. These include approval of the municipality budget (Section 16 of the MFMA) and oversight in the tabling of the annual budget; approval of service delivery and budget implementation plans; signing of annual performance agreements (Section 53(2) of the MFMA); and adopting and annually reviewing the Supply Chain Management Policy (Chapter 11 of the MFMA) (Government of South Africa, 2003).

Another structure in the local government system is the caucus which is a political sub-grouping of elected councillors of the same political organisation who plan for their input to the distributed portfolio, executive or council meeting agenda. It is a private meeting of councillors of the same political organisation discussing the agenda prior to the council meeting or executive or portfolio committee meeting to express their preference and decide on possible resolutions of the council. Caucuses help the political parties to have the same understanding about items listed in the agenda. Caucus resolutions are very important because they must be brought before the council, debated

and become resolutions to be implemented for service delivery. The Chief Whip's responsibility is to act as a watchdog for the individuals and the whole political team, and to see that all political members are present at the caucus meetings and that they achieve common understanding and consensus in the council meeting to ensure the smooth running of the council. The full Municipal Council of Mtubatuba has 40 councillors, and only 13 are women. Table 4.3 and 4.4 below show this information.

Table 4.3: Mtubatuba Municipality full council (2016–2021)

Ward	Councillors	M	F		M	F
1	Mr Jericko Muziwakhe Gumedede	x		Cllr. Maureen Mavis Davies		x
2	Mr Gordon Bhekinkosi Mkhithi Msane	X		Cllr. Mandlenkosi Sabelo Gumedede	x	
3	Mr Siyabonga Richman Khumalo	X		Cllr. Mondli Cyril Funeka	x	
4	Mr Thembelani Wiseman Myeni	X		Cllr. Sigoga Caiphus Mkhwanazi	x	
5	Mr Ndumiso Emmanuel Zuma	X		Cllr. Verus Thobelani Ncamphalala	x	
6	Mr Penuel Sandile Manqele	X		Cllr. Lindiwe Masisi Mkhwanazi		x
7	Mrs Sibongile Julie Shezi		x	Cllr. Petros Khumbulani Msweli	x	
8	Mr. Sibusiso Jetro Khoza	X		Cllr. Zandile Wendy Mathonsi		x
9	Mr. Sibusiso Nhlanhla Sibiya	X		Cllr. Mbongeleni Alfred Gina	x	
10	Mr. Sithembiso Mgexo Khumalo			Cllr. Annacletah Veronicah Mabika		x
11	Mr Zakhele Ernest Nyawo	X		Cllr. Phumzile Velile Ntshalintshali		x
12	Mr Luke G Mkhwanazi	X		Cllr. Janet Bongiwe Lembede		x

13	Mr, Sibusiso Nhlanhla Sibiya	X		Cllr. Richard Boy Bhekezakhe Mkhwanazi	x	
14	Mr Fisokuhle Nicholus Mpanza	X		Cllr. Thuli Pretty Zikhali		x
15	Mr Mxolisi Mthethwa	X		Cllr. Zandile Nobuhle Mthethwa		x
16	Mr. Muziwenkosi Zwilenkosi Shobede	X		Cllr. Nombulelo Gugu Khumalo		x
17	Mr, Mbongiseni Prichard Ndlovu	X		Cllr. Dipuo Rosina Ntuli		x
18	Mr Robert Mandla Bukhosini			Cllr. Khanyisile Ntombifuthi Mpontshana		x
19	Mr.Musawenkosi Qhina Mkhwanazi	X		Cllr. Philip Madodenzani Mkhwanazi	x	
20	Mr .Sibusiso Makhani Gumede	X		Cllr. Patience Samukelisiwe Tembe		x
	TOTAL	19	01	TOTAL	08	12

Table 4.4: Mtubatuba Municipality full council (2016–2021) as percentages

Total Councillors	Male	%	Female	%	TOTAL
20	19	95	01	05	20
20	08	40	12	60	20
40	27	67.5	13	32.5	40

The Municipal Structures ActNo. 117 of 1998 and the Women Empowerment'sand Gender Equity BillNo. 37005 of 6 November 2013 endorse what is said in South Africa's Constitution. That is, the public bodies have got responsibilities of Implementing measures, in order to achieve the progressive realization of a minimum of 50% representation and meaningful participation of women in decision-making structures including Boards, which must include building women's

capacity to participate; enhancing the understanding and attitudes of communities to accept the capabilities and participation of women as their equals; and developing support mechanisms for women.

This study demonstrates that there is a great variation and no consistency in the representation of women in Local Government.

4.6 CYCLE OF DECISION-MAKING

At the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, there is a cycle of decision-making system. The council is made of 40 councillors and has a final resolution. When new matters like reports, new development issues, in deputations or any other new motion comes in the council agenda for the first time, which is prepared and speculated seven days before the date of the meeting, are usually referred to the relevant portfolio committees for finetuning and forward their recommendations to the committee. Exco will either support a recommendation or proposed another better recommendation to the council to take a final decision.

When political parties receive an agenda for meetings, they go for caucuses before the date of the meeting to discuss it, preparing and aligning themselves to have a common understanding in all items of the agenda, to eliminate split when they vote in the council. Caucus is a ground-up, party-building activity, it is a meeting of the members of the same political party in a legislative council, to agree and shape their agenda about what they want like to develop party policy before the council meeting.

Resolutions are actually taken in caucuses and formalised in the council meetings. If women are not well represented in caucuses, they will never be able to influence council meetings, and there is a need to bring women to a level where they would be able to compete fairly with men for high-level positions and to develop frameworks to support and strengthen corporations that supported women in government.

4.7 RESOLUTIONS AND MOTIONS

At the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, most council decisions are taken after a portfolio committee, or Exco makes a recommendation to the council. In the council, matters are brought before in the form of a motion or items in the agenda from the individuals and from the Exco. Before a motion or item in the agenda is discussed, any councillor may propose a motion or motivate an item, and there must be a seconder, other motions and items may be accepted without any debate, and that motion or item becomes a resolution of the council which needs to be implemented. A member submitting a motion shall introduce such a motion and shall have the right of reply thereto.

From the documents available, it is apparent that only men serve as proposers and seconders and engage in robust debate. For example, the minutes of the Exco meeting on 28 September 2016 in the Mtubatuba Municipal Council Chamber show that only one male councillor really contributed during the whole meeting. It was also revealed that male councillors dominated the session and only males served as proposers, seconded the motions, debated issues, and took part in almost all resolution sat a Special Council Meeting held on 18 October 2016(from the agenda and minutes of these meetings).

In this research, there were only three participants who are women councillors. Two of them are members of the Exco of Mtubatuba Local Municipality and one is the Speaker of the Council in the same municipality. Participant D, who is also a member of the Executive Council of the same municipality, revealed that most women councillors (as well as many men) do not have the requisite skills to effectively participate in budget process planning and to analyse budget information in order to engage in productive debate, and to challenge and create new proposals. She agreed that there is a lack of understanding and skills to evaluate, monitor and analyse the IDP, budget, SDBIP, performance management and oversight functions. Furthermore, the municipality's important documents like the laws, code of conduct, IDP, budget, implementation plan, agenda, minutes and others are written in technical language. Most women serving as councillors on economics- or finance-related committees, like the Executive Council, tend to shy away from discussing and making proposals with confidence. Another problem she mentioned was the issue of parties' internal politics. The true internal nature and culture of Local Government institutions, and the nature of local leadership are critical elements that determine whose voice dominates. The Local Government culture, and all decisions taken therein, should be fully

democratic, in line with the binding National Constitution, but this is apparently not the case in Mtubatuba Local Municipality.

A woman councillor (Participant C) indicated that the issue of 50/50 representation in Local Government is still a massive problem because political parties are not yet willing to implement the policy. The excuse is made that placements in high positions are made based on competence and experience. She further indicated that women's empowerment is core to ensuring women acquire more skills, but it must be accompanied by a positive mindset shift among the top political office bearers.

She highly believed that women are manipulated by social norms to see men as their born leaders and failed to perceive themselves as leaders. She also highlighted that women have trust issues among themselves, which give rise to men to take advantage of deliberately nominating incapable women with an aim of manipulating them by dancing to their political tune and display women as incapable of holding high leadership positions. She further indicated that it is more difficult in administration for women to hold top senior management positions even if they have got qualifications and experience, they mostly remain in junior positions and middle management; that is why most of these senior management positions are occupied by men. She mentioned that women should stand together, combine their voices against this evil and fight against being grounded and being taken for granted.

4.8 WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP IN COMMUNITY MEETINGS AND MAYORAL IMBIZOS

The Mtubatuba Local Municipality fulfilled its legal obligation in that each year they are required to review their IDPs and budgets (Sections 21, 57 and 69 of the MFMA) (Government of South Africa, 2003). The researcher also credits the proficiency noted which illustrates the needs of the people of Mtubatuba. Coordination was so effective that in all wards visited people had more or less the same priorities depending on ward needs. According to the official participation in the IDP process, there are two main types of IDP process gathering, firstly is the IDP road shows (which include every community members in their area) and secondly the IDP steering committee forum (which includes all stakeholders of the municipality).

This study will reflect only the remarks observed at the public forums. The objective was to monitor women in executive leadership positions engaging within the working environment. At the Mtubatuba local municipality women have never participated in IDP processors as an electorate. Municipalities depend on different forms of communications to invite community members to the public meeting, like loudhailers, flyers, posters, community radio, churches and schools to announce the date, time and venue.

This method involved many welfare organisations; however, most Women NGO never attended. (See Appendix 5, the IDP Forum attendance register). Community meetings attracted many women's Community Based Organisations (CBOs) only. There were no formal invitations mailed to the formal structures of the community or civil organisations which resulted to the poor attendance in the IDP forum.

From this forum, the researcher discovered that there were women councillors who were more competent and more experienced than those who are the members of the Exco. Most women who are councillors argue that they represent the interests of women. They feel that they have a sound knowledge and good understanding of the problems that affect women because they can speak about the problems of poverty and women development with which most women are faced. Other women who are councillors regard themselves as representatives of the community at large, including men and not just women.

Most women who are councillors argue that they represent women as they have sound knowledge and an understanding of the problems faced by women by being vocal on poverty and women advancement. Some councillors feel they are representatives of the local area, including men. Most female councillors, exhibit their responsibility to address the needs of women with effective women development and empowerment. The researcher observed that women in council, habitually, promote the rights of women, poverty alleviation initiatives, and awareness of HIV/Aids, creating crèches, accessing funds, training, and outsourcing farming equipment. The efforts of female councillors expressing the issues faced by women are not effective in the Municipal Structures: as mentioned above, Exco has only two councillors who are women compared to six councillors who are men, and, in the full council meeting, women councillors are 13 against the other 27 male councillors.

From this study, we learned that women who are councillors have an extremely limited voice at Mtubatuba Municipal Council. In the interview, female Participant C said “They feel women’s issues have not being taken into serious consideration by men councillors, and that they experience resistance and antagonism from them. Women believe that political party’s commitments to 50/50 representation and commitment to women issues is white propaganda.” Within the voting public, women who are in council, not only experience resistance from men in council but other women within as well. She mentioned that, at the election of ward committee, members displayed hesitance to nominate, elect or position women to leadership. Participant C further noted that there is a strong argument that men are better and more effective and efficient in senior decision-making management positions. “Women who are councillors have learned that many women are hesitant to support women candidates and they are criticised for their leading roles, not wanting to see other women progressing” (Participant C).

The researcher observed inequities between women and men in practice. Cultural values strengthen established attitudes about women including their supposed weakness and obedience and created a challenge for women in developing confidence to overcome these attitudes. Participant C and Participant F confirmed that members of the public respect male councillors more than female councillors.

The study showed that incorporating women in executive positions in local government do not guarantee that women will have more influence over policy decisions or that women’s rights and gender equality will be addressed in government policies and programmes. Nevertheless, women’s voices and perspectives must be heard in decision-making and in ensuring that services address women’s needs and interests as well as those of men.

4.9 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES, MECHANISMS AND POLICIES FOR WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUALITY

Local government, or municipal government, as it is also known, is made up of three groups, elected councillors who form a municipal council, an administration made up of officials appointed by a municipal council and the people who live in the municipality, including residents, groups, CBOs and businesses (Section 2(b) of the Municipal Systems Act, Government of South

Africa, 1998). A municipality is more than a geographic area or the government officials who work there. It also includes the people who actually live there. As defined in the first chapter, this study glances on the political and administration sectors which entail the up-front obligation of fulfilling South Africa's constitutional mandate to uplift women and gender equity within the community moreover the workplace.

The researcher attempted to have foresight on the range and heights of choice, and find out if there are any other alternatives available to empower women interms of leadership in decision-making positions. This study discovered that at Mtubatuba Local Municipality there is no gender policy, no women's empowerment policy and no department for gender equity. Furthermore, here is an official employed for special programmes which cover gender issues and others such as a youth desk, for people living with a disability and so forth. Gender issues are not a priority, and there is also no specific budget allocated for gender issues and no gender programme in place. The only available document at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality is the National Government's Gender Policy Framework (Government of South Africa, 2006) which determines the protocol for South Africa to move towards redefining old legacy with introducing current conditions of reference in interaction both in the private and public spheres. This is done with proposals endorsing established structures which enable same access to goods and services to all gender. The Gender Policy framework puts forward procedures which move away from treating gender issues as delayed business.

Other issues take precedence over gender issues. This policy framework on gender aims to facilitate the process of achieving gender. Equity is at the very core of transformation in South Africa within all structures, institutions, policies, procedures, practices and programmes of government, including its agencies and parastatals, civil society and the private sector. Therefore, these gender equity policies and programmes in local government should not only aim at increasing the role of women by numbers, but should uplift and empower women's political leadership capabilities by training women on how things operate, thereby building an effective network of social and political relationships.

4.10 WOMEN MANAGERS AND LEADERS' CONTRIBUTION TO IMPROVING SERVICE DELIVERY AT THE MTUBATUBA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY

Almost all participants in this research agreed that the upliftment and autonomy of women and an improvement in their social, economic and political status are essential for the achievement of transparent and accountable government, administration and sustainable development in all areas of life. Participant F said, "Women's equal participation in decision-making not only demands for simple justice or democracy, but can be considered a necessary condition for women's interest to be accountable." These women taking up their positions in the local government or municipality and legislative structures contribute towards redefining political priorities, placing new items on the political agenda that reflect and address gender-specific concerns, values and experiences, providing new perspectives on mainstream political issues.

In the literature review, Carli's (2001:275) argument is mentioned that "people typically perceive men to have higher levels of competence than women" and that women themselves can internalise that perception and consequently devalue their own effectiveness. Ganguly-Scrase (2000:86) says "Women in government in India are powerful and influential, and enjoy the privileges and benefits of their class position." According to Caliper (2005:275), "women leaders are more assertive and persuasive, have a stronger need to get things done, and are more willing to take risks than male leaders." Women leaders are also found to be more empathetic and flexible, as well as stronger in interpersonal skills than their male counterparts.

Female Participant H mentioned that women in this municipality during its period under Provincial Administration had demonstrated considerable positive leadership in community development and financial administration, as well as in public office.

Participant H mentioned that women in this municipality, during its period under Provincial Administration, demonstrated considerable decisive leadership in community development and financial administration, as well as in public office. Participant H stated that, as part of efforts to renew public confidence in the administration of the municipality, COGTA, having oversight on the turnaround strategy in municipalities under investigation, announced the suspension of the male municipal manager of Mtubatuba Local Municipality on 20 October 2014. The positions

filled by females are Acting Municipal Manager, Chief Officer, Human Resources Director, Deputy Major, Speaker and three Councillors on the Exco. Thereafter, the Auditor General's report showed an improvement from a qualified to an unqualified status, there was increased service delivery, and there was a major improvement in the implementation of development projects and the allocation of expenditure by the Municipal Infrastructure Grants (MIG) Programme. This resulted in the operating deficit being reduced from R27million to R8million. The bank overdraft of R6million was cleared by June 2013. The collection of debt increased from R900 000 per month to an average of R1.6million per month. The infrastructure implementation programme managers improved their standards and completed all planned MIG projects in the 2012/2013 and 2013/2014 financial years. These achievements are attributed to the municipality's female leadership.

In conclusion, it is notable that the participants mentioned that socialisation and negative stereotyping of women in municipalities support the tendency for political decision-making to remain a male domain. The participants also mentioned that the underrepresentation of women in decision-making positions in the municipalities and in other sectors prevent women from having a significant impact on many key institutions. Responding to the interview questions, Participant E, who is a councillor in the Exco, said that other women tend to treat her poorly. They are jealous of one another, and South Africa's history and tradition have greatly contributed to this. On the issue of women in decision-making positions, women are purposefully side-lined, either by political parties or by the government, because they are told that councillors take their mandate from political parties for a candidate to be placed in senior positions. Participant E said:

They are looking for people they trust, calling them politically correct candidates. For example, if you can take the study of our uMkhanyakude District Municipality, not even one woman who has been employed as municipal manager since its establishment in 1996. The truth is women are more professional than men. If you want things done and done correctly, assign it to women. We need to agree that men laid a good foundation in local government but now the time has come to allow women to put more shape because they are more professional, totally informed of the issues face by women in their communities and are uniquely positioned to address.

Participant B holds one of the highest positions in the Mtubatuba Municipality. He agreed that the vast majority of decision-making positions in local government, in administration, and in the political wing, are held by men. He further mentioned that some of these men are not competent enough to run the local government efficiently and effectively and are poorly skilled. He said, “Women in these positions are scared to take serious decisions, they are intimidated by men.” He gave an example about Mtubatuba Local Municipality’s Acting Municipal Manager, who is a woman and who is always intimidated by these men. Participant B also stated:

I think men have a major role to play to encourage women to participate in these positions and also make a point that they fully give support to women since gender is nothing but the most important is capability, knowledge, skills and application of those skills to produce best outcomes which are service delivery and community accountability.

4.11 CHALLENGES FOR WOMEN IN DECISION-MAKING AND LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

Already noted, “Women’s equal participation in decision-making not only demands for simple justice or democracy, but can be considered a necessary condition for Women’s interest to be accountable” (Participant F). The goals of equality, development and peace are unattainable without the active involvement of women and their perspective at all levels of decision-making (BPFA, 1995). The researcher notes that local government is a powerful public space and a tool to drive local economies, promote cultural expression, empower women and tackle social segregation. All participants interviewed agreed that there is a need to remove barriers that hindered the full participation of women in executive positions at Mtubatuba Municipality in addition to strategized plans and interventions to aid women and promote gender equality and more especially on the political side of local government. Most women came to local government from a background which was entirely different from politics and community development, some from teaching school children, nursing, business and some from being ordinary housekeeping women.

Patriarchy, sexism and a lack of political intervention in Local Government are the root causes of Gender-Based Violence. Political emancipation is occurring, however, women are still marginalised in this sphere of our society. Local Government today is not seen by the public as a source of service delivery to society, but as an employment opportunity. Tradition, culture and religion are used as a basis for discriminating against women in Local Government, instead of protecting them.

4.12 WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT

The participants mentioned that one of the glaring gender issues affecting women in Local Government is the absence of efforts towards women's empowerment. A women's empowerment programme is not in place at Mtubatuba Municipality. Participant F said, "The Municipality should harness the power toward proactive change with its women empowerment initiative. This effort would help to promote the economic and social empowerment of women through the formation of self-managed and self-sustaining savings group."

This study shows that the Mtubatuba Municipality needs to provide a programme to raise the profile of women councillors in municipal decision-making positions, while continuously striving to address their skills needs through the implementation of productive capacity building programmes which include women in mentorship and training. Continuous support groups provide social and individual leadership development platforms, enabling women as powerful agents of economic and societal transformation within their communities. There exists a common belief among participants that empowered women are themselves solutions to poverty, poor health and vulnerability within their families and communities. There is great potential, if ongoing support and encouragement in a hostile environment, education and training, and financial resources are available to women.

4.13 PATRIARCHY

It becomes very difficult for women to be active in political life when the societal structures are male-dominated and patriarchal. The participants in this research criticised that the commitment to 50/50 gender representation in government made in 2015 was not adhered to by the political parties, showing a lack of commitment to gender equality. The Mtubatuba Local Municipality has

20 wards, and only ward seven has a woman ward councillor (Mrs Sibongile Shezi). The other 12 women councillors are party representative councillors or political representatives. Participant C said, “We are a system in which outcome is basically determined by party as opposed to candidates or community.”

Participant I asked, “Is there any other platform these women are able to use to advance the interests of the poor people or poor women in particular? Who is talking about the issues which face women and are there any good agenda for service delivery? Issues of water, electricity, quality education, safety, reliable public transport, etc. are issues no one is addressing.” As indicated in the literature review, according to Pottie and Ford (2001:66), “in South Africa, women should be in a position to claim additional interest in service delivery areas, which is the responsibility of Local Government.” Input by women in municipal decision and policy making is pertinent and thus ensue front position in politics at local level.

4.14 GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

South Africa’s Local Government is constitutionally bound by and operates under a rich institutional and legislative framework.

However, the reality of women experiences in South Africa, more so in local sphere of government, has been considerably more complex and this reality creates questions on the country’s celebrated gender-related accomplishments. (Gasela, 2007) As citizens, our task is to ask what more must be done to ensure greater equality for women in political parties (in general) and in the political process (at every level of government). One does not have to be physically harmed to be intimidated or to feel that one is being marginalised. Verbal – and other – gender-based violence in the political process was acknowledged by Participant E, as well as in how the systems are rigged against the fuller participation of women in leadership in political parties. Verbal abuse has been labelled verbal aggression, verbal abuse, verbal attack, negative verbal interaction, negative interaction and coercive response (Vissing and Bailey, 1996).

In this study, the term verbal abuse is used and the definition by Garbarino et al. (1986) and adapted by Pearl (as cited in Hamarman and Bernet, 2000: 929) guided the research: “constant name calling, harsh threats, and sarcastic comments that continually ‘beat down’ the child’s [or other

individual's] self-esteem with humiliation. Verbally assaulting behaviours include openly telling the child that he/she is worthless and calling the child derogatory/demeaning names.”

Participant C supported Participant E and said that, on “a range of issues important to women, as well as issues related to gender equality, females in the political process often feel intimidated and afraid to speak for fear of not being a member of the political club, or marginalised if one does speak out on various issues.” From this research, it was learned that there are subtle and not so subtle forms of women being intimidated and side-lined. Participant E said, “When one is alone, or among the few women in the council chamber, when an important item is in discussions, there is often the pressure to conform or to remain silent. Silence is sometimes golden.” The researcher realised that in this situation, as throughout history, marginalised groups have had to remain silent out of fear. Political office or power is seen as the preserve and prerogative of men too often. Women thus often tread lightly and minimise their voices.

4.15 TRADITIONAL CULTURE AND RELIGION

Participants were asked whether it is possible that the current political culture reflects traditional attitudes regarding women in decision-making roles, since Mtubatuba Local Municipality is located deep in a rural area of KwaZulu-Natal where tradition, culture and religion are highly respected. The answer from Participant K was yes. “Tradition, Culture and religion are major obstacles to achieving these targets. However, efforts are being made by the government and non-governmental organisations working on gender issues to try and deal with the situation” (Participant K). Participant A said, “The concept of gender equity among our people has clearly been misunderstood. It has caused a climate of people who assumed that the equity process has come to disintegrate the cultural beliefs and values. This misconception does not help promote harmony, and thus it is imperative that gender initiatives are promoted, understood and accepted within the values of us as a Nation.”

This confirms Bekker's (1996:377) view that “cultural values strongly influence the nature of relationships in organisations and the consequent organisational life”. This is one of the vital factors that shape the level of women's political participation in local government. Therefore, this

study, debates that the abovementioned male-controlled conceptions, customs and standards are barriers to women entering the decision-making process and leadership positions.

4.16 POLITICAL PARTIES

From the different participants the researcher learned that political parties are among the most important institutions affecting women's political participation. Most candidates depend on party nomination, electoral support, human resources, financial resources and constant assistance before and after elections. Hence, women seeking entry into politics must usually turn to political parties. According to the participants, political parties differ greatly on the procedure to advance women to leadership positions or to stand as party candidates and address the political, economic and social issues concerning women. Participant E said that one of the most effective ways to ensure women are elected to public office is to have party lists that are gender balanced or include a certain proportion of women, which is a legal obligation in many countries. This system depends on the implementation of certain details to be effective. Having 50% women on a list will not be as effective as having women placed high up on the list. List placement is important to ensure women are elected to legislature or council if the party wins seats (refer to Table 4.3).

4.17 SUMMARY

There are no formal qualifications required to become a councillor. However, you must be 18 years of age or older at the date of nomination and be a citizen of the Republic of South Africa (Independent Electoral Commission of South Africa (IEC), 2017). In this study, all participants agreed that councillors play an important role in achieving the goals of local government and ensuring outcomes in congruence with the primary political commitment that, "the People shall govern". Participant K said, "Education and councillor's empowerment will help to provide key competencies to councillors to fulfil their mandate in respect of improving the lives of all people in their municipalities. It will provide the councillors with the necessary skills, knowledge and attitudes required to be a proactive link between the public and the council."

In terms of women's empowerment, it was encouraging to hear from the male Participant B that it is "the art of living to provide women-empowerment programmes. Women across South Africa

and many other countries have been able to gain financial freedom and stand up against social injustice. They have also become agents of change by educating and empowering other women about finding their voice and standing up for them.” Participant J said, “Women empowerment is easily, and more archived in urban areas than in rural area because of patriarchal mind that still exist in rural areas community.” She said that women’s movements in South Africa are mostly aligned with political parties, which “alone differentiates the voice of women.”

Participant B and Participant E indicated that women are currently considered in the decision-making process in the community as it serves the best interest of the community in development. However, women feel undermined in the political arena, even though they constitutionally have a right to participate in the decision-making process of the community. Women are underrepresented in Local Government and given that, in politics, if you do not have sufficient numbers, you do not have a voice and this directly affects women. The researcher discovered that there is only one woman ward councillor out of the 20 wards in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. Most of the women come into politics from a non-political background and men capitalise on their political ignorance. Therefore, it has become vital for women’s empowerment to be at the forefront of political agendas – but women’s empowerment must not be empowered gender equity. Every woman should be empowered because every woman has a home and a community in her hands, so a woman that is empowered is more valuable.

Most participants mentioned that South Africa has internationally renowned policies for gender equity and for women’s empowerment. However, the implementation of such policies is sorely lacking. Participant G mentioned that the South African Local Government Association (SALGA) is trying to establish a women’s movement, which may be a solution to some of the challenges involved in South Africa implementing these policies. Currently, women still vote men into power rather than another woman. In terms of the women’s movement in South Africa, we do not have a uniting women’s movement that is not affiliated to any political organisation in the true sense and this affects women in relation to political ideologies.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

A remarkable and significant shift in favour of women's representation and involvement in political, economic and social activities has been seen in the last 30 years of the 20th century and in the new century. Worldwide, awareness campaigns in the media and those conducted by feminist movements, along with access to better opportunities in education, health and employment, and women's self-fulfilment and contribution to the democratic process are the reasons behind this shift (Agbalajobi, 2008). There has been an increased number of workshops, conferences, symposiums, plans, and international, national and regional debates addressing gender issues and devised for the active participation of rural women since the 1980s (Jabeen and Jadoon, 2008). This has resulted in a growing body of literature, statements at international summits and declarations, government policy documents and discourses that reveals that rural women have considerable potential (ibid).

Therefore, this study explores the advancement of women's empowerment ideals through their sufficient representation in decision-making and leadership positions. The significance of this is shown in how they influence decisions and related processes to benefit women and society in general.

Specifically, the objectives of this study were to:

- Examine the gender representation of women in leadership positions in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.
- Determine gender equality or inequality in the participation of women and men in decision-making and leadership positions in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality.
- Determine the structures that give support to women in decision-making and leadership positions and the level of institutional readiness with regard to practices and policies.

The purpose of this research project is to contribute to changing municipal consultation practices and policies so that women in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality have a meaningful voice in the decisions that affect their daily lives.

5.2 THE GENDER REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS

In South Africa, there has been a proposal by the women from various political parties to reserve a quota for women from local to national level.(Commission for Gender Equality, 2009).This research argued that, while participation is contingent upon representation, it would be a mistake to see representation as an end in itself.

It is easily tempting to assume that better representation will guarantee increased participation. These two distinct phenomena, representation and participation, are often used interchangeably when examining women's involvement in political decision-making. Thus, "representation focuses merely on the number of women in decision-making positions and is therefore only part of the story". (Kurebwa, 2016:34) Kurebwa further argued that on the other hand, "participation focuses on what women do when they are in decision-making positions" (Kurebwa, 2016:34).

This research shows that women are under-represented in Mtubatuba Local Municipality. Women occupied only 32.5% (13 out of 40) of all legislative seats and 33.3% (two out of eight) of executive council seats. On the administration side, 75% (three out of four) of women in decision-making positions were temporarily employed (their contracts were about to expire during the research period).This statistical portrait of women's representation in leadership and decision-making across Local Government indicates significant discrepancies between men and women as decision makers and leaders. The above findings also suggest that women across South Africa should be helped to overcome the difficulties they face in leading and participating in decision-making outside the public sector. The causes of women's continued lag behind men in leadership and participation in decision-making in municipalities are unfair. Illiteracy, poverty, inadequate training, and patriarchal political systems are the reasons behind women's continued lag behind men in leadership and participation in decision-making in municipalities. During the discussion with Participant C, it was revealed that the most challenging problems for women in Mtubatuba

Local Municipality are that they are divided from different political organisations and that they have a different mandate and view development differently.

Table 4.5: Participant’s political party affiliations

Political Party	Female Ward Councillors	Female Political and Councillors	Representatives	Total
Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP)	01	05		06
ANC	00	04		04
Democratic Alliance (DA)	00	01		01
Economic Freedom Fighters(EFF)	00	01		01
African Independent Congress(AIC)	00	01		01
TOTAL	01	12		13

According to Participant J, women are more strongly represented in political representative lists controlled by political parties, while there are very few in ward councillor lists which are controlled by the community. This confirms that women in the community mostly vote for men rather than for other women. One report indicates that women are outnumbered in Local Government and there is thus a lack of critical mass of women in the Municipality. (OECD, 2016) Political party affiliation, race and language divide female councillors who have established form groups, according to Participant C.

All participants in this study suggested that it is vital for on-going strategies, improved innovated approaches to accelerate to promote and advance women’s leadership and active participation in

decision making in addressing Goal 5 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and Section 12 of the Common wealth Charter. Most of these programmes are at a developmental stage at the Mtubatuba Local Municipality. Promoting women's economic empowerment, as a prerequisite to advancing women's participation, must also be a top priority of governments and civil society. Successful quota systems for women should be introduced in other jurisdictions, while promoting education to develop literate and informed partnership capable of sound leadership and effective participation in decision-making.

5.3 PARTICIPATION

According to Kurebwa, 2016, "Otzen (1999) defines participation as a process through which stakeholders influence and share control over development initiatives and the decisions and resources which affect them". (Kurebwa, 2016:35) Similarly, "Community, public or citizen participation is the act of allowing individual citizens within a community to take part in the formulation of policies and proposals on issues that affect the whole community" (Onibokun and Faniran, 1995: 9) "More radical definitions of participation, however, not only emphasise community involvement in the processes of local development, but also demand that social development lead to the empowerment of community members. This involves social change to bring about improved living conditions within a community and is especially significant to women". (Kurebwa, 2016:35).

This means that participation is not about bringing people to the project when it is about to be started when physical labour is required, but participants should be involved when the first decisions about project were made. The participation of women in local government bodies would include women as voters; members of political parties; candidates; elected members of local government structures taking part in decision-making, planning, implementation and evaluation; and members of women's organisations and their association with voluntary organisations.

In the interview with Participant D, who is a woman executive councillor, the researcher noted that education plays a major role in her career. A lack of knowledge about how to govern in the local sphere is a major problem. All papers in local government are written in English which can

be limiting for those whose first language is not English. Therefore, as decision-makers, women in Exco need more capacity building and empowerment in terms of understanding the details of municipal policies, laws and procedures. They need to understand how crucial and informed decisions are taken. Participant E said, “If I want to speak or say anything in the executive council I say it.” However, if you follow the minutes and resolutions taken by Exco, men dominate the resolution proposals made (95%) and they are mostly seconded by another man. From information about community gatherings it can be seen that the low participation rate of women is a result of their low socioeconomic status, stemming from the social norms of a male-dominated society, which generally confine women to the household. Their unequal status in society gives them unequal access to educational, economic and other opportunities offered by the state and society. All these factors reinforce one another and keep women’s political participation low.

Participant A, B and C concurred that the male-biased environment within political institutions could discourage women. The fact that there are few women in the decision-making bodies of Mtubatuba Local Municipality means that these women have to work within the leadership styles and modes acceptable to men. Participant K emphasised that politics is about numbers and, as a result, women cannot give attention to their own issues. Sometimes they are badly treated by their male colleagues and political leaders, including being threatened. Lack of cooperation by men in Local Government is a significant barrier to women’s effectiveness in decision-making. Participating in decision making positions need to follow certain stipulated in definitions above, more especially on women in the issues of service delivery as it affect other women on the grassroots level. Women need to have a clear understanding and sound knowledge from the crafting of the IDP, budget process, SDBIP, performance management report and annual report. It is difficult to determine whether poor women living in the Mtubatuba area are benefiting as a result of there being women councillors in the Municipality.

In this study, all participants recommended that more women be included in decision-making positions and that this would generally contribute to more attention being paid to women’s issues, particularly issues of service delivery, public safety and violence against women. A remaining question concerns how political parties can be encouraged to increase the representation of women in decision-making positions, particularly in local government politics because the placement of women on candidate lists has a strong bearing on their ability to gain votes. The ranking of women

on party lists is decided exclusively by parties. Another issue that emerges is how to bring women into these processes in a more equitable and empowered manner which enables them to articulate and engage with policy choices and deliberations.

5.4 INSTITUTIONAL STRUCTURES AND POLICIES FOR WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT AND GENDER EQUITY

Local government structures that give support to women in decision-making and leadership positions and the level of institutional readiness with regard to practices and policies were examined in this research. At the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, gender equality has been viewed as an unfunded mandate, but participants did not think the problem was necessarily the need for additional funds. Rather, it is the adoption of different attitudes towards ensuring that women also benefit and are included. The researcher discovered that Mtubatuba Municipality developed a specific unit, headed by a junior staff member, for driving special programmes (for youths, disabled people, elderly people, etc.) and gender mainstreaming is included in this programme, but there are no funds allocated for a women's empowerment programme. The Provincial and National Government Gender Policy Framework (2006), which guides municipalities in implementing these programmes, is the only policy that the Municipality has and which is complete. All participants agreed that women in local government hold mostly junior positions and the higher structures are dominated by men. Participant C mentioned that "There is a department at the Mtubatuba Municipality that looks after women issues and is coordinated by junior personnel, although I don't know what he is coordinating." Participant E said:

Local government must make the effort to raise women's capacity in expressing their problems and monitoring the degree of their participation in every sector. In addition, it must ensure that the gender issue is properly reflected in the preparation of every development plan, research, and studies and implementation. It must also support the gender focal points in all sectors to ensure gender mainstreaming in their work and inter-sectoral linkages in gender activities.

Participants also agreed that there is no gender policy, coaching or mentorship programme at Mtubatuba Local Municipality. Local government, as an institution, needs to address gender equality issues primarily at two levels. The first level relates to the interventions required for women living, learning and participating as councillors at local government not for compliance purposes only but driving it with understanding. The second level relates to women who are employees within the local government in which the Gender Policy Framework provides for equality within the civil service, and the development of skills that enable officials to promote gender equality in the workplace. The strategic focus areas indicate key interventions that have to be undertaken in terms of the overall local government goals and the national long-term gender outcomes, as spelt out in the National Policy Framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality. These long-term gender outcomes are capacity building, gender mainstreaming, advocacy, policy development, coordination, and monitoring and evaluation (Kornegay, 2014).

Local government elections are highly politicised and violent and, in some areas women candidates were murder victims (Agenda FM, 2016). What impact will this have on the future participation of women? Women themselves entrench patriarchy in their parties, for example, by only voting men into senior political and decision-making positions while they "choose" to be clerks or work at lower administrative levels. It is vital that actions are taken to improve equality in local government in order to ensure that women are included in decision-making positions. Women's organisations and other groups must put more pressure on political parties to address the imbalances by increasing the allocation of seats for women in leadership and decision-making positions. Gender forums also need to be established.

5.5 POLICY, LEGISLATIVE PROVISIONS AND ACTUAL IMPLEMENTATION

This study revealed that there are many challenges facing policy and legislative implementation in local government. The study found that Mtubatuba Municipality had not yet introduced the necessary legislation and/or policies to institutionalise gender equality and to guide gender-related functions and responsibilities. There is a lack of knowledge about gender mainstreaming in most municipalities and across all levels. The lack of knowledge and understanding has to be changed so that senior management can move from a vision (in policy) to strategy and action.

The public service should create a culture that recognises gender as a marginalised issue and prioritises it. Gender must not be recognised merely as “women’s issues”. There must be an ongoing monitoring and evaluation of policies.

5.6 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions have been drawn: in the Mtubatuba Local Municipality, the participation of women in leadership and decision-making positions is low. Men dominate in decision-making positions, especially on the political side of the Municipality. Men’s predominance in positions of municipal power, coupled with their well-established professional experience and social network patterns, provide them with greater access to support and information, for example, in campaigning and lobbying, and skills on how to make and second proposals. Women often have difficulty accessing this professional support system. The lack of women’s representation and participation has thus been attributed to several factors and constraints.

Municipal councils must set up one or more advisory committees, whose members are persons other than councillors, to advise the council various issues, for example, on the IDP. Municipalities must also take into account the issue of the representation of women and persons with disabilities when appointing such committees. The employment of people who have an understanding of both the necessity of women’s empowerment as well as the barriers against it is of utmost importance. The employment of male municipal managers who do not question and seek to dismantle patriarchy, and the insidious effect it has on women’s empowerment (and therefore the progress of societies at large), will have negative consequences on the country’s ability to confront and rectify its gender equality issues which are already sanctioned by the State as an important focus area.

Women must understand and know the IDP and make input because the IDP determines the municipal financial budget. Women experience everyday life differently from men. Traditional

roles have overloaded women and forced them to be multi-taskers. As a result, women have a unique knowledge of the environment and the importance of sustainability. But, the demands placed on women has left them with less time than men.

From this study and the literature review, the researcher became aware that women are poorly served in their communities. Improvements in city services, infrastructure, the design of cities and public transport are slow. One of the ultimate goals of the study is to help women use experiences, initiatives and an improved gender perspective to leverage their own social involvement. Therefore, the presence of women in decision-making positions is vital in municipalities in order to represent other women and address these issues.

The study discovered that tradition is one of the barriers for women who engage in public processes. Women are still expected to remain within the domestic sphere and they expect barriers when entering the public sphere. Women form the majority of the world's poor, as well as the majority of those living in poverty and who have illiteracy. Political parties, electoral systems and legislative assemblies can put up walls preventing women from having full and equal participation. The study resulted in a better understanding of leader's views on women's cultural status which result in barriers to their participation. A significant problem is that there are more women who are illiterate in terms of policies. This has resulted in women being unable to address sanitary, environment and health problems, among others. The study discovered that women often lack a basic understanding of governmental processes. Capacity-building and creative policy literacy programmes are among the urgent measures that need to be undertaken by government organisations and NGOs to integrate women in policy planning and implementation more.

This study investigated the impact of democracy on women's ability to move from the private to the public realm at an exciting period in South African political history. It revealed that elected men and women in local government have an essential role to play in advancing women's empowerment. Good political leaders in South Africa who are gender sensitised can be pioneers in breaking patriarchal structures in a highly masculine political environment and demonstrate that change can occur. There is now the possibility for all South African men and women to move from political gender segregation and work together to sustain community service delivery.

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SCHOOL OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

INTERVIEW CONSCENT FORM
Invitation to participate

Note:

All participants are requested to sign the consent form before the interview.

TITLE: THE PARTICIPATION OF WOMEN IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: a case study of Mtubatuba Local Municipality

STUDY INVESTIGATOR(S): Manqele Siphon Eric

STUDENT NUMBER: 207527114

DEGREE: Masters in Social Policy

INSTITUTION: University of Kwa Zulu – Natal Howard Collage

Honourable Exco member Cllr. LM Mkhwanazi
Mtubatuba Local Municipality

You are hereby invited to participate in the above-mentioned research study. The study focuses on Participation of Women in Community Development, decision-making and leadership in community positions making example by Mtubatuba Local Municipality. Drawing from the fact that local government is historically a male-dominated environment; the study seeks to investigate the gender dynamics in this sphere of government especially with regard to women in decision-making and leadership positions.

It is anticipated that the study will help in building a much more in-depth understanding of gender transformation in the local government sector, the challenges, successes and lessons.

These lessons should establish a fundamental basis that will be valuable for future policy directives and programmatic interventions in an effort to concretize gender transformation in public institutions. The interview will take place at a venue and time jointly agreed upon by (yourself/ves) the participant/s and the researcher. Each interview will take about an hour to complete and will be recorded both in audio (tape recorder) and manually (notes-taking) for thorough analysis.

This study does not involve any harm or risk; you will be asked to answer questions in relation to your career, workplace and community. The complete report emanating from the study may be made available to participants if need be and participating institutions, as well as other relevant stakeholders of interest such as the Commission on Gender Equality, Provincial Office on the Status of Women for example, as key institutions in policy and programmes development.

The researcher is bound by **ethical conduct** and to this effect, among others, the following aspects will be considered:

Confidentiality

Information provided will be kept strictly confidential. To protect your privacy, you will be allocated a number, and your responses to the interview questions will only be identified with a code number, and at no point your name will be mentioned in the responses.

Use of information obtained:

The researcher might use some information flowing from this study for article (s) that might be published in scientific journals and presented at seminars, summits, and other professional meetings. However your identity will not be revealed.

Right to Refuse or Withdraw:

The decision to participate in this research project is entirely at your own free will. You are also at liberty to not answer some questions or parts thereof.

Right to Ask Questions:

You have the right to ask questions about this study and to have those questions answered by the student researcher before, during or after the research.

Your signature below indicates that you have decided to participate voluntarily in this study and that you have read and understood the information provided above. You will be given a copy of this form to keep.

Participant Full Names: _____ Date: _____

Participant Signatures: _____

INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM
Invitation to participate

Note:

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STUDY INVESTIGATOR(S): Manqele Siphon Eric

STUDENT NUMBER: 207527114

DEGREE: Masters in Social Policy

INSTITUTION: University of Kwa Zulu – Natal Howard Collage

Honourable Mayor Cllr. M.Q. Mkhwanazi
Mtubatuba Local Municipality

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Participant Full Names: _____ Date: _____

Participant Signatures: _____

ANNEXURE: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Student : Manqele Sipho Eric: No.207527114
University of Kwa-Zulu Natal

Topic : Participation of Women in Community Development
: A Case Study of Mtubatuba Local Municipality

Preamble: The research is a scholarly research, a mini-dissertation in partial fulfillment of the Degree, Masters in Development Studies. With this process of data collection through interviews, the researcher is bound by the ethical conduct; permission to record will be sort from participants and all participants will be duly acknowledged.

PART 1: STANDARD PARTICIPANTS' BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

GENDER...

AGE...

PLACE OF ORIGIN....

CULTURE:

HOME LANGUAGE:

HIGHEST EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT...

CURRENT STUDIES...

FUTURE CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASPIRATIONS/PLANS:

ANY OTHER ASPECT OF YOURSELF YOU WISH TO SHARE:

PART 2: PREVIOUS JOB/OCCUPATION BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCES

- What was your previous occupation/job?
- For how long were you occupied with the above?
- What are some of the most useful and valuable lessons that you have learnt from you previous job/occupation?
- What are some of the least useful and valuable lessons you have learnt from your previous job/occupation?
- What are some of those unique issues that stood out for you in your pervious job/occupation?
- How would you say these will or have influenced your career progression?
- Any other aspect of your previous job/occupation would you wish to share?

PART 3: CURRENT JOB/OCCUPATION

- What is the name of your current employer?
- What is your job title?
- How long have you been with the employment?
- Which positions have you held over this period?
- What have been your main job roles and responsibilities over the period?
- What are your current job roles and responsibilities?
- How long have you been in your current job/position?
- What are some of the most useful and valuable lessons that you have learnt and continue to learn in your current position?
- What are some of the least useful and valuable lessons you have learnt from your current position?
- What are some of those unique issues that stood out for you in your current position?

- How would you say these will or have influenced your career progression?
- Any other aspect of your current position would you wish to share?

PART 4: COMMUNITY ACTIVISM, INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

- In which structures, if any, were you active in prior your entry into local government?
- What position/s, if any, did you hold within those structures?
- What were your main roles and responsibilities in those structures?
- What are some of the useful and valuable lessons that you have learnt from your involvement in these structures?
- What are some of the least useful and valuable lessons that you have learnt from your involvement in these structures?
- How would you say these lessons, experiences and participation will/have shape your future community activism?
- Any other aspect of your community involvement you would want to share?

PART 4: ISSUES AND IDEOLOGIES

- What is your own broad understanding of Gender?
- What is your own understanding of the difference between women's empowerment and gender equality?
- What is overall reflection of both women's empowerment and gender equality in South Africa currently?
- What would you say about overall women's empowerment and gender equality policy and legislative frameworks in South Africa currently?
- Would you say there is a coherent and progressive women's movement in South Africa currently?
- If yes, what would you say (views and opinions) about the women's movement in South Africa today?
- Would you say there is a coherent and progressive men's movement in South Africa today?
- If yes, what would you say (views and opinions) about the men's movement in South Africa today?
- In what ways do you think the women's movement would or have positively or negatively contributed to the gender transformation agenda in South Africa today?
- In what ways do you think the men's movement would or have contributed positively or negatively to the gender transformation agenda in South Africa today?
- What are your ideas of the role of women and men respectively in the women's empowerment and gender equality agenda – the gender transformation agenda perhaps?
- Any other aspect you wish to share on overall women's empowerment and gender equality in South Africa today?

PART 5: WORKPLACE ISSUES & IDEOLOGIES (LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPECIFIC)

In view of your broad understanding, views and opinions above, focusing on your workplace, local government;

- What do you believe are the main, glaring gender issues affecting women specifically?

- What do you think are the main, glaring gender issues affecting men specifically?
- Would you be able to select at least one case in point, demonstrate and explain in details some of the said gender issues?
- What is your view/opinion of women in decision-making and leadership positions in your workplace?
- What is your view/opinion of women in decision-making and leadership positions in local government in general?
- What is your view/opinion of men in decision-making and leadership positions in local government in general?
- Explain your observation and experiences of the (i) women-to-women relations, (ii) women – to-men relations, (iii) and men-to-women relations (iv) men – to –men relations in your workplace
- What is your view/opinion of men in decision-making and leadership positions in your workplace?

PART 6: INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISMS FOR GENDER MAINSTREAMING

- How would you describe your organizational culture in relation to gender?
- Is there a gender unit/department in your workplace?
- What is the staff complement at this unit/department in your workplace?
- What is the post level of the head of the unit/department in the workplace (middle or senior management)?
- What is her/his main job functions?
- What is the budget allocated to this unit/department in your workplace?
- Is there a workplace women’s forum at your workplace?
- Is there a workplace men’s forum at your workplace?
- Is there any coaching and mentorship Programme at your workplace?
- Is there a workplace gender policy in your workplace?
- What are any other gender transformation related programmes at your workplace?

PART 7: CONCLUDING CONFIRMATORY QUESTIONS

- Would you say there exist barriers for achieving women’s empowerment and gender equality in your workplace?
- If yes, what would you point to as the main barriers to achieving gender transformation in your workplace?
- What are some of the suggestions you think should be implemented and would contribute towards the attainment of women’s empowerment and gender equality in your workplace?
- Which roles and responsibilities would you wish to assume as your own personal contribution towards gender transformation in your workplace?
- Do you think entrenching women’s empowerment and gender equality in community structures and forums is important? If yes, why?”
- Any suggestions of how community structures and forums could drive gender transformation through to municipalities/local government?

Thank you very much for taking part in this interview, your time and input is highly Appreciated

Manqele Eric