



A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekwin Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit

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I Nelisiwe Nicolene Mbongwa declare that:

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Author's Dedication

This manuscript is dedicated to the light of my guardian angel, my late Dad (Popo Almon Mbongwa), who instilled the importance of education in us.

Also, to my family:

- My mom Hilda Jabulile Mbongwa thank you for your prayers and to my siblings Mthokozisi, Mbongeni, ZamaMbuyisa and Nokukhanya, thank you for your support and a special thank you to my elder sister Dr Hlengiwe Mbongwa, thank you *mntakaMa* for your support and encouragement even when I felt like giving up.
- To my nephews, nieces, and my sons (Khwezi and Lulonke). You were the inspiration behind my taking on this endeavour. I hope to teach you that you can do anything that you set your mind to and to always try your best.

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Abstract

The advent of democracy in South Africa led to a shift from a highly centralised system to a decentralised one, with national, provincial, and local spheres of government. While distinctive, these spheres are interdependent and interconnected, necessitating cooperation to secure the well-being of citizens. The Constitution mandates national and provincial governments to support municipalities in managing their affairs and exercising their powers. However, challenges persist, including poor financial management, weak technical capacity, and governance issues. Provision of services to members of the communities is the function of local government which is done through municipalities. Currently, municipalities are faced with increasing pressure to deliver efficient and effective services to members of the community residing in their area of jurisdiction. The implementation of service standards plays a crucial role in achieving this goal. However, despite various initiatives and capacity-building efforts, many municipalities continue to struggle with service delivery challenges. This thesis critically assesses the implementation of eThekweni municipality's service standards within the water and sanitation unit, aiming to identify key issues, gaps, and potential solutions.

Data were collected from two groups which were members of the public who were randomly selected using the report from the municipality's system which is called Faultsman, only members of the public who had reported water-related queries were selected and Municipal employees were also randomly selected from units within the municipality and participants were from all staff levels from employees who are on an internship programme to senior management. A total number of 36 participants made up the first group (municipal employees) and the second group consisted of 19 members of the public. Interviews and questionnaires were used as tools to gather data from participants' responses and the total number of participants from this group was 19. As a result, frequent responses and trends found in the collected data were used to categorise the participant responses.

The study found that whilst the development and use of service standards as a means to assess service delivery is widespread, several critical challenges remain. These challenges are service standards not communicated accordingly using different communication channels including publication through the municipality's annual report, "Service Delivery Standards" as a standing

agenda item is not included during engagements with members of the community, service standards are not linked with the Individual Performance Management System of the municipality. Sufficient budget is not allocated to those areas where services need to be improved. A standardised process for engaging external clients in developing service standards is in place but not adhered to. Feedback from members of the public regarding service delivery is not addressed.

Key words: Constitution, Spheres of Government, Service Standards

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

The study aims to assess the implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards on complaints or faults related to water reported by community members. The approach taken for the literature review was to benchmark with municipalities from abroad and in Africa on how they deal with water-related complaints or faults reported by their community members.

A healthy human life requires enough secure water (Nnadozie, 2011). Access to water and sanitation are basic needs to be provided to the country's citizens, and municipalities in the local sphere of government have the mandate to provide such basic services. Around 2 billion people, or more than one-third of the global population, reside in areas with a water shortage, and one in eight people do not have access to clean drinking water (Ungureanu, 2020). The municipalities are responsible for planning, implementing, and monitoring water and sanitation progress. Considering the world's population, which tripled during the 20th century, and the subsequent seven-fold rise in water consumption, the United Nations declared access to clean, safe water and sanitation a human right (UN, 2020).

Delivery of public services is a continual and dynamic process that must be improved over time because criteria must be gradually upgraded as they are reached. All citizens should have equal access to the services they are entitled to. Complete and accurate information regarding the public services to which they are entitled should be provided to the citizens. Furthermore, municipalities should develop service standards detailing how the above-mentioned will be achieved (Carden et al., 2018). In this regard, South Africa is confronted with serious challenges such as non-revenue water, skills shortages, ageing infrastructure, shifting demand patterns, overwhelming water supply and demand, and outdated solutions for emerging challenges (Mulenga, 2017; Carden et al., 2018). Access to basic services for all citizens is one of the most significant issues. Successful

water governance involves political, social, economic, and administrative institutions that are in place to develop, administer, and provide water services at all levels of society.

The significance of effective water governance and implementation cannot be overstated (Mulenga, 2017). In South Africa, an inter-ministerial committee responsible for ensuring the overall performance of key legislative mandates of governance, integrated development, and service delivery in all spheres of government was developed (DPSA, 2011). This committee advised municipalities to create service delivery standards that specify how services would be delivered, including turnaround times to ensure accountability for the local government's delivery of basic services. According to the eThekweni Municipality's annual report for the 2020/21 financial year, the water and sanitation unit provides these services to the public namely: acceptance of wastewater for disposal, clearance of sewer blockages, emptying of septic tanks and conservancy tanks, provision of potable water, provision of Ventilated Improved Pit Latrines (VIP), and transit camp facilities.

The focus of this study is to assess the implementation level of service standards by the Water and Sanitation Unit ("the Unit"), which is a section of eThekweni Municipality. The population served by eThekweni Municipality is estimated to be five million people (eThekweni Municipality Integrated Development Plan, 2023). This population represents the number of potential eThekweni Water and Sanitation Unit customers. The province of Kwa-Zulu-Natal is experiencing a dilemma as people migrate from rural to urban regions in search of better resources, tertiary education institutions, and a higher quality of life (Nxumalo, 2017). The biggest challenge with migration is that the municipality's budget and planning would not have considered the number of individuals who migrate to the territory covered by this municipality (Howanitz and Steindel, 2014). Customers of the Unit come from the suburbs, mixed communities, rural areas, and informal settlements.

The municipality has made significant efforts and investments to improve the provision of water and sanitation services to its customers. However, it still faces the difficulty of poor and underserved areas that lack water and sanitation infrastructure (Nxumalo, 2017). Although the Unit does not face competition in the supply of water and sanitation, customer service quality and satisfaction remain critical to increasing efficiency (Mhlongo, Nzimande & Munapo, 2016), better

resource utilisation, and customer service quality and satisfaction, as well as service delivery. Water and sanitation are basic human needs since they allow people to thrive and live healthy lives (Nxumalo, 2017). The South African Constitution, Act No.108 of 1996 ("the Act"), also emphasises the right of South Africans to access sufficient and safe water. It also requires the state to implement acceptable legislative measures through government structures to realise this fundamental constitutional right (Act 108 of 1996).

The provision of water and sanitation is one of the services on the South African government's priority list. It is not only consumed by humans but also by animals and plants to thrive, making water a requirement for all living beings. In addition to providing basic water and sanitation services, in accordance with the eThekweni Water and Sanitation Service Level Standards (2016/2017), the Unit additionally offers the following services: portable water services, sewer clearance, the new Urine Diversion Sewerage system, which intends to replace the old system known as septic tanks, and, finally, the Durban Water Recycling Project. Drought has significantly impacted the country's water supplies. The Unit has taken steps to limit the availability of water (Mhlongo et al., 2016). The country's inflation and economic woes have been mirrored in the costs charged by water and sanitation companies.

Illegal water connections and public protests are also a cause of waste and loss for the Unit in terms of this scarce resource. The disruption of water and sanitation services directly impacts the number of consumers contacting customer service at the Unit or visiting the Walk-In Centre (Nxumalo, 2017). The Unit operates eight walk-in clinics around the Metro area.

This study will show if the service delivery standards for the unit were developed according to the directive from the inter-ministerial committee. This research further determines if the unit is adhering to the set standards when addressing reported challenges and complaints from the public. Furthermore, this study will assist in determining whether the water and sanitation unit is experiencing the same challenges faced in other parts of South Africa.

1.2 Background of the Study

South Africa inherited from the Apartheid regime a public service that was not people-friendly, non-inclusive and lacked the skills and attitudes to meet the developmental challenges facing the country. The post-apartheid South Africa created a starkly unequal service left over, leading to

South Africa being a nation of two worlds, notably one with the wealthy developed world and underdeveloped developing world components (Webster & Francis, 2019). After gaining democracy, initiatives such as *Batho Pele* (People First) were implemented to correct past injustices. The *Batho Pele* initiative aims to enhance the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services (Nzimakwe & Mpehle, 2012). According to Section 195 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), some values and principles should govern public administration. These are effective, efficient, and economical utilisation of resources; people's needs are to be responded to, and public administration should be accountable, transparent, and development-oriented.

The eight *Batho Pele* principles, namely, Consultation with clients; Service Standards expected; Access to service provided; Courtesy; Information; Openness; and Transparency in the service delivery; Redress challenges faced during service delivery; and Value for Money equivalent to services provided are in line with the Constitution (DPSA, 1997; Mohatle and Phori, 2022). This should be implemented by all spheres of government to improve the quality of services provided to both internal and external customers (DPSA, 1997). Although the *Batho Pele* Principles were designed as a tool to help South Africa's service delivery system improve, over the past few years, there have been more demonstrations of poor service delivery around the nation (Carmen, 2022). According to Carmen (2022), the rising service delivery protests in South Africa since the country's democracy began are frequently related to the fact that the current administration is failing to meet the basic services such as water and sanitation of the populace.

The residents, and the impoverished in particular, are unhappy with the lack of service delivery (or, in some cases, the bad service delivery) in the areas where service has been provided. Despite an increase in the number of households with better water supplies in six South African provinces, access to water decreased between 2002 and 2021 (Stats SA, 2021). Public officials who refuse to be responsible and attentive to the requirements of the public they are expected to serve when they are assigned to public posts appear to be aggravating the citizens' dissatisfaction with the absence of or inadequate service delivery by the government.

1.3 Motivation for the Study

This research examines the service delivery standards of the eThekweni municipality's Water and Sanitation Unit. It aims to determine whether these standards are adhered to when basic services are provided to the public within the municipality's area of jurisdiction.

1.4 Problem Statement

In South Africa, it is still challenging to address any resource-related problem without first considering the effects of the past 300 years of the country's history in general and the past 50 years in particular. During apartheid, restrictions were placed on non-White populations' freedom of movement, political representation, access to land, and use of basic services (Nnadozie, 2013). Stats SA (1998) reported that in 1996, only 6.3% of Black males made more than R3500, compared to 65% of White men who made more than R3500. The African population lagged for all variables in terms of living standards by a significant margin. Undoubtedly, the policies implemented during the apartheid years can be largely blamed for the current profile of water access and servicing in South Africa. The South Africa Water Act (No. 36 of 1998) recognises the need for an integrated approach to managing all aspects of water resources by delegating management functions across the national levels down to the regional and municipalities, even though the national government has the authority to provide individuals with basic resources (Weaver et al., 2019).

Due to the significance of the local services that many South African municipalities offer, they have endured years of criticism for their subpar basic services and continuous complaints and concerns from the media, civic groups, and community-based organisations (Akinboade et al., 2012). The problem is compounded as the urban poor in South Africa, particularly in informal settlements, are further marginalised by not having access to safe water. While individuals in the high socioeconomic class have access to clean water and excellent standards of living, those in the low socioeconomic class experience poverty, starvation, and low standards of basic services (Collins et al., 2015).

Water scarcity, water resource management, floods, drought risks, and damaged ecosystems have limited the water services provider's capacity to alleviate the increasing water stress (Urama and Ozor, 2010). This inadequacy has resulted in community frustrations, loss of confidence in the municipality's ability to provide basic services, and violent confrontations demonstrated over the

years. In addition, the dissatisfaction raised by the citizens is expressed through public protest which sometimes leads to damage to municipal infrastructure. The register of issues raised by the public is kept by the office of the Mayor under the unit named Operation Sukuma Sakhe (OSS) (Mhlongo, 2018).

Protestors often embroil in conflicts over water supply as water is the lifeblood of the country. There were 164 protests in 2014, while in 2013 and 2012, 155 and 173 protests, respectively (Municipal-IQ 2016). Unfortunately, the protests are now seen as an opportunity for the government to show its commitment to the people and the need to deliver on the promises made in the past. Customers' reluctance to pay for water services and the municipality's problems recovering revenue further affect the community's misperception of the government's ability to provide basic water services and their loss of trust in it.

Customer satisfaction with water services in South Africa rose from 15,8% in 2005 to 31,8% in 2009, falling to 26,4% in 2014 (Masindi and Duncker, 2016). The percentage of households that rated water services as 'poor' increased from 7,8% in 2005 to 12,2% in 2014 (Stats SA, 2015). This is partly a result of the unstable political environment, which makes it challenging for municipalities to cut off the water supply in rural areas, which can lead to the filing of legal claims against clients who fail to pay for water services.

1.5 Aim

This study aims to examine the service delivery standards of the eThekweni Municipality's Water and Sanitation Unit. It is to determine whether these standards are adhered to when basic services are provided to the public within the municipality's area of jurisdiction.

1.6 Research Objectives

The specific objectives of this research are to:

1. Ascertain the public participation process by the eThekweni Municipality in developing service standards.
2. Examine the public review process of the effectiveness of service standards.
3. Evaluate the challenges of service delivery at the eThekweni Municipality.
4. Offer recommendations for the public participation process in eThekweni Municipality

1.7 Research Questions

The research questions that guided this research are as follows:

1. What is the current impact of service delivery provided by the municipality?
2. What is the consultation/public participation process by the eThekweni Municipality in developing service standards?
3. What are the challenges of service delivery at the eThekweni Municipality?
4. Is the public participation process in the eThekweni Municipality adequately performed?

1.8 Significance of the Study

Good health and socioeconomic growth depend on having access to a water supply that is economical, dependable, and simple to access. Poor performance is, in fact, more often a result of challenging conditions than poor decisions. It is anticipated that findings from this study will significantly highlight the challenges faced by the eThekweni Municipality in providing water and sanitation services to ensure the development of improved service delivery standards to customers and the community at large. The study will contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the water and sanitation service delivery and access to strategic planning and performance management in the eThekweni Municipality. The process of service delivery techniques by the national socioeconomic strategy will also be highlighted to help the government fulfil its obligation to its local constituency. Furthermore, by taking into account the involvement of community public servants and the populace when formulating policies and strategies that affect the people and by offering novel and inventive ways to manage service delivery in the study area, findings from this research could change the water service delivery catastrophe in the eThekweni Municipality.

1.9 Research Methodology

The methodology is the set of skills, tools, and techniques used by researchers to collect, analyse, and present results (Creswell, 2013). For this study, the interview questions to the participants and municipal officials directly involved with providing water and sanitation services to the communities were used as part of the qualitative method to explore the human element of the subject matter and how they see and experience the service being delivered. The eThekweni municipality's beneficiaries of the water and sanitation services were the subject of the quantitative

technique. Since each participant for this study had to respond to the same set of questions in a specific order, questionnaires were the most popular quantitative data-gathering tool (Mulenga, 2017).

1.10 Delimitations of the Study

The results of this study might not apply to other municipalities because the research was restricted to one municipality. Targeted participants from members of the community were only limited to those who reported water-related faults and not all services provided by the municipality. The targeted number of participants for data collection was not reached due to the non-availability of targeted participants.

1.11 Chapter Outline

This dissertation comprises five chapters as follows:

Chapter One: Introduction

This chapter introduces the entire study. The focus of the study, the problem statement, the research questions, the aim of the study and a brief outline of the research methodology are provided in this chapter.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter provides the theoretical background to the research.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter outlines the research design and the research methods that are used in the study.

Chapter Four: Research Findings, Discussion, and Analysis

The research findings are presented and discussed in this chapter concerning existing literature and empirical studies.

Chapter Five: Conclusion and Recommendations

The conclusion and recommendations based on the findings are presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

The approach taken for the literature review was to benchmark with municipalities from abroad and in Africa on how they deal with water-related complaints or faults reported by their community members. This chapter details information for the City of Edmonton in Canada, the City of Gaborone in Botswana and eThekweni Municipality, KwaZulu Natal, South Africa, and presents the framework underpinning this study and South Africa's local government.

2.2 Theoretical Frameworks

The provision of services by municipalities is supported by several theoretical frameworks, which represent the intricate interactions among variables that affect the services that local governments offer to their citizens. The theoretical frameworks discussed below are some of the most pertinent for comprehending the dynamics of municipal service delivery. They offer a variety of viewpoints on these dynamics and shed light on the structures, behaviours, and motivations that influence the services that local governments offer to their communities.

The first theory is Service-Dominant Logic (SDL), which according to Vargo (2017), was developed to contribute to the understanding of human value co-creation, by developing an alternative to the traditional logic of exchange. This theory highlights the importance of engaging citizens and stakeholders in the design and delivery of services, recognising them as active participants in the service delivery process. The second theory is Public Choice Theory, which according to Boyne (1998), is the application of economics to the study of political science and government decision-making. The third one is the New Public Management (NPM) which deals more with the better management of the public budget and this theory is better positioned to generate efficiency and favourable results. The fourth theory is Community-Based Governance. Kearney (2007) describes this framework as a framework which emphasises collaboration between local government and community stakeholders in service delivery. The fifth theory is the Social Capital Theory, which is explained by Dubos (2017) as a theory that explores the value of social

relationships and networks in achieving collective goals. In municipal service delivery, it can be applied to understand how social ties and community networks contribute to effective collaboration between local government and residents, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for service outcomes. The sixth theory is the Innovation Diffusion Theory. According to Yuen (2021), this theory is a hypothesis outlining how new technological and other advancements spread throughout societies and cultures, from introduction to widespread adoption. Lastly, the seventh theory is the Institutional Theory and according to Peters (2022), this is a theoretical framework that can provide an effective explanation of how a municipality implements its service standards and this is the theory underpinning this study.

2.2.1 Institutional Theory

According to Peters (2022), the application of "Institutional Theory" and, more precisely, "Institutional Isomorphism" as a theoretical framework can provide an effective explanation of how a municipality implements its service standards. This theory was developed by sociologists like Meyer and Rowan to ensure that organisations are adhering to social norms and expectations so that they can be accepted by their surroundings. This theory describes how organisations, including municipalities, tend to imitate the procedures and benchmarks of other prosperous institutions or organisations in their industry regarding service standards. There are three primary categories of isomorphism which exist, and they are as follows:

1. **Coercive Isomorphism:** This happens when companies implement procedures as a result of outside influences, like rules, legislation, or stakeholder requests. Municipalities may apply service standards in reaction to mandates from the government or the public.
2. **Mimetic Isomorphism:** To establish credibility and legitimacy, organisations can learn from successful peers or counterparts in the industry. To be perceived as adhering to best practices, other municipalities or organisations that are like them may decide to follow suit if they have effectively implemented service standards.
3. **Normative Isomorphism:** This entails businesses adhering to industry standards and professional norms. To show their dedication to providing high-quality services, municipalities can adopt service standards that go hand in hand with industry benchmarks or guidelines set by professional associations.

2.2.1.1 The Importance of the Institutional Theory

According to Boghossian (2021), one popular viewpoint in modern organisational study is institutional theory. It includes a vast and varied corpus of theoretical and empirical research that is united by a similar focus on social norms and expectations as fundamental drivers of the structures, behaviours, and results of organisations. The adoption and dissemination of formal organisational structures, such as written policies, standard operating procedures, and novel organisational forms, are frequently explained by the institutional theory. The theory is regarded as one of the most well-known methods of organisational study available today. Understanding the forces pushing institutions to become more alike, which reduces institutional diversity, is made easier with the aid of the institutional theory. To maintain their legitimacy, organisations make an effort to adhere to widely recognised and accepted norms within the organisational area.

In the 1970s, the institutional theory experienced a "cognitive turn" that focused on routines and presumptions that were taken for granted. This movement in organisational studies is known as "neo-institutionalism." The focus of perspective-based research has recently changed from the mechanisms leading to isomorphism to institutional change, as demonstrated by studies of the introduction of new laws, policies, goods, services, and professions. The theoretical framework's long-term vitality has been aided by its expansion, but there are still several obstacles to its advancement. These include resolving contradictions in the various action and decision-making models that support institutional analysis and advancing our knowledge of the interaction between socio-cultural forces and entrepreneurial agency (Khassawneh, 2022).

2.2.1.2 Approaches to institutional theory

Peters (2022) explains the approaches to this theory as a comprehensive approach that includes a vast and varied body of theoretical and empirical work that is linked by a shared emphasis on social norms and shared expectations as important sources of an organisation's activities, structures, and results. Organisational communication is explained by institutional theory in terms of common pre-existing norms, standards, and beliefs in the organisations' external environment. The institutional theory is approached from various angles, such as:

Normative Institutionalism: This approach emphasises the role of norms and values in shaping the behaviour of organisations and individuals.

Regulative Institutionalism: This approach focuses on the role of rules and regulations in shaping organisational behaviour.

Cultural Institutionalism: This approach emphasises the role of culture and identity in shaping organisational behaviour.

Institutional Entrepreneurship: This approach focuses on the role of individuals and groups in creating new institutions or changing existing ones.

These approaches are not mutually exclusive and can be used in combination to explain different aspects of institutional change.

2.2.1.3 Pillars of the Institutional Theory

According to Scott (2001), the three pillars of isomorphism in the institutional theory are normative, cognitive, and regulative.

The regulatory pillar highlights how rules and laws influence how organisations behave. The normative pillar highlights how values and norms influence how people and organisations behave, whereas the cognitive pillar foregrounds how culture and identity influence how an organisation behaves, and the institutions become more alike because of these various factors, and these three pillars are connected to institutional theory. A combination of the three pillars can be utilised to describe various facets of institutional transformation.

2.2.1.4 Key Assumptions of the Institutional Theory

According to Furusten (2023), the institutional theory is a viewpoint that highlights the significance of social norms and shared expectations as major influences on the structures, behaviours, and results of organisations with the key assumptions that institutions are socially produced (they are not natural or objective entities; rather, they are made and maintained by people), institutions tend to endure over time, even after they have outlived their initial function because they are self-reinforcing and institutions are isomorphic (because of the requirements of institutional conformity, organisations that are part of the same institutional environment tend to become more similar to one another over time).

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2.2.1.5 Institutional Power

Institutional power is the ability that organisations such as governments, churches, and corporations have to manipulate individuals and shape their behaviour by using rewards and penalties. Institutions frequently have hierarchical power structures, where authority is vested in those at the top and distributed like a chain of command.

Institutions themselves possess institutional power rather than people holding it. For instance, the institution of government, not any one person, possesses the power of a government. In a similar vein, a corporation's power is vested in its institution rather than in any one individual. Institutional power can be used to control individual and organisational behaviour as well as uphold social norms and results. It is crucial to remember that institutional power is not always used negatively; rather, it can also be employed to further constructive social change (Benesch, 2020).

2.2.1.6 The Role of the Institutional Theory

According to Shibin (2020), institutional theory is a well-known viewpoint that highlights the significance of social norms and shared expectations as major sources of an organisation's structures, behaviours, and results. The adoption and dissemination of formal organisational structures, such as written policies, standard operating procedures, and novel organisational forms, are frequently explained by the theory.

Institutional theory serves as a tool to help us comprehend how organisations are influenced by their institutional surroundings and how those environments are influenced by them. A framework for comprehending how organisations react to pressures from their institutional environment and work to uphold their legitimacy there is provided by the institutional theory. The theory is regarded as one of the most well-known methods of organisational research available today.

In the 1970s, the institutional theory experienced a "cognitive turn" that focused on routines and presumptions that were taken for granted. This movement in organisational studies is known as "neo-institutionalism." The focus of perspective-based research has recently shifted from the processes leading to isomorphism to institutional change, as demonstrated by studies of the introduction of new laws, policies, goods, services, and professions. The theoretical framework's long-term vitality has been aided by its expansion, but there are still some obstacles to its advancement. These include resolving contradictions in the various action and decision-making models that support institutional analysis and advancing our knowledge of the interaction between socio-cultural forces and entrepreneurial agency. The institutional theory explains innovation based on cognitive institutions that seek legitimacy so that they will be accepted. This legitimacy constitutes a mechanism that links organisational behaviour with belief systems and public opinion in which change occurs as a response to institutional pressure (Geels, 2020).

2.2.1.8 Conclusion on the Theoretical Frameworks

The institutional theory is the theory underpinning this study since it emphasises collaboration between local government and community stakeholders in service delivery. By applying an institutional theoretical framework to the implementation of municipal service standards, we can analyse the external constraints, imitative behaviour, and normative influences that shape the adoption and compliance with a particular service standard. This theoretical perspective helps us understand the organisational dynamics and factors that influence the setting and implementation of service standards in municipal contexts.

2.3 City of Edmonton

As mentioned in the introduction, information about other municipalities has been obtained the following information relates to the City of Edmonton, which is based in Canada, where its parliamentary system stems from the British, or "Westminster", tradition (Tindal & Tindal, 2000). These levels are Federal, Provincial, also called Territorial, and Municipal, subdivided into regional and local. Each level has various responsibilities determined by the Constitution or a higher level of government (Siegel, 1994).

Since this study is dealing with local government, information that will be detailed will be for the Territorial / Municipal level. This level plays a significant role in the everyday lives of Canadians

which are local communities. They have their political leaders: Mayors, Reeves, Councillors, Aldermen, Directors, Agencies, Boards and Commissions (Tindal & Tindal, 2000). This is almost like the structure we have in municipalities as South Africans, consisting of mayors and councillors. Municipal councils consist of political officials, usually called councillors. These are elected officeholders who may represent a particular geographical area of the municipality or are elected at large in city-wide elections. In addition to councillors, councils have a leader or head of council, usually called a mayor. This leader is generally elected city-wide and is responsible for presiding over council meetings. It is important to note that Canadian mayors tend to have very little power independent of their councils. Instead, the office's significance stems from its high profile in the local community. This serves in sharp contrast to the American experience, where mayors often exercise considerable independent power in local government (Borins, 2003).

Currently, the City of Edmonton is governed by a council of 13 members including the Mayor and 12 City Councillors. The mayor is elected by all Edmontonians who vote in the civic election. Councillors are elected by voters in their wards, <https://www.edmonton.ca> (accessed 26 May 2023).

In the City of Edmonton, the functions of local governments differ depending on where it is situated; this results in rural local governments performing different functions from the ones situated in large urban governments (Kernaghan, 1994). According to the 2021 census, the City of Edmonton had a population of 1,010,899 residents. The metropolitan area of Edmonton had a population of 1,491,000 at the beginning of 2021.

In general, local governments are responsible for:

- (i) Protection of persons and property, which includes the management of local policing and firefighting services.
- (ii) Only transportation, such as management of public bus and rail services, as well as municipal roadway construction and maintenance.
- (iii) Geosocial development, including municipal zoning and industrial/economic development.
- (iv) Public utilities including social welfare of local sewage systems, water treatment, and electric utilities.
- (v) Local social-welfare services, such as management of local health, library and educational facilities, and social assistance services.

- (vi) Parks, recreation, and culture, including the development and management of local parks and green spaces, public recreation facilities, local art and cultural programs and events.

Accordingly, the City of Edmonton has developed service delivery standards for each service they provide. These standards form part of the City's quality management plan. For the provision of water and sanitation, it is stated that: *The Municipality will:*

- (i) *Perform the services in an effective and timely manner,*
- (ii) *Endeavour to work co-operatively with the owner and/or the owner's representative(s) to achieve compliance with the SCA and applicable Regulation(s),*
- (iii) *Perform the services with impartiality and integrity,*
- (iv) *Provide services professionally and ethically.*

Furthermore, The City of Edmonton has a complaint process for water-related complaints. The turnaround time for the officer who investigates the water-related complaint must be attended to within four business days.

It is further noted that water services in the City of Edmonton are managed by Edmonton Power Corporation (EPCOR), which deals with new applications for water services and attending to faults or complaints reported. They then attend to the query in line with the standard operating procedures approved by the Council of the City of Edmonton, <https://www.edmonton.ca> (accessed 26 May 2023).

It was revealed through the inspection of policies and procedures of the City of Edmonton that members of the community are made aware of processes to follow in case there are water challenges: leaks and burst pipes. This information is also available on the website of the municipality.

2.4. City of Gaborone

The study also looks at one of the municipalities in the African continent. The name of the municipality is the City of Gaborone, which is situated in Botswana. According to Datta (1995), this city is one of Africa's fastest-growing cities. It has grown from a very small village to the capital city of Botswana, which had a population of 6,000 people twenty years ago but has now increased and is estimated at 150,000. The city is proud that it has adequate and modern civic and commercial centres; modern functional infrastructure including water, electricity, roads, and

sewage systems; access to land for virtually all people; adequate housing provided by both the public and the private sectors; and for the low income, the adoption of a very successful program of squatter upgrading and self-help housing (Mosha, 1996). Through careful management and development control practices, city growth has been contained quite well despite rapid development, and the city's future looks quite bright.

The Botswana government has public service customer service standards that apply to all ministries, departments and municipalities within the country. The charter details but is not limited to the following clauses relating to access to service and attending to queries (Hope Sr, 1995, p 25).

Service Accessibility. “Every Ministry and Department will do everything possible to ensure that its services are available to all individuals by making all suitable adaptations, including those for individuals with special needs. Ministries and departments should make sure that the building is well-maintained, comfortable, and friendly, and that there are signs directing visitors to the various offices”.

Consulting with customers. “It strongly encouraged that every Ministry/Department engage in consultation and communication with its current and prospective customers regarding the provision of its services, the standard of service they have received, and their expectations. They will engage in a range of forms of consultation and apply their opinions to enhance the services offered. Plans for service enhancement should be shared with customers along with the outcomes of the consultation. It is recommended that a team be established to oversee the implementation of published standards, oversee the complaints mechanism and feedback system, and provide ongoing management input”.

According to (Workman, 2009), City of Gaborone’s water is provided by Water Utilities Corporation (WUC) to the cities of Gaborone, Francistown and towns of Lobatshe, Jwaneng, Selebi-Phikwe and Sowa. The Minister of Minerals, Energy and Water Resources appoints the Board. The water supply is critically important in Botswana's arid or semi-arid environment. This corporation is raising enough revenue through billing and subsidies to cover operational costs and debt servicing, which makes it self-self-financing (Chen & Chen, 2014).

2.5 South African Government Structure

In South Africa, there are three government spheres: National, Provincial and Local Government. Each sphere is mandated with different functions, which differ from the other spheres, but in the end, the aim is to serve people residing in South Africa as stated in the constitution of South Africa.

The National Government of South Africa is responsible for implementing the policies and programs of the ruling party. The government's mandate is to eliminate poverty and reduce inequality by 2030. This is done in line with the National Development Plan (NDP), which has five key elements which are:

- (i) Inclusive social and economic development,
- (ii) sustainable investment and growth,
- (iii) decent jobs and sustainable livelihoods,
- (iv) a capable development state, and
- (v) expanding opportunities.

According to the Constitution of South Africa, each province has its legislature consisting of between 30 and 80 members. The number of members is determined according to a formula set out in national legislation. The members are elected in terms of proportional representation. The provincial governments and their structures are established as defined by Chapter Six of the Constitution of South Africa.

The Constitution of South Africa states that the mandate of local government is to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities, ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner, promote social and economic development, promote a safe and healthy environment, and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act of 1998 provides for the ward committees whose tasks include preparing, implementing, and reviewing integrated development plans, establishing, implementing, and reviewing municipalities' performance management systems; monitoring and reviewing municipalities' performances; preparing municipalities' budgets.

2.5.1 National Department of Water and Sanitation

Since there are three spheres of government in South Africa, government departments were developed to deal with different service delivery issues. Accordingly, there is one dealing with water and sanitation, which is called the Department of Water and Sanitation, and it is led by Minister Senzo Mchunu.

The Department of Water and Sanitation has begun awareness campaigns to inform businesses and water consumers to collaborate with the government in order to minimise water use and conserve as much water as possible in order to manage the current situation in South Africa. Desalination, groundwater optimisation, water conservation, demand management, and re-use optimisation are the four pillars of this short- to long-term intervention strategy. Furthermore, some towns nationwide are enforcing water restrictions to guarantee decreased water usage and prevent faucets from drying out. The department still advises all customers to use water responsibly.

Together, these initiatives have the potential to save a substantial amount of water, which would greatly enhance South Africa's water security. The National Water Act (NWA), Act No. 36 of 1998, calls for the Minister of Water and Sanitation to develop the National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS) as a policy framework to ensure that the nation's water resources are protected, used, developed, conserved, managed, and controlled.

The NWRS is the legal instrument and is recognised as the primary mechanism to manage water across all sectors of society towards achieving the National Government's development objectives. The first and second editions of the National Water Resources Strategy were published in 2004 and 2013, respectively. The third edition of the National Water Resources Strategy (NWRS-3) aims to ensure water security and enable equitable access to water and sanitation in support of socio-economic growth and development. This Strategy is for all sectors and stakeholders who use and impact South Africa's water resources.

It responds to NWA by outlining strategic objectives and strategic actions within various key chapter topics that are aligned and then carried forward for resourcing and implementation under the scope of the National Water and Sanitation Master Plan (NW&SMP).

The NWRS-3 was approved by the Cabinet for gazetting for public consultation. The gazette was issued on Friday, 29 July 2022, on Government Notice No. 47133 for a 90-day commenting period, from 29 July 2022 until 29 October 2022.

2.5.2 South Africa's Local Government

Because of the injustices of the apartheid era, South Africa's Public Service was not majority-people-friendly and lacked the skills, and attitudes to meet the country's developmental challenges. *Batho Pele* principles were introduced as one of the interventions to correct injustices, and it was implemented after democracy. *Batho Pele* initiative aims to enhance the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services (Fraser-Moleketi, 2007).

The term *Batho Pele* is derived from the Sesotho phrase, which means 'People First' an initiative launched in 1997 to transform public service at all levels. *Batho Pele* set has been summarised by the slogan: "*We belong, we care, we serve.*" *Batho Pele* aims to ensure that all public servants put people first and adhere to the following overarching framework:

- (i) We Belong: we are part of the Public Service and should work together and respect.
- (ii) We Care: caring for the public we serve (Our customers).
- (iii) We Serve: all citizens will get good service from public servants (*Batho Pele* Handbook, 2003:8).

The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution, Section 195, lays forth the principles and requirements that ought to regulate public administration. Among them are the following: public administration should be transparent, accountable, and development-oriented; the needs of citizens must be met; and resources should be used effectively, efficiently, and economically.

The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (WPTPS), 1997, outlines the eleven *Batho Pele* principles: Consultation, Service Standards, Access, Courtesy, Information, Openness and Transparency, Redress, and Value for Money, Service Excellence, Customer Impact, and Leadership and Strategic Direction. The eleven principles are implemented in KwaZulu-Natal, and eight are implemented nationally. It can be noted that the principles outlined in the WPTPS, 1997, are in line with the Constitution and thus must be implemented by all spheres of government to improve the quality of services provided to internal and external customers.

The Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA) is at the centre of Government and is responsible for promoting the eleven *Batho Pele* principles across government. The DPSA plays a major policy role in establishing norms and standards for Public Service, which ensure that service-delivery mechanisms, integrated systems and access, human resources, institutional development, and governance initiatives are responsive to the needs of citizens.

2.5.3 The Concept of *Batho Pele* to Improving Service Delivery

Batho Pele is a strategy for getting public officials to commit to serving people and finding methods to improve service delivery (Enaifoghe, 2022; Wu, Huang, & Chou, 2014). This strategy also necessitates public participation in holding the Public Service accountable for the quality of service provided. *Batho Pele* is also about transitioning the public sector from a rule-bound strategy that impedes service delivery toward an approach that supports innovation and is results-driven (Martinović et al., 2017). In other words, rather than looking for reasons why the government cannot do something, they must create better ways to provide what people require (Moletsane et al., 2014). Managers in the public sector play an important role in fostering an environment in which their employees can become more productive in their interactions with clients (Koma, 2016). This necessitates a focus on encouraging employees, ensuring that they have the necessary tools for the job, and providing continual assistance, particularly during times of stress and strain.

According to Rotermann, (2020), a service standard is a reasonable and measurable expectation from the side of the recipient and an honest commitment by the service provider to meet or exceed that expectation. It is considered that the rules of engagement for providing services must include targets such as waiting time and hours of operation. One of the objectives of developing the service standard is for the beneficiaries to know what they should expect from the department, how services will be delivered, what they cost, and what can be done if services are unacceptable. Citizens should be told about the level and quality of the services they receive. The standards set must be the tools to measure performance, and therefore, they need to be realistic depending on available resources. Service standards should be measured to determine if they are being met (Rotermann, 2020).

The South African constitution states that municipalities are responsible for ensuring that all citizens are provided with services to satisfy their basic needs. Municipalities create several procedures that explain how these services are inexpensively delivered to the community, such as through municipal regulations. Average citizens can play a part in assisting municipalities in deciding what services to offer and how to deliver them.

2.5.4 Municipal Service Delivery Standards

Amongst other services that the municipality provides through service delivery, this study will deal with water service, which is provided by the Water and Sanitation Unit in eThekweni Municipality. This is because “Water is life – and life on earth is linked to water”. Our existence is dependent on water, or the lack of it, in many ways, and one could say that our whole civilisation is built on the use of water. Among the 30 driest nations on Earth, South Africa is an arid nation. The average daily consumption of South Africans is 237 litres, which is higher than the global average of 173 litres. In addition, the nation has not fully recovered from the drought of 2014, as seen by the sharp decline in dam levels in the majority of the country. Parts of the provinces of Limpopo and the Eastern Cape were severely affected by the drought, placing a strain on water supplies. The country's water security is being negatively impacted by the heat wave and the country's dams evaporating a significant amount of water due to the blazing sun.

One of the least expensive and most successful ways to enhance public health and save lives is to provide access to clean drinking water and safe sanitation worldwide Montgomery and Elimelech, (2007). The United Nations (UN) and World Health Organisation (WHO) designated 2005-2015 as the decade of the year to establish the framework for eventually reaching half of the world's population without access to safe drinking water and adequate sanitation, and this has attracted attention and resources to improving water and sanitation services globally Sachs, (2002). However, there is still a chronic dearth of water and sanitation services in developing nations like South Africa, causing millions of people to contract preventable diseases each year and pass away (Montgomery & Elimelech, 2007). Around 2.2 billion people lack access to clean water, 4.2 billion lack access to decent sanitation, and women and girls in Sub-Saharan Africa often travel 40 billion miles yearly to gather basic water necessities for their homes (Jephcote, 2021).

The WHO predicted that by 2030, 81% of the world's population will be covered with properly managed services, leaving 1.6 billion people without access to basic services (WHO, 2021). However, many nations around the world still lack access to water and sanitation because of a lack of funding, accountability, corruption, and ineffective management to improve water and sanitation (Montgomery & Elimelech, 2007). In South Africa, the need for water resources for human consumption is increasing due to the population increase and the incidence of drought (Masindi & Duncker, 2016).

2.5.5 Local Government and Service Delivery

The Municipal Systems Act, 32 of 2000, section 41, 42, 44 states that:

- *Municipalities to set measurable performance targets in respect of their development priorities and objectives.*
- *Municipalities to involve the local community in the development, implementation, and review of its performance and to allow participation in the setting of performance indicators and targets.*
- *A municipality must make known to the general public its key performance indicators and targets.*

According to the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997:10), in a civilised and democratic society, public services are not a privilege but rather a fair expectation. In the relationship between government and citizens, service delivery is critical. According to (Wu et al., 2014), service delivery is the government's primary job in servicing the communities. The best metric for measuring government performance in terms of good governance is service delivery to the people. However, according to Municipal IQ Hotspot Monitor (2016:1-2), violent protests grew from 75% of all service delivery protests between 2004 and 2016 to 86% in 2018 (Enaifoghe & Abosedo, 2021). Community displeasure with the impoverished and a lack of service delivery are the root causes of community strikes (Prentice, 2013). This condition shows that the government is failing to provide services to the people, particularly on a local level.

2.5.5.1 Evaluation of the Quality-of-Service Delivery

Evaluation should be done either daily, weekly, or bi-monthly. Continuous evaluation helps to ensure that the set goals are achieved. To learn from mistakes and improve your future goal-setting

process, evaluation of performance at the end of the procedure is crucial. Evaluating also assists with monitoring set goals and staying focused along the process. Finally, if difficulties arise, one must stand back and adjust, which indicates that work is being done to resolve the issues without changing the set goals. According to Andrews et al. (2005), characteristics of service standards must be relevant and meaningful to the individual user to assist users of the service standards to understand why the standards exist.

According to Muthien (2014), service standards must be expressed in a manner that is relevant and easily understood; this is achieved by ensuring that they are documented in simple language which allows all users to understand them better; it also allows standards to be translated into different languages to ensure that all stakeholders understand them. Some standards will cover the process to clarify how long it takes to provide the service to clients or intended beneficiaries. They should be benchmarked against international standards; this assists in ensuring that what is set is achievable and in line with the norm.

Service standards, as well as the results of performance against standards, should be published to ensure that both the developer and the beneficiary are on the same page. They are an essential mechanism to enable the public to hold municipalities and government departments accountable for their performance. This assists in ensuring accountability for the developer. They assist in tracking improvements in services from year to year and implement measures taken to improve performance reported in the previous financial year. They inform subsequent decisions about the levels to which standards should be raised by analysing the standards and ensuring that proper decisions are made with the results in informing future decision-making in an organisation (Kotler, Keller, Manceau & Hémonnet-Goujot, 2015).

With a greater understanding of the factors influencing water availability, thanks to these correlations, policymakers may be able to make more informed choices in the future (Ndevu & Muller, 2018), by adopting the *Batho Pele* principle to improve government service delivery at the municipality. Government employees are at the forefront of implementation management (Turk, 2016). Public Service is critical to the success of the government's programs and policies.

2.5.5.2 Service Delivery Protest in South African Municipality

Over the past few years, protests over the delivery of services have been increasingly violent, resulting in fatalities and property damage. In South Africa during the apartheid era, political violence was a historical occurrence. However, violence-related service delivery demonstrations continue under the democratic system and are predicted to have increased from 41.66% in 2007 to 54.08% in 2010 (Netswera, 2014). As stated by Morudu (2017), policymakers must be aware of the underlying dynamics relating to basic services and protests, given the rise in service delivery protests in South African local municipalities, frequently reported in the media. Findings from some qualitative studies have provided insights into the relationship between providing basic services and protests in South Africa.

The service delivery protest in South African municipality indicated that poor public participation in development forums, corruption, political infighting, and weak intergovernmental fiscal relations account for poor service delivery and the proliferation of service delivery protests (Shaidi, 2013; Twala, 2014; Morudu, 2017). The public and organisations participate in many consultations and decision-making processes at the local level, such as ward committees, budget consultations, ward meetings, and Integrated Development Planning Forums, to understand the range of services offered, the delivery methods accessible, and the options the municipality has for providing services (RSA, 1996).

The municipality department is expected to perform at a level of excellence that has been established, desired by the public, and should be attainable. An honest determination by the service provider to meet or exceed the recipient's realistic and measurable expectations constitutes a service standard. An initiative called *Batho Pele* was launched in 1997 by the South African government to transform public service at the national, provincial, and local levels (DPSA, 1997). The *Batho Pele* initiative aimed to enhance the quality and accessibility of government services by improving efficiency and accountability to the recipients of public goods and services (Nzimakwe & Mpehle, 2012). Municipal employees are required to place the needs of the public first, follow the law, cooperate, and ensure that the public receives quality services while showing respect for their fellow employees.

2.6. South Africa, KwaZulu-Natal, EThekweni Municipality

EThekwini Municipality has a designated *Batho* office under the directive of the Head of the Sizakala Customer Service Unit, which is mandated to administrate the oversight of *Batho Pele* in the organisation. The Municipality adopted its first Customer Care Policy in 2008 to regulate customer relations across its structures. However, the policy had gaps, duplications, and fragmented indicators. The policy was then reviewed and adopted in 2014 to address the duplications by integrating the two policies, namely, *Batho Pele* and Customer Care, into a single policy at www.durban.gov.za.

The *Batho Pele* Principles were implemented in 2004. However, the Municipality still faces complaints from the citizens concerning service delivery and the quality of services received. The dissatisfaction raised by the citizens is expressed mostly through public protest and the damage to municipal infrastructure.

The *Batho Pele* belief system is summed up by the motto "We belong, we care, we serve" (eThekwini Municipality, 2017). *Batho Pele's* goal is to guarantee that all public workers prioritise people and follow the overarching framework (Olgun, Dortyol, Zührem & Gulmez, 2013). The *Batho Pele* Principles include Consultation, Service standards, Redress, Access, Courtesy, Information, Transparency, and Value for money are among the eight *Batho Pele* Principles.

EThekwini Municipality has been facing water challenges for years. The municipality has been struggling to provide water to its residents due to several reasons, including but not limited to the following:

1. **Theft and vandalism of infrastructure** is one of the serious challenges that often lead to the disruption of services, and most vandalism takes place in water and wastewater pump stations.
2. **More than 60% of the city is rural**, whereas infrastructure development in rural areas and informal settlements are much more costly compared with urban areas because more materials are needed and the time it takes adds to the labour costs. Providing services in rural areas in a financially sustainable manner is much more difficult. The city is researching and implementing innovative ways to provide access to water and sanitation in rural areas.
3. **The increase in the number of households**, growth and uncontrolled migration into the city increase the number of households that require services. According to census figures, the number of households in the municipality has increased in recent years from over 945,000 to

just over 1,200,000. This increase of about 261,000 households has increased the backlog regarding people who must be reached with services.

4. **Constant and uncontrolled mushrooming of informal settlements** made the planning of service provision difficult as there was insufficient funding to provide housing for all informal settlement dwellers quickly. As a result, infrastructure that was provided and meant to provide interim relief for five years was now being stretched out. These facilities, by design, are not robust enough to last more than five years and refurbishing them is not cost-effective. The municipality is now changing to solutions that will be more permanent and cost-effective to maintain.

Apart from water challenges, eThekweni Municipality is also facing other challenges, such as high unemployment rates, poverty, and crime. The city has been implementing various programs to address these challenges, such as the Durban Inner-City Regeneration and the Durban Aerotropolis.

2.7 Definition of Concepts

2.7.1 Service

Service is defined by Enaifoghe and Durokifa (2021) as an activity or sequence of acts of the more or less tangible and intangible type that generally, but not necessarily, take place in contact between the customer and the service person. According to Ndlovu, Maramura and Enaifoghe (2020), services include tangible products and intangible services.

2.7.2 Delivery

Delivery is described as creating or performing, handing over, transporting items to the intended receiver, or producing results as promised or expected (Enaifoghe, 2022). Delivery is the act of conveying and giving out something. In this study, delivery is defined as how service can be provided to the people.

2.7.3 Service Provision

The South African Constitution states that municipalities are responsible for ensuring that all citizens are provided with services to satisfy their basic needs. The delivery of a product or service by a government to the community to which it was promised or expected is known as service

delivery (DPLG, 2007). Service delivery refers to addressing citizens' requirements, what members of the public desire from government institutions, or the services the government commits to providing residents based on their priorities (Rauch, Collins, Nale & Barr, 2015).

2.7.4 Local Government

The Municipal Structures Act defines a municipality as the structures, political office bearers and administration of the municipality; a geographic area; and the community of the municipality. In other words, a municipality consists of a municipal institution (political and administrative structures), and the people who live in the local area. The term can also be used to refer to a local area that falls within a municipal boundary. The municipal institution is an organ of the state and has a separate legal personality. The local community cannot be held liable for the actions of the municipal institution (Municipal Systems Act).

2.7.5 Local Government Services

According to Statistics South Africa (2016:1), the fundamental objective for forming local governments is to offer municipal services to local citizens, and local governments are directed to deliver services for water and sanitation, electricity and community health services.

2.7.6 Municipal Service Provision

Municipal services are those that are paid for with public funds. This money is primarily derived from the general public, who pay rates and taxes on the property they own as well as for municipal service delivery (Melnik, Bititci, Platts, Tobias & Andersen, 2014), such as water supply, electricity, rubbish removal, and sanitation services. These services are given on a sliding basis in South Africa, with poor people paying less than rich individuals (Mofolo, 2014). The state also offers money for certain necessities, but they are all public funds (Nzewi & Musokeri, 2014). Service delivery comprises the distribution of fundamental resources on which inhabitants rely, such as water, electricity, sanitation infrastructure, land, and housing.

Departments submit budgets and service delivery plans to the Treasury, and funds are distributed to local governments to ensure accountability and transparency (Office for Civil Society, 2014). Public services can be provided by the state or on its behalf by a voluntary and community organisation (VCO) or a private-sector firm (Phutiagae, 2014). Contracting (including contract

management and service delivery after the contract has been awarded), commissioning (creating a list of services on demand and allocating them to providers) (Tefera & Govender, 2017). Procuring (shopping for goods and services from providers) and tendering are all part of public service delivery (choosing the best or cheapest company to supply goods or services) (Tefera & Govender, 2015). All these approaches improve official performance and allow for fairness in service delivery of public services.

2.7.7 Community Participation

Community members can participate in many consultation and decision-making processes at the local level - for example, ward committees, budget consultations, ward meetings, Integrated Development Planning Forums, and so on. When one wants to represent people and fight for their interests, it is very important to understand the level of available services and how services can be delivered.

2.8 Conclusion

Based on the information reviewed and comparison of municipalities from internationally, which is in Canada, a municipality based in Africa, Botswana, and South African municipality. The political structures of these municipalities are the same. They all have one common goal which is to deliver services to community members residing in their areas of jurisdiction. Institutional theory is the theory that is suitable to underpin this study since its theoretical perspective helps us understand the organisational dynamics and factors that influence the setting and implementation of service standards in municipal contexts.

CHAPTER 3

Research Methodology and Design

3.1 Introduction

The paradigm that guided the study, the research approach and design, the sampling strategy utilised, and the methods for gathering and analysing data are all explained in detail in this chapter. Furthermore, this chapter provides the reader with a description of the research limitations, ethical considerations, validity, and reliability of the study.

3.2 Aim

This research aims to examine the service delivery standards of the eThekweni Municipality's Water and Sanitation Unit. It aims to determine whether these standards are adhered to when basic services are provided to the public within the municipality's area of jurisdiction.

3.3 Research Paradigms

A paradigm in science is a manner of thinking. A paradigm in scientific inquiry is the researcher's perspective on the world (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). According to (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017), a research paradigm is a set of accepted ideas that guides the interpretation or meaning of study results. Various scientific paradigms, such as positivism, constructivism, and transformative paradigms, are employed in research. There are five characteristics of a paradigm: theory-driven, ethical, flexible, adaptable, and measurable.

Whereas, according to Saunders et al. (2016), the research process is divided into six layers: research philosophy, research approach, research strategy, research choice, time horizon, and research techniques and procedures, as shown in the figure below.

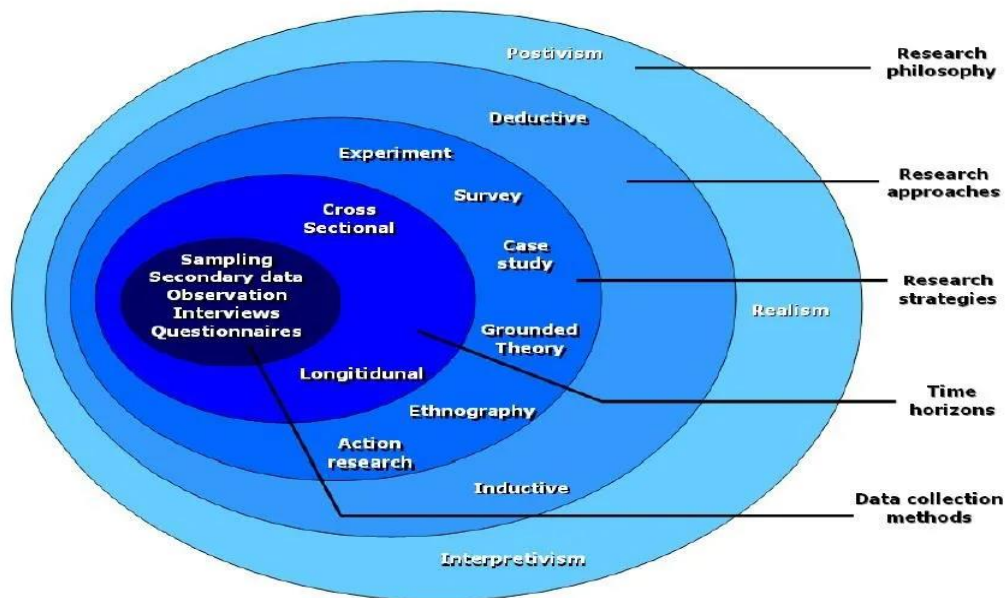


Figure 3.1: Research process onion (Saunders et al., 2016:164)

3.4 Research Philosophy

According to Saunders et al. (2016), research philosophy is "a system of beliefs and assumptions about the development of knowledge and the nature of that research knowledge." The views and presumptions of the researcher influence the research philosophy that is selected. These in turn have an effect on the research approach, research techniques, and findings interpretation. The main research philosophies are as follows:

- Positivism - employs empirical data from science, including statistics and experiments, to create lawful generalisations.
- Critical realism - combines positivist and postmodernist components in its quest for connections, helping scholars make sense of social phenomena and offer solutions to societal issues.
- Transformative / pragmatism - argues that because individuals give events meaning, they are different from occurrences.
- Postmodernism - highlights the importance of language and power dynamics in challenging established ideas and giving voice to alternative, disadvantaged viewpoints.

- Pragmatism - emphasises consequences and actions over cause and effect. The methodology is flexible, allowing the researcher to make adjustments as needed to ensure that the concepts are applicable in situations where they facilitate action.

The research philosophy used for this study was pragmatism. According to Crowther and Lancaster (2008), pragmatism is a deconstructive philosophy in which truth is not seen as an absolute but a moveable and usable construct for understanding the reality of nature. This integrated multiple approaches and strategies, such as qualitative and quantitative research methods within the same study, and this will assist in the critical assessment of the implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards for water-related complaints logged to the Municipality.

3.5 Research Approaches

There are three primary research methodologies utilised in social science research, namely, mixed-method research, qualitative research, and quantitative research. The paradigm that directs a study determines the research approach to be used; positivism is commonly associated with the quantitative research approach, constructivism with the qualitative research approach, while pragmatism is a deconstructive philosophy that views truth as a malleable and useful construct rather than an absolute.

In this study, the mixed method (both qualitative and quantitative) proves to be the most appropriate method of research since the interview questions to the participants and municipal officials directly involved with providing water and sanitation services to the communities will be used as part of the qualitative method to explore the human element of the subject matter; how they see and experience the service being delivered. The eThekweni Municipality's beneficiaries of the water and sanitation services will be the subject of the quantitative technique. Since each participant must respond to the same set of questions in a specific order, questionnaires are the most popular quantitative data-gathering tool (Mulenga, 2017). Hence, for this study, the researcher used pragmatism since both qualitative and quantitative methods made it possible to gather the most needed data to address the research question and ensure that the study's objectives were successfully met.

3.6. Research Strategy

According to Saunders 2016, a plan outlining the steps a researcher will take to address a particular research issue can be referred to as a research strategy. Experiments, surveys, case studies, archival research, ethnography, action research, grounded theory, and narrative inquiry are some of the strategies employed by researchers. According to Creswell (2009), qualitative researchers might choose from the following approaches: grounded research, ethnography, phenomenology, narrative inquiry, and case studies. The study design and the researcher's objectives that is, to investigate, characterise, or explain are intimately related to the research strategy. The application of the eThekweni Municipality's service standards is examined in this study, which focuses on the retirement planning strategies of mid-career employees. The following are strategies that can be utilised to obtain information from participants:

3.6.1 Interviews

The research interview is an interpersonal encounter between the researcher and the research participant, during which the researcher poses a series of prepared fundamental questions to the participant to gain their perceptions, attitudes, feelings, and experiences. Qualitative interviews were traditionally carried out face-to-face and later via the telephone (Farooq & De Villiers, 2017). However, the use of computer-mediated tools, like Skype, to conduct research interviews has increased due to the growth of electronic networks and the Internet. According to Opdenakker (2006), in-person interviews are advantageous because they allow the researcher to obtain more information from social indicators like body language and voice intonation, while internet communication interviews allow the researcher to interview people anywhere in the globe. The researcher may use focus groups or interviews with individuals utilising an unstructured, structured, or semi-structured interview guide, depending on the type of information the researcher is trying to gather. A semi-structured interviewing technique was used in this investigation. The subject and the researcher had an official interview. An interview guide consisting of a series of pre-planned, open-ended questions was created by the researcher.

3.6.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Longhurst (2003) characterises a semi-structured interview as an informal discourse. Because there are both closed-ended and open-ended questions, it shares traits with both structured and unstructured interviews. These are deliberate, methodical, and partially structured talks that the researcher participates in. To facilitate the interview, the researcher creates an interview guide with a list of pre-planned questions. However, because the interview is fluid and might go off course, the researcher is free to deviate from the script and ask more detailed or probing questions to explore subjects that come up in the course of the discussion. Semi-structured interviews can take place in person or virtually via Facetime or Skype.

3.7 Data Collection

The municipal system (Faultsman) was utilised to source information from members of the community who had previously reported water-related faults in the Municipality. A database of Municipal employees will be used to obtain a list of employees in the positions and units targeted to participate.

Amongst other methods of data collection, interviews were done to collect primary data for the study. Interviews are techniques for orally obtaining data utilising pre-planned core questions (Shneiderman & Plaisant, 2005). Because the interviewer can focus on specific topics of concern and potentially generate targeted and constructive solutions, interviews are thought to be a very useful tool. Thus, the primary benefit of interviews is that rich and extensive data may be gathered with fewer participants by obtaining detailed information (Shneiderman & Plaisant, 2005). Additionally, qualitative researchers frequently use interviews as a tool (Bryman, 2012). They enable the researcher to gain a greater understanding as well as knowledge of the participants on a particular topic. This is the reason this study identified interviews as a suitable means of data collection. Participants were able to expound on their experiences and perceptions throughout the interviews, which allowed for the extraction of detailed information from them. As previously said, semi-structured interviews allowed the researcher to prepare an interview guide based on the study questions.

Furthermore, the semi-structured interviews were helpful since they gave the researcher the ability to direct the interviews to address the goals of the study while still enabling the participants to freely share their experiences and opinions. Twenty to thirty minutes were allocated for the semi-

structured interviews, which were conducted online in groups and over the phone utilising call recording software. In research, secondary data refers to pre-existing information gathered by previous researchers. Primary and secondary data were employed in this study to confirm the research findings and bolster them with previously published works. Triangulation in research projects refers to the utilisation of many methods to gather data. By verifying a claim using two or more independent metrics, triangulation in research tries to boost trust in the results (Bryman, 2021). According to Tashakkori and Teddle (2003), combining results from two or more rigorous methodologies yields a more complete picture of the results than either approach could do on its own,. As a result, secondary data from numerous document sources was gathered and examined. We gathered and examined the most recent service delivery standards charter as well as the water and sanitation papers. The examination of these records was essential because it gave the interviewer more understanding together with primary data, the documents that were studied allowed the researcher to gather thorough information and comprehend the subject of the study.

3.8. Research Design

According to Saunders et al. (2016), The purpose of the study and the features of certain designs are reflected in the research design, which includes the following:

- Exploratory – focuses on topics for which there isn't much current study available. The study design is hence loose and unstructured.
- Descriptive – focuses on topics where it is necessary to accurately and validly portray factors related to the research question. Compared to an exploratory study, the research design is therefore more structured.
- Explanatory – seeks to establish connections between many aspects of the study subject and is quite structured.

The constructivist paradigm-based qualitative research technique is linked to several study designs, including case studies, ethnographic studies, narrative studies, grounded theories, descriptive studies, and phenomenological studies (Shin, 2009). According to Adom et al. (2016), the one thing that all of these approaches have in common is how much time they take to fully understand the phenomenon being examined. The qualitative research design was adopted for this study. This study obtained detailed information on the experiences and viewpoints of how long it

took for eThekweni Municipality to respond to water-related inquiries through the use of a case study qualitative research approach.

3.9. Sampling Method

Research studies may utilise a variety of sampling techniques, from non-probability sampling to probability sampling. A nonprobability sampling technique was utilised for this study. Quota sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling, deviant case sampling, sequential sampling, and theoretical sampling are all included in the non-probability sampling technique (Neuman, 2000). To obtain a comprehensive understanding of service standards, the study adopted a purposive sampling. Only units identified as key stakeholders in implementing the service standards were selected to participate in the study. Furthermore, the study adopted convenience sampling when selecting participants from the identified units.

Furthermore, Datta (2018) states that the study's key sample is important since it will affect how broadly the research findings may be applied. Stratified random sampling was used because the population of interest has different race groups and there is a need to ensure that all the groups are fairly represented in the sample. The sampling technique was to select from all regions of the municipality (South, North, Central and Outer West) this is to determine if all areas within the municipality irrespective of the location and how much rates are being paid are treated the same. The purposive and snowball nonprobability sampling techniques were utilised in this study because they best fulfilled its objectives. Only units that were identified as key stakeholders in the development and monitoring of the service standards were selected to participate in the study. Participants were selected using the purposive non-probability sampling technique from among the municipality's units.

3.10 Population and Sample Selection

The target population is defined as the “complete set of cases or group members that is the focus of the research inquiry, and from which a sample will be drawn” (Saunders et al., 2016). According

to Zhao et al. (2013), a target population is a collection of people or units with specific characteristics the researcher is interested in. Stratified random sampling was used because the population of interest has different race groups, and there is a need to ensure that all the groups are fairly represented in the sample.

The population for this study comprised municipal employees from units of the municipality, including the Sizakala Unit and Performance Monitoring and Evaluation (PME) Unit, and public members who have reported water-related faults. The target population was established as one hundred (100) and included employees and members of the public who reported water-related faults in the municipality between June - July 2023.

3.11 Reliability and Validity

According to Seale (1999), "the reliability and validity of a research report are primarily based on its trustworthiness." According to Patterson (2001), there are four essential components of trustworthiness in qualitative research: credibility, dependability, confirmability, and transferability. Of these, credibility is the most crucial. As stated by Patton (2001), "The first element or requirement that needs to be created is credibility. It is regarded as the most crucial element or standard for determining reliability. This is because credibility requires the researcher to establish a connection between the research study's conclusions and actual events in order to validate the validity of the findings. In this regard, credibility is established using a variety of methods, one of which is the triangulation method used in this study. By integrating data-gathering methods, triangulation, according to Patton (2001), strengthens a study. To guarantee the validity of the study's findings, the researcher employed triangulation. Interviews with participants and pre-existing documents were used to gather data. Because the study's findings are corroborated by a variety of previously published papers and publications, this gave the data for the study credibility.

3.12 Data Quality Control

In the recent history of mixed methods research, quality has been one of the most contentious issues. To promote well-designed and well-executed mixed methods studies, an increasing number of writers are actively debating how the quality of mixed methods research should be conceptualised and operationalised. These writers contend that because mixed methods research

differs from monomethod research in many ways, it should be evaluated using a distinct set of standards. This review, which was based on a systematic search of the literature, looks at the quality of mixed methods research published up until February 2016 and analyses its features and trends. It also offers a meta-summary of the most common quality criteria that have been suggested in this literature and makes several recommendations for further research and discussion on the subject.

The review concludes that: (1) there are more and more detailed publications on the quality of mixed methods research; (2) a common set of core quality criteria can be found across publications for the appraisal of mixed methods research; and (3) future work on this topic should concentrate on increasing the number of empirical publications on quality, achieving greater consistency in quality terminology, and coming to an agreement on core quality criteria.

3.13 Data Analysis Plan / Procedures

Research results and recommendations have been generated using logical data analysis techniques or reasoning from the gathered data. The main and secondary data acquired for this research project were analysed using theme analysis and content analysis. Thematic analysis, according to Robson (2011), finds themes or patterns in qualitative data. Therefore, the process of classifying the results based on different recurring themes found in the data is known as thematic analysis. In addition, thematic analysis is the act of finding themes or patterns in the material that has been received. The researcher developed the pre-planned interview guidelines based on the major themes found in the semi-structured interviews. The fact that the gathered data was already organised into themes helped the researcher analyse the data.

Determining themes that are significant or intriguing patterns in the data and using these themes to answer the research questions are the objectives of thematic analysis. Nevertheless, during the interviews, a few of the sub-themes emerged. With the consent of each participant, primary data were captured during interviews and transcribed later to facilitate the easy analysis of the gathered information. In addition, the researcher took notes during the interview, highlighting significant issues brought up, which were subsequently grouped into the major themes. The method employed in this study to examine secondary data is content analysis, which involves reviewing previously

published materials. Scholars view content analysis as a versatile technique for examining textual data (Cavanagh, 1997).

Summative content analysis, according to Hsieh and Shannon (2005), entails counting and comparing, typically of terms or material, and then interpreting the underlying context. Thus, papers from the water and sanitation unit, service delivery dashboard, and associated publications and articles were chosen and analysed using keywords, content, and study-related themes. The documents' content was analysed to uncover underlying meanings about the subject of this study.

3.14 Ethical Considerations

Wang (2023) asserts that in order to ensure the study's credibility, ethical ethos must be upheld by the researcher and ethical considerations are always crucial when conducting a research study. As a result, the researcher followed all ethical guidelines when conducting this study. Each participant signed a consent letter that was written in both English and isiZulu, the two official languages of the eThekweni Municipality. Conselly (2005) states that in order to gain permission, three requirements must be met: the subjects must comprehend the nature of the request, the consent must be freely provided, and the parties involved must be competent. Therefore, before participants signed the consent form, the researcher gave them a detailed explanation of the purpose, goals, and research questions of the study. The participants were also informed that they could choose to stop taking part in the study at any time. Before the study started, all required paperwork for ethical clearance and gatekeepers' letters were acquired to make sure the study was carried out with the intended title and scope. Prior to initiating the research, the University of KwaZulu-Natal granted ethical clearance approval, also gatekeepers' letter was obtained from eThekweni Municipality, and this guaranteed that the study was carried out within the designated parameters and title.

In addition, the standards of gatekeepers were met to guarantee that the study did not negatively impact the participants or the organisation that sponsored it. Any research project should prioritise protecting human subjects by implementing the relevant ethical norms, as stated by Orbi et al. (2001). As a result, pseudonyms were used to protect participant confidentiality during the whole research process and during the study's publication. Owing to concerns about safety, the research was conducted using non-contact forms for the public, council members, ward committee

members, and municipality staff. Online interviews were conducted with these individuals due to their hectic schedules. This led to various ethical applications and phone and online interviews based on the above-mentioned.

3.15 Limitations and Delimitations

Many researchers worry that the scientific quantitative approach diminishes human individuality and cognitive capacity, which is one of the shortcomings of quantitative research that opponents have pointed out (Walle, 1996; Massey, 2003). According to Gilbert (1993), its mechanistic ethos frequently pushes away ideas of moral responsibility, freedom, and choice. Instead of being a human endeavour to better understand the human situation, quantification can become an end in and of itself. It disregards people's own capacity to make sense of their experiences, act upon them, and interpret them (Gilbert, 1993; Massey, 2003). To overcome this constraint, a qualitative research methodology that examines people's views towards alternative energy sources and policy analysis will be used. It is important to remember, though, that subjectivity was involved in both the selection of an issue for inquiry and the interpretation of the findings, so the quantitative approach cannot be objective. the public's unwillingness to participate in the study and the non-availability of targeted employees to participate.

CHAPTER FOUR

Findings, discussions, and analysis of the study

4.1 Introduction

In research, the common consensus is that a study's validity and rightful acknowledgment are determined by the calibre of its conclusions and the analysis that follows. According to Yin (2003), credible and trustworthy data analysis and interpretation, depend on a researcher's capacity to remove any bias from the study's conclusions. As a result, information gathered from two participant groups that were sampled for this study is presented in this chapter. Thirty-six people made up the first group, which was made up of employees of the eThekweni Municipality from various departments within the municipality. The second group consisted of municipal customers who filed complaints between June and August of 2023 over water and sanitation-related issues. Interviews and questionnaires were used as tools to gather data from participants' responses and the total number of participants from this group was nineteen. As a result, frequent responses and trends found in the collected data were used to categorise the participant responses. As a result, the study questions, goals, and objectives, the theoretical framework, and the examined literature served as the theme foundation for the analysis and debate that followed.

4.2 Theories on Assessment of Service Delivery

There are several theoretical frameworks that are most pertinent for comprehending the dynamics of municipal service delivery, namely, service-dominant logic was developed to contribute to the understanding of human value co-creation, by developing an alternative to traditional logic of exchange. The Public Choice Theory is the application of economics to the study of political science and government decision-making. The New Public Management (NPM) is better positioned to generate efficiency and favourable results through better management of the public budget. The Community-Based Governance Theory puts more emphasis on the importance of involving communities in decision-making processes. Social Capital Theory explores the value of social relationships and networks in achieving collective goals. In municipal service delivery, it can be applied to understand how social ties and community networks contribute to effective

collaboration between local government and residents, fostering a sense of shared responsibility for service outcomes. The Diffusion of Innovations Theory is a hypothesis outlining how new technological and other advancements spread throughout societies and cultures, from introduction to widespread adoption. The Institutional Theory is a theoretical framework that can provide an effective explanation of how a municipality implements its service standards.

4.3 Process of Developing Service Standards

One of *Batho Pele's* principles is customer care. *Batho Pele's* principles remain central to promoting service excellence and professionalism. For customer care to be implemented effectively, the municipality must develop service standards. When designed, they must be measurable, have set performance targets and focus on residents' daily experiences. Must be applied consistently in all areas of the municipality. Setting standards ensures proactive and reactive interventions by the municipality and ensures that all residents equitably share the benefits from the municipality.

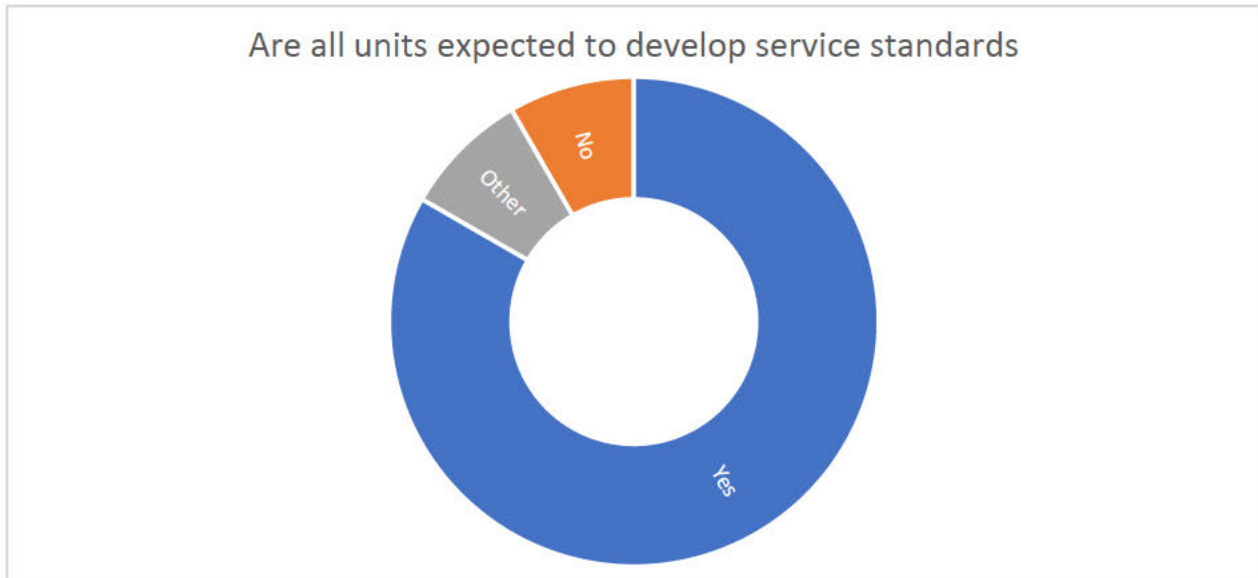
According to the municipality's service charter, after the council approves service standards it should be publicised to both internal and external stakeholders. For internal stakeholders presentations are done in various departmental general workers depots, frontline and back-office staff meetings, new employee inductions, team effectiveness workshops, departmental supervisors' meetings, and human resource officers.

For external stakeholders, service standards are publicised through various community and other forums presentations, taxi, bus ranks blitz, and budget hearings. Below are the views from both employees and members of the public regarding the development of service standards for eThekweni Municipality.

The following questions were asked to participants during interviews to get an in-depth understanding of the development of service standards.

4.3.1 Service Standards Development for Units within the Municipality

Thirty (30) participants out of thirty-six (36) feel that all units within the municipality are expected to develop service standards. In contrast, three disagree and three are not clear whether all units are expected to develop service standards or not.



Graph 4.2: Responses to Service Standards Development for Units within the Municipality

4.3.2 Development of Service Standards

Participants were asked how service standards are developed according to their understanding. Different responses were documented on this question, the study revealed that municipal employees are not aware of who should develop service standards, this is evidenced by their responses and some of the responses are as follows:

“Based on the best practice and compliance standards for service delivery taking into account resources required to enable delivery, as well as client expectations.”

“Service standards are developed by the process owners taking into account legislative requirements and industry norms. The process is facilitated by customer service representatives from the Sizakala unit as officials mandated to look after customer satisfaction issues.”

“These standards are developed by each unit based on their legislated mandates. These standards are sector-based however the Municipality in some cases set its targets for certain standards based on the capacity and other operational circumstances.”

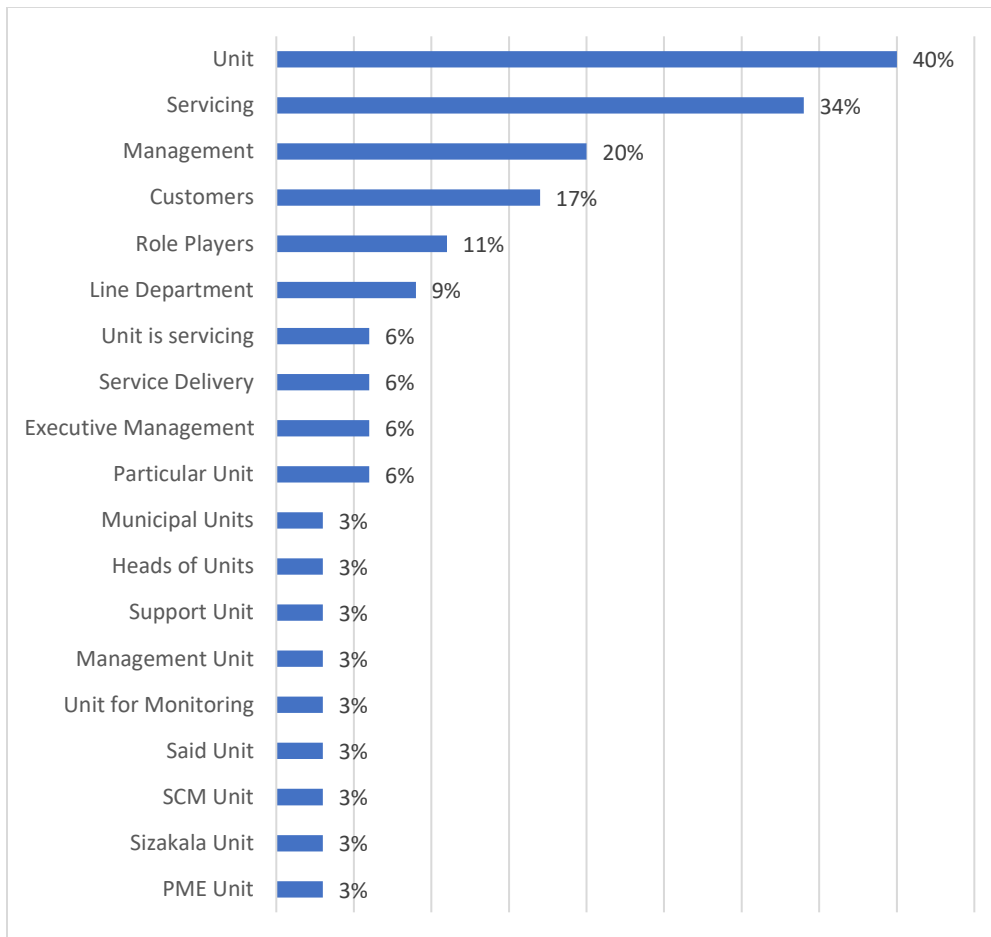
“Through consensus by committees of affected stakeholders including the departments concerned.”

“Policies and SOPs.”

This is not in line with the introduction of *Batho Pele* as a strategy for getting public officials to commit to serving people and finding methods to improve service delivery (Enaifoghe, 2022; Wu, Huang, and Chou, 2014). This also indicates that the municipality does not conform to one of *Batho Pele* principles which is transparency since employees are not aware of who should develop service standards and that means the process followed internally within the municipality is not transparent.

4.3.3 Key Role-players during the Development of the Service Standards

Different views were shared by participants as detailed in the graphical presentation below, responding to the question of who the key role players in the development of service standards are.



Graph 4.2: Responses to key role-players during the development of the service standards

Based on the responses above which are different from one participant to another it is clear that there is a lack of transparency within the municipality regarding the development of the service standards.

4.3.4 For whom are these standards developed?

Participants responded as per below when they were asked according to their understanding for whom the municipal service standards are developed. It was revealed that some employees within the municipality are not aware of whom the service standards are developed.

“I think they are developed for the customers to be aware that they are aware how long should they wait after complaining/fault.”

“They developed for all key role players and ultimately, it's for the benefit of City citizens.”

“Unit Staff members Unit Management Unit clients/communities.”

“Internal - other units that are clients/business partners and within value chain External - Rate Payers, Customers, Visitors, Business and Communities.”

“Municipal Employees and Political Leadership.”

“Service standards are guidelines for employees to follow when giving service to customers. For the employees to give the best service as per the turnaround time stipulated on the charter and for the customers to expect delivery of service as per the promise on the charter.”

“For municipal staff and recipients of municipal services if the Units offer services to the Community.”

Based on the responses from participants above, it is clear that the municipality’s service charter is not adhered to since it states that *“after the council approves service standards it should be publicised to both internal and external stakeholders. For internal stakeholders presentations are done in various departmental general workers depots, frontline and back-office staff meetings, new employee inductions, team effectiveness workshops, departmental supervisors’ meetings, and human resource officers.”* If this was done accordingly same responses were going to be obtained from participants and they will be aware that for whom are the service standards developed.

4.3.5 When are they developed?

The following responses were documented when participants were responding to a question of when the service standards are developed, from the responses received the study revealed that employees of the municipality are not fully aware of when the service standards are developed.

“Before the start of the new financial year, so ideally in Quarter 4 of the previous financial year”

“3rd quarter and approved on 4th quarter for implementation in the new financial year.”

“They are done in the 1st quarter of the new financial year.”

“Beginning of the financial year.”

“Should be done and adopted before the start of the first quarter of the financial year.”

“They are reviewed at the first quarter of the financial year for implementation therefrom.”

“They are in place for most units and reviewed when there is a need. For units who still do not have them in place, during the financial year they are developed to try and close the gaps.”

“Standards should be developed and reviewed on an ongoing basis. Preferably to be reviewed before the beginning of the financial year, so preferably by the 2nd quarter of the year, in time to review before the start of the financial year.”

Staff empowerment is one of the processes to be followed when service standards are developed and this also goes hand in hand with change management within the municipality, by obtaining the above responses it is clear that staff empowerment and change management were not properly done because if they were done properly all municipal employees would have been aware when service standards for the municipality are developed.

4.3.6 How often are consultations done?

Participants responded with the following responses when asked to explain according to their knowledge how often consultations about the development of service standards were done. The study revealed that participants are not sure how often consultations are done.

“I am not aware of consultations being done.”

“Consultations with staff or customers. If it's customers, this must be done at least annually through media to alert customers to the standards. if its staff, then staff must be consulted frequently to ensure that they understand their deliverables.”

“Consultations should be done with all role players on an ongoing basis, implementation with feedback on improvements communicated timeously to allow for implementation and measuring of results.”

“Consultations are done once standards have been developed or reviewed.”

According to the municipality’s service charter, after the council approves service standards it should be publicised to both internal and external stakeholders. For internal stakeholders presentations are done in various departmental general workers depots, frontline and back-office staff meetings, new employee inductions, team effectiveness workshops, departmental supervisors’ meetings, and human resource officers. For external stakeholders, service standards are publicised through various community and other forums presentations, taxi, bus ranks blitz, and budget hearings. Below are the views from both employees and members of the public regarding the development of service standards for eThekweni Municipality, however, the responses above indicate that this was not done since participants are not sure how often consultations are done.

4.4 Understanding Municipal Service Standards

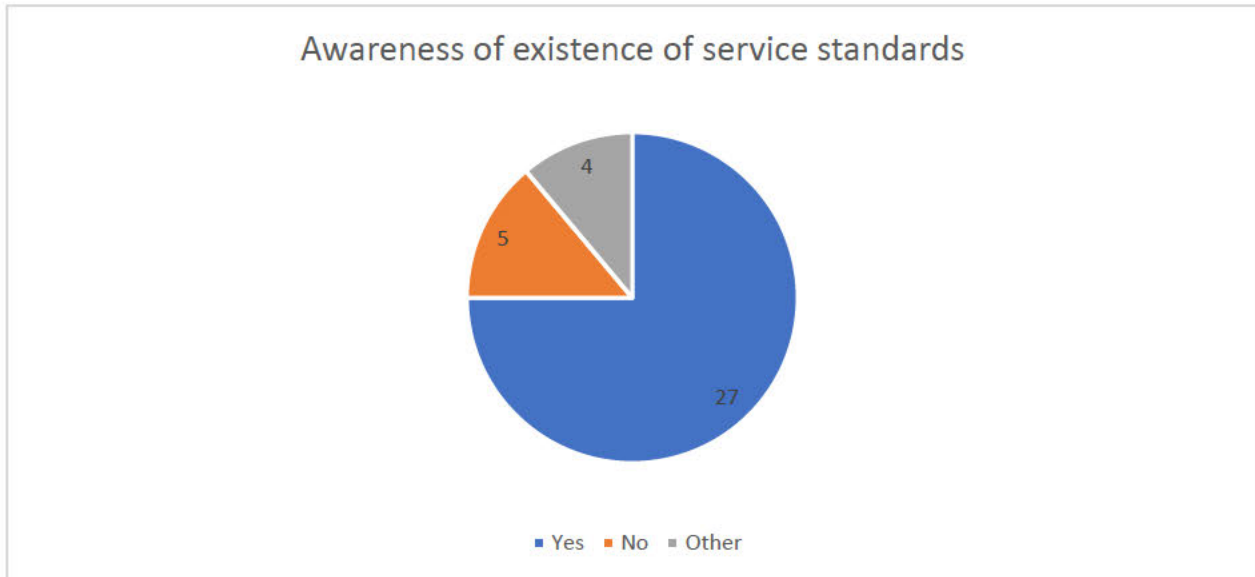
The study revealed that municipality employees are aware of and understand service standards by the municipality, however, the study also revealed that members of the public are not aware of the municipality’s set service standards as mentioned in their responses below:

“No, I am not aware that the Municipality has service standards since their service is very poor. Even after logging a fault, they do not bother updating you as a customer on the progress and sometimes they do not respond at all.”

Community members were not afforded an opportunity to participate in many consultation and decision-making processes at the local level - for example, ward committees, budget consultations, ward meetings, Integrated Development Planning Forums, and so on as legislated.

For Municipal employees, from the total number of thirty-six (36) participants, twenty-seven (27) are aware of the service standards, five are not aware and four participants did not respond whether

they know the service standards. The results for municipal employees are detailed in the graph below:



Graph 4.3: Awareness of the existence of service standards

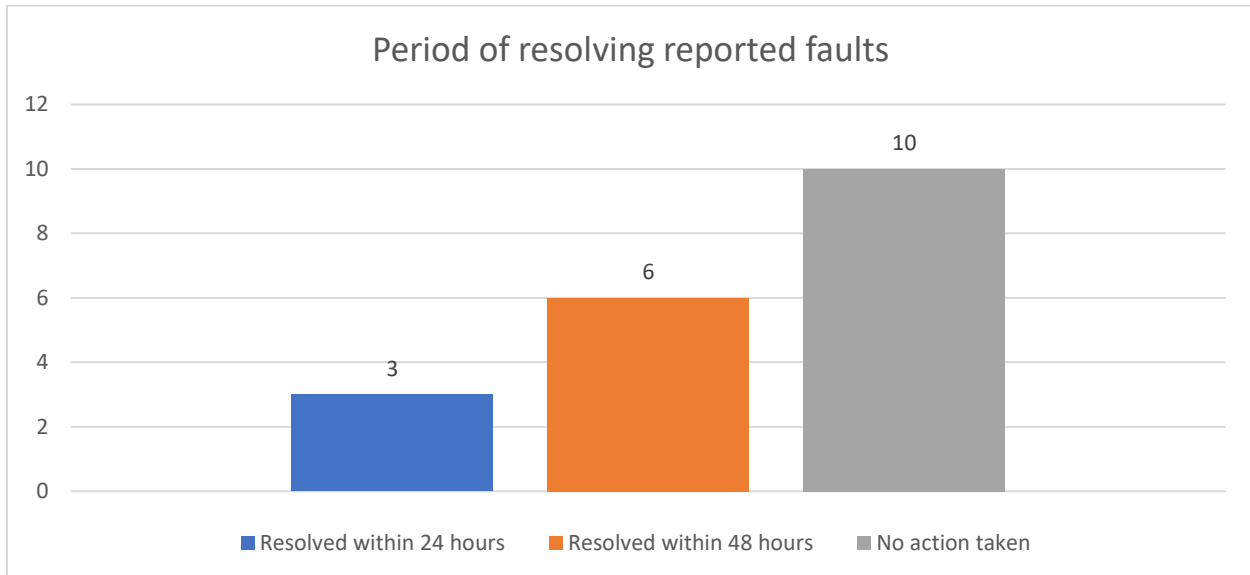
4.5 Turnaround Time for Fixing the Reported Fault

According to the approved service standards for eThekweni Municipality under the water and sanitation unit, 85% of burst water pipes will be repaired within 24 hours, and 55% of water outages will be restored within 24 hours. According to participants in the study who reported nineteen (19) participants were members of the public who were selected randomly using the reports from the Faultsman system which is used by the water and sanitation unit to record faults that are logged and progress as to when they were resolved. The study revealed that out of nineteen reported faults, three (3) were attended within twenty-four hours, six (6) were resolved within 48 hours and ten (10) were not attended to on the date of the interview, however on the system these calls were closed and appeared as being resolved. Some of the responses received were:

“To be honest with you I have lost hope that this will ever be resolved, and we are expected to live in a house where there is sewer because of burst pipe and the drain. I first waited for the municipality to come and fix it and I was not going to work, and I ended up going to work currently I live in my neighbour’s house because I can’t even enter the house because there is a sewer inside. I cannot even get my identity document because it is inside the house and worse all that we have

including furniture is getting destroyed inside the house. I reported this to the municipality more than a month ago and I keep calling them, but no one comes to fix the issue.”

Below is the summary of responses received from participants who are members of the public:



Graph 4.4: Responses to the period of resolving reported faults

Responses above reveal that municipal employees under the Water and Sanitation Unit do not resolve water-related queries in line with the municipality’s approved service standard which states that “burst water pipes will be repaired within 24 hours”.

4.6 Challenges in Water and Sanitation Service Delivery by the Municipality

The study revealed that out of 36 participants, 34 agree that there are challenges in service delivery for the provision of water and sanitation services by the municipality, with the following mentioned and causes for these challenges.

“1. Water Infrastructure is not in a good condition. 2. The cost to maintain and replace water infrastructure is much and not affordable in one year. 3. There is inefficiency in the way we go about the maintenance of water infrastructure. 4. We lose about 60% of the water we purchase from Umgeni in distribution. 5. Skills are exiting this unit and we are struggling to retain the same and have a transfer of skills. 6. Water is a scarce resource that we cannot afford to waste. 7. We are capped with the amount of water we can draw from Umgeni Water. 8. Allegations of fraud,

theft, and corruption plague the Water and Sanitation unit. 9. We are not open to other methods of financing to meet the demand for replacement and maintenance of water infrastructure.”

“Water disconnections Water trucks are not on time and are sometimes unavailable. Water leaks and sewage spills.”

“Infrastructure, illegal Water Connection, the bulk of consumer debts owing to a municipality.”

“The Community is faced with challenges of water outages, and they are not informed in time and the water tank cars are not properly provided especially for township areas and it tarnishes the image of the entire Municipality.”

“Non-compliance to standards leads to unsatisfied customers Closing of contact centre cases without service being rendered Uncoordinated effort in service delivery Poor SCM on delivery of service leads to at times non-delivery of services by service delivery departments.”

“Difficulty when trying to report faults through calls Long turnaround times Contractors closing our faults before they are fixed, claiming that they fixed them when they did not Horrible attitude from people sent to fix the faults.”

The top challenges mentioned during interviews are:

Top ten challenges identified	Percentage
Water leaks	21%
Turnaround time concerning response to complaints	16%
Water loss	15%
The cost of replacing infrastructure is too high	10%
Ageing infrastructure	9%
Too much reliance on Umgeni water	6%
Skills are exiting this unit without transferring skills	5%
High demand due to an increase in population	3%
Insufficient maintenance	3%

The above is in line with what was documented on the municipality’s Integrated Development Plan for the 2022/23 financial year that eThekweni Municipality has been facing water challenges

for years. The municipality has been struggling to provide water to its residents due to several reasons.

4.6.1 Mitigating Factors for Challenges Identified

Participants were asked to identify mitigating factors on challenges identified which are the causes of delays and or non-attendance to water-related queries logged with the municipality and the following was provided:

“1. Proper leadership tone at the top supported politically and administratively. 2. Proper analysis of the problem. 3. Open to new funding mechanisms. 4. Good borrowing and spending on water infrastructure to benefit generations to come. 5. Good control environment. 6. Consequence management and rooting out corruption.”

“Staff training and motivation, minimisation of outsourcing, proper planning and increased budget allocations, employment of qualified employees, houses construction to eliminate informal settlements.”

“All citizens should be given the same level of prioritisation regardless of the area they live in. Water is one of the most important needs of the community so the unit responsible must ensure that the community is addressed early of water outages and have a proper mitigation plan in place to minimize strikes that lead to vandalism of infrastructure by the angry community.”

“The City needs a global view strategy so that there is a smooth transition even when leadership changes.”

“New billing system Budget for fixing ageing infrastructure.”

“Consequence Management implementation Productivity study Less engagement of contractors.”

“If the unit can have infrastructure asset maintenance plan in place and ensure that it is implemented, some of these challenges can be addressed.”

“Prioritisation of supply of water and sanitation services.”

“A detailed assessment must be undertaken to establish the extent of the problem.”

“Awareness campaigns to teach the public about water and sanitation issues When an incident is logged it must be dealt with timeously.”

The study is unable to confirm if the above interventions are true or not since it was not covered in its scope but if another study can be undertaken to deal mainly with the interventions it can be confirmed whether the above interventions are realistic or not.

4.7 Public Participation Process

According to municipal processes, service standards are communicated to other stakeholders after approval by the council. For external stakeholders service standards are publicised through various community and other forums presentations, taxi, and bus ranks blitz and budget hearings. The study showed that participants agree that the municipality does have a plan to communicate with community members through various methods, but the effectiveness of these meetings is questionable as mentioned in the comments below:

“There are various channels: ward committee meetings, izimbizo, community meetings, media and social media, etc.”

“Through public budget meetings and ward committee meetings.”

“Through community meetings planned by ward councillors and also taking part in Operation Sukuma Sakhe where ward-based challenges are tabled, and officials intervene.”

“Public participation is conducted during the IDP preparation process and budget preparation process.”

“Generally, but effectiveness is questionable.”

“I am not entirely sure of how public participation is conducted.”

“Public participation is undertaken in different forms e.g. via war rooms, wards-based planning exercises, mayoral imbizos, IDP/Budget regional hearings.”

“There are radio slots. There is a Facebook page There is Ezasegagasini Newspaper.”

“Ideally there should be conducted at ward levels however this does not happen more often.”

The study confirmed that communication with members of the community does take place, however, could not conclude on the effectiveness of these communication channels especially when it comes to communicating about municipal service standards.

4.7.1 Awareness Campaigns or Community Mobilisation

Most participants twenty-five out of a total number of thirty-six agree that there are awareness campaigns or community mobilisation. However, responses received confirm that even participants themselves are not sure of how they are done as per the responses documented below:

“Through radios and other mediums of communication.”

“Physical campaigns and pamphlets.”

“Through social media, EMTV placed in customer service centres, through local newspapers and ezasegagasini eThekwini newspaper.”

“To raise awareness campaigns are done via CPAS (loud hailing in communities), community radio stations, local newspapers, and posters placed in communities. Citizens are also transported to venues.”

According to the municipality's service charter, after the council approves service standards it should be publicised to both internal and external stakeholders. For internal stakeholders presentations are done in various departmental general workers depots, frontline and back-office staff meetings, new employee inductions, team effectiveness workshops, departmental supervisors' meetings, and human resource officers. For external stakeholders, service standards are publicised through various community and other forums presentations, taxi, bus ranks blitz, and budget hearings. Responses received from participants differ from what is documented on the municipality's service charter since there are other means of communication mentioned.

4.7.2 Public Engagement Meetings and Attendance Rate

This was further followed up by the question of when the public participation meetings are taking place and the following responses were received, which further confirms that participants are not aware when they are done but the majority indicated that they are done both during on weekends.

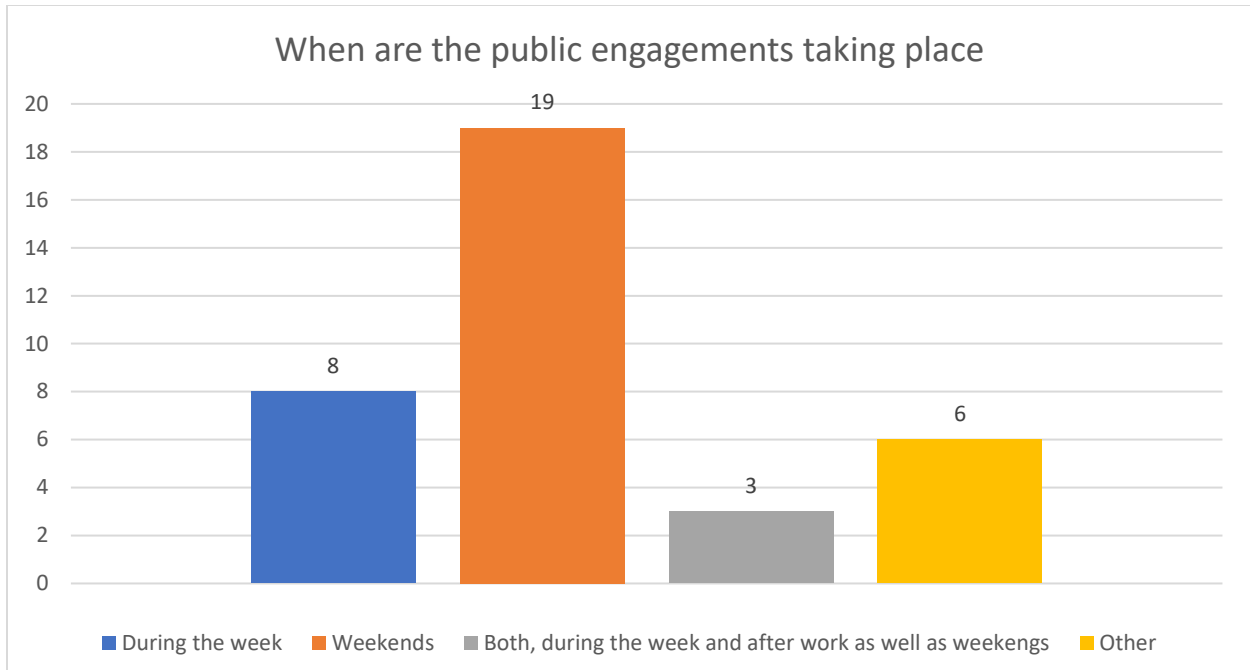
"During the week and weekends."

"Weekends."

"No specific time."

"I don't know."

A summary of responses is detailed in the table below:



Graph 4.5: Responses to when public engagements take place

The study also wanted to confirm the attendance rate of public meetings and participants were asked from the previous public participation process, how was the attendance by the Community. The study revealed that public meetings that were held were mainly for the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and Budget for the following financial year.

“The public participation that I am aware of is budget consultation. it where the community is able voice out the needs other than that it through protest.”

“It was excellent, and attendance was pleasing.”

“The last one was on the 3rd of September 2023 for Wards 18,19,20,21,22 & 92 for the Masakhane Outreach programme. Ward 21, did not participate as they were not made aware of the meeting.”

“Relatively good but needs more effort”.

“Good”.

“Average.”

The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution, Section 195, lays forth the ideals and guidelines that should direct state administration. Amongst them is the economical utilisation of resources, the municipality is not utilising its resources accordingly because if they hold meetings during the

week and after-hours attendance will be poor because community members are at work and after hours, they are on their way back from work and others are tired.

4.7.4 Agenda Items During Public Meetings

The study disclosed that the item that is shared with community members during their engagements is the budget for the ward, which is thereafter followed by projects for that respective ward, and housing-related issues and no participant mentioned service standards as one of the agenda items discussed during public engagements. This is evidenced by some of the responses below:

“Service delivery issues”.

“Challenges of housing challenges of water challenges of employment challenges of crime.”

“Budget, Projects to be delivered per Ward Safeguarding and protection of assets.”

“From the notice I saw, it was budget and IDP. I do not know to what extent water issues were discussed.”

“All budget issues and items affecting the budget.”

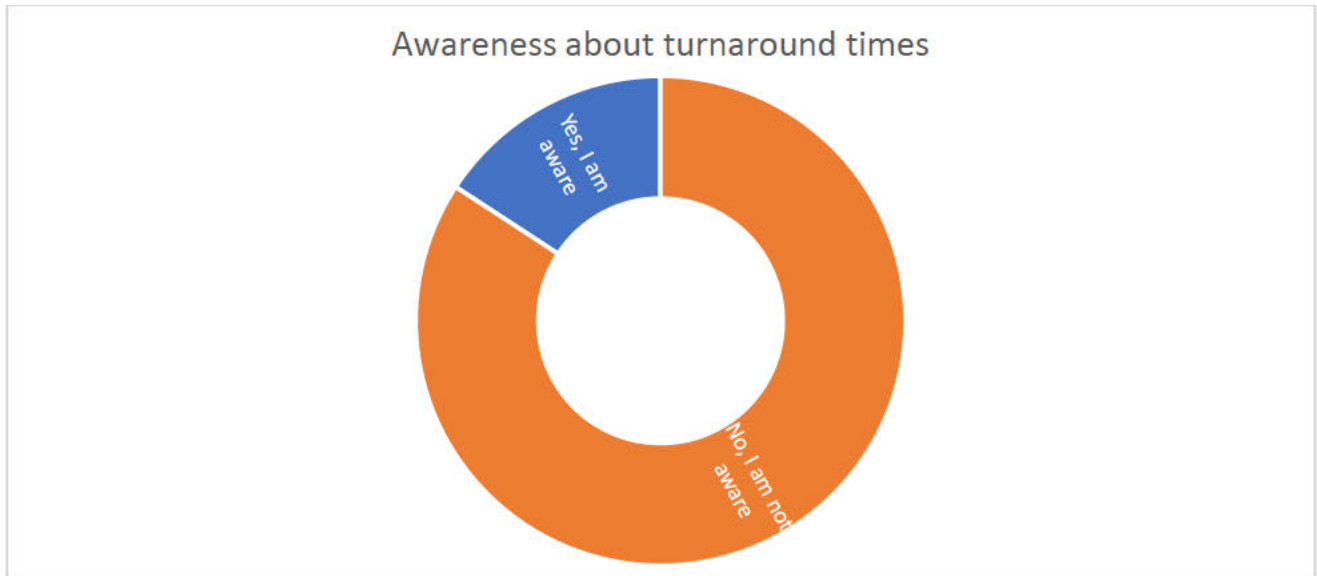
“IDP and Budgets.”

“Budget Presentation.”

“Budget, programs, projects.”

“Service delivery, mainly: 1. The residents who are still awaiting housing allocation, still staying in a temporary unsuitable shelter. 2. Damages to roads due to floods which are still not fixed.”

Community members were asked if they were aware that the municipality has a turnaround time for the fixing of burst water pipes and unplanned water outages; out of nineteen participants, only three participants were aware that the municipality has a turnaround time for fixing unplanned outages and the rest of the population is not aware.



Graph 4.6: Awareness of turnaround times

The Republic of South Africa's 1996 Constitution, Section 195, lays forth the ideals and standards that should guide public administration. Effective, efficient, and economical resource utilisation is one of them. Based on the responses received the municipality is not taking into consideration section 195 of the constitution since it is evident that their meetings are not effective and efficient since they do not cover all critical items to be discussed with members of the public

4.8 Chapter Summary

The findings presented in this chapter reveal the process followed by the municipality to develop service standards, and the public participation process of the municipality. Challenges facing water and sanitation unit, their response time to unplanned outages reported by community members. This was guided by the research questions, aims and objectives, theoretical framework, and reviewed literature for developing service standards. A disjuncture was reflected between the set service standards of the municipality and the responses from the participants. Through findings, several challenges were identified regarding transparency, inclusion, facilitation, service delivery and stakeholders' perceptions of the municipality. In contrast, public participation promotes transparency and accountability and brings hope to members of the public.

CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This chapter ties the study's objectives to the main findings, concludes the study, and provides recommendations and areas for future research. In this respect, the chapter briefly reiterates the overview and summary of the main findings. Notably, the results in this study provide insights into the variety of perceptions towards the development of municipal service standards and response time to reported unplanned outages in line with the primary existence of the local government sphere, which is service delivery to its community members. Thereafter, the chapter presents conclusions, recommendations, and areas for further research.

5.2 Overview of the Study

This study had four research objectives, which were to:

- Ascertain the public participation process by the eThekweni Municipality in developing service standards
- Examine the public review process of the effectiveness of service standards.
- Determine the challenges of service delivery at the eThekweni Municipality.
- Explore public participation process ideas for the eThekweni Municipality.

5.3 Findings

This study highlighted four key results in assessing the implementation of eThekweni Municipality's water and sanitation unit's service standards. In this regard, the observation in this research study is that there is a due process of developing service standards for the municipality in line with the established guidelines in service quality management; however, not all steps in the procedures are followed. The findings of this study include a lack of awareness of service standards, inadequate measurement of service standards, inadequate senior

management support for service standard improvement, and lack of service standards monitoring, as discussed below.

5.3.1 Lack of Awareness of Service Standards

The second *Batho Pele* principle listed in the *Batho Pele* White Paper is service standards, which states that Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect. The study revealed that members of the community and municipal employees are not aware of the municipality's approved service standards; this is a challenge since both members of the community and municipal employees are the internal and external stakeholders of the municipality. This finding corroborates a previous study in Namibia, which reported that a shortage of water supply, unsecured dumping of refuse, air pollution, and poor management systems resulted from bad public relations with the leading players and the absence of citizen participation and knowledge in local government operations (Routh, 2018). Residents are unaware of service standard delivery and do not know when services are poorly delivered and what to expect.

This makes it challenging to ascertain if services delivered by the municipality are being offered in line with the set standards of the municipality. It would be appreciated if all staff participated in regular workshops. It would also be beneficial if the workshops included information on best practices for service standards. For the municipality, enhancing service delivery is a constant, ongoing effort rather than an isolated assignment. It urges a departure from inward-looking bureaucratic systems, procedures, and mindsets in favour of innovative approaches to work that prioritise the requirements of the municipality's customers.

5.3.2 Inadequate Measurement of Service Standards

Measurement of performance against set standards regularly seems to be a challenge. For the unit to develop proper service standards It needs to have a solid strategic plan with precise goals and objectives, as well as useful and applicable metrics for the unit's activities. This will assist in addressing the existing challenge of municipalities and government departments focusing on measuring outputs to evaluate project effectiveness. This does not imply that measuring output

is wrong and not necessary. However, output measures will not inform community members about the quality-of-service delivery they receive from the municipality.

It is recommended that a uniform reporting procedure be established for all municipalities. This would enable them to report based on a shared set of criteria and guarantee that all departments employ identical metrics and definitions for gathering information and presenting findings. Municipalities use the information from the reporting to create and maintain service standards as part of their endeavour to enhance the quality of services provided to the residents of their communities.

5.3.3 Inadequate Senior Management Support for Service Standard Improvement

The findings in this study on ineffective leadership in terms of service delivery agree with a previous study conducted in Namibia (Kalonda & Govender, 2021). The study highlighted that there is usually poor service delivery when high-ranking positions in the Municipalities are based on appointment by politicians and not competence or who is qualified to do the job. Delivery of public services is a continual and dynamic process that must be improved over time because criteria must be gradually upgraded as they are reached. The commitment of management and leadership to take responsibility for their decisions and actions is fostered by good governance. Good governance and effective leadership are essential for an institution such as the municipality to function, especially for the local government to fulfil its mandate (Helao & Naidoo, 2016). All citizens should have equal access to the services they are entitled to. Citizens should be given complete, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to. Municipalities should develop service standards detailing how the above-mentioned will be achieved (Carden et al., 2018).

Senior management must lead the process of ensuring that service standards are accepted and communicated with all stakeholders, including the municipality's employees. To do this successfully, service standards must be embedded in the municipality's strategic plan and translated into the unit's business plan. Service standards must be used as part of the performance assessment process within the municipality. This will assist in improving service delivery because performance assessment may be used to strengthen the service delivery and determine

if staff can receive performance bonuses. Proper training must be provided to all staff members to ensure that all employees understand the importance of service standards so that when they are performing their duties, they are fully aware of the service standards of the municipality.

5.3.4 Lack of Service Standards Monitoring

Truthfully, a lack of monitoring of service delivery is a sign of poor governance because good governance seeks to improve the well-being of its people (Kalonda & Govender, 2021). When service standards have been established, verification mechanisms need to be identified for each service standard. This will enable the municipality to monitor its progress and maintenance towards achieving its standards regularly. The findings from this study indicated that monitoring and maintenance of service delivery is poor. For example, the service standard for resolving a burst water pipe is within 48 hours. However, this fault is often resolved after several days or not resolved within a reasonable time frame. According to Masiya et al. (2019), relative hardship and inequality, broken political promises, unequal access to services, subpar services, and high levels of poverty all contribute to the low quality of municipal services, which breeds discontent among the populace. According to Bachmann and MacCleery (2006) (cited by Murimoga and Musingafi, 2014), public service standards foster local economies, but subpar service delivery degrades local quality of life, slows down economic growth, and erodes public confidence in local government.

This can be done by introducing different ways of monitoring and receiving feedback from community members. Other methods may be too costly, so the municipality must implement the method that will not be too costly but will result in the municipality being able to monitor the implementation of the approved municipal service standards. This will assist in ensuring proper accountability.

5.4 Recommendations

The study found that whilst the development and use of service standards as a means to assess service delivery is widespread, several critical challenges remain, which are as follows:

- Service standards must be communicated accordingly using different communication channels including publication through the municipality's annual report. This must be done in a user-friendly language that everyone understands.
- Include the item "Service Delivery Standards" as a standing agenda item in all meetings held by employees at all levels so that it is not overlooked or forgotten.
- Linking service standards with the Performance Management System of the department and moving from individual performance assessment to component assessment and organisational performance, will assist in ensuring proper accountability and transparency, service standards must be used as part of the performance assessment process within the municipality.
- A budget should be allocated to those areas where services will be improved.
- Departments should establish a standardised process for engaging external clients in developing service standards.
- The municipality must introduce proper customer feedback, which will be traceable.

5.5 Areas for Further Research

Future research needs to include more participants, especially from members of the public and Councillors. Other municipalities may conduct research on the same study, and this will assist in comparing findings.

5.6 Conclusion of the Study

The study concludes that service standards were developed for the Water and Sanitation Unit in eThekweni Municipality, however, service delivery is not in line with the approved turnaround times, and the theoretical framework for the implementation of municipal service standards, was analysed to look to the external constraints, imitative behaviour, and normative influences that shape the adoption and compliance with eThekweni Municipality's water and sanitation service standards.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Turnitin Report

ORIGINALITY REPORT

8% SIMILARITY INDEX	9% INTERNET SOURCES	1% PUBLICATIONS	3% STUDENT PAPERS
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PRIMARY SOURCES

1	researchspace.ukzn.ac.za Internet Source	1%
2	www.mapleleafweb.com Internet Source	1%
3	www.news24.com Internet Source	1%
4	www.dws.gov.za Internet Source	1%
5	www.gov.za Internet Source	1%
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Appendix B: Questionnaire (For Municipal Employees)

Questionnaire #

A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY'S SERVICE STANDARDS: A CASE STUDY OF WATER AND SANITATION UNIT

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. It should take you approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. My name is Nelisiwe Mbongwa, and I am enrolled for a Master of Commerce (Leadership Studies) degree with University of KwaZulu Natal. As part of my academic exercise, I am doing a study on the assessment of the implementation of eThekweni Municipality's service standards: A case study of Water and Sanitation Unit. The analysis of result from this exercise will contribute to my academic work as well as eThekweni Municipality in Water and Sanitation Unit. Thus, your participation is highly valuable. Please see below my contact details for any study related questions:

Email Address: and Contact Number:

1. **To ascertain the public participation process by the eThekweni Municipality in developing service standards.**
 - (a) Do you know what are the service standards for the Municipality?
 - (b) In your understanding are all Units within the Municipality expected to develop service standards.
 - (c) How are these standards developed according to your understanding?
 - (d) Who are the relevant key role-players?
 - (e) For whom are these standards developed?

2. **To examine the public review process of the effectiveness of service standards.**
 - (a) When are they done (which quarter of the financial year of the Municipality)?
 - (b) How often were the consultations done if they were done?

3. To evaluate the challenges of service delivery at the eThekweni municipality.

- (a) In your view are there any challenges on service delivery for provision of water service by the Municipality. If yes, what are those challenges can you mention a few.
- (b) What do you think are the causes of these challenges?
- (c) How do you think these challenges can be addressed or minimised?

4. To offer recommendation for the public participation process in eThekweni Municipality

- (a) How are the public participation conducted e.g., one per ward?
- (b) Are there any awareness campaigns or community mobilisation? If yes, how are they done and how often i.e., once a day, twice a day, once a week etc.?
- (c) When are the public participation taking place (during weekends, after work etc.)?
- (d) From the previous public participation process, how was the attendance by the Community.
- (e) Which agenda items were discussed during these public participation meetings?

Appendix C: Questionnaire (Members of the public)

Questionnaire #

A CRITICAL ASSESSMENT OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY'S SERVICE STANDARDS: A CASE STUDY OF WATER AND SANITATION UNIT

PARTICIPANT QUESTIONNAIRE

Thank you for taking time to complete this questionnaire. It should take you approximately 10 to 15 minutes to complete. My name is Nelisiwe Mbongwa, and I am enrolled for a Master of Commerce (Leadership Studies) degree with University of KwaZulu Natal. As part of my academic exercise, I am doing a study on the assessment of the implementation of eThekweni Municipality's service standards: A case study of Water and Sanitation Unit. The analysis of result from this exercise will contribute to my academic work as well as eThekweni Municipality in Water and Sanitation Unit. Thus, your participation is highly valuable. Please see below my contact details for any study related questions:

Email Address: and Contact Number:

1. Please indicate which age category do you fall within.

18 – 24 years	1
25 – 34 years	2
35 – 44 years	3
45 – 54 years	4
55 and above	5

2. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

3. Area of residence

Suburbs	1
Township	2
Rural	3

4. Which eThekweni Region

North	1
West	2
East	3
South	4

5. Which of the following sources of water are available to you?

Piped water into dwelling	1
Communal standpipe	2
Borehole	3
Water tanker	4
Other	5

6. Which of the following describes your perception about the quality of the water?

Tastes bad	1
Looks dirty	2
Creamish in colour	3
Makes me sick	4
Smells bad	5
Looks clean	6
Safe to drink	7
Other	8

7. What is the frequency of water supply?

24-hour supply	1
Once a day	2
Once in two days	3
Once in three days	4
Other	5

8. Have you made a complaint related to a burst water pipe / leak in the past one year? Yes/No

9. What was the result of that complaint?

Prompt action taken (within 24 hours)	1
Delayed action (within 48 hours)	2
No action taken	3
Other	4

10. How frequent does the water pipe leak or burst?

Once a weekly	1
Once every two weeks	2
Once a month	3
Other	4

11. Does the Municipality properly fix the water pipe upon arrival? Yes/No_____

12. How often do you experience water interruptions?

24 hours	1
48 hours	2
More than 48 hours	3
Other	4

13. Are you aware that the municipality has a turnaround time for the fixing of burst water pipes and unplanned water outages? Yes/No_____

14. Were you or any of your family members consulted when these timelines were developed? Yes/No_____ Please elaborate _____

Appendix D: Informed Consent (English)

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit

Information Sheet and Consent to Participate in Research

Date:

Good-day,

My name is Nelisiwe Mbongwa. I am a student at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus in the department of **UKZN Graduate School of Business**. My contact number is [REDACTED] and email address is **221082100@stu.ukzn.ac.za**

You are being invited to consider participating in a study which is about Municipal service standards. The aim and purpose of this research is to determine if eThekweni Municipality's Water and Sanitation Unit attends to reported faults for water in line with the Municipality's service standards. The study is expected to enroll 100 participants which will be a combination of Municipal employees and members of the community residing within the Municipality area of jurisdiction who had reported water related faults to the Municipality. It will involve interviews as data collection tool, results from the interviews will then be transcribed and be analysed to be able to conclude on the study. The duration of your participation if you choose to enroll and remain in the study is expected to be 30 minutes. There is no funding for the study.

The study does not involve any risks or injury. We hope that the study will assist to verify if the Municipality is providing service delivery to members of its community as expected.

The study will provide no direct benefits or incentives. However, knowing how the municipality is performing against its set standards will be beneficial for both the Municipality and members of the community residing within its area of jurisdiction.

This study has been ethically reviewed and approved by the UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (approval number _____).

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

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

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

You are not forced to participate in this study, you may withdraw at any time. You will not be penalized or lose anything with your withdrawal. If you wish to withdraw, you may contact the researcher and you will be withdrawn immediately.

There are no costs involved when participating in this study, and there are also no incentives or reimbursements for participation.

During interviews, no name will be mentioned only participant number 1,2,3 etc. The information used while collecting data will be kept safe at the UKZN and will be disposed of after 5 years.

CONSENT

I (participants full name) have been informed about the study entitled **A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekwin Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit** by Nelisiwe Mbongwa.

I understand the purpose and procedures of the study.

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

I declare that my participation in this study is entirely voluntary and that I may withdraw at any time without affecting any of the benefits that I usually am entitled to.

If I have any further questions/concerns or queries related to the study I understand that I may contact the researcher at (provide details).

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

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

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

Additional consent, where applicable

I hereby provide consent to:

Audio-record my interview YES / NO

Signature of Participant

Date

**Signature of Witness
(Where applicable)**

Date

**Signature of Translator
(Where applicable)**

Date

Appendix E: Informed Consent (IsiZulu)

UKZN HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE (HSSREC)

APPLICATION FOR ETHICS APPROVAL For research with human participants

IFOMU LOKUCELA IMVUME

A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit

Ishidi Lolwazi kanye nemvume yokuhlanganyela ocwaningweni

Usuku:
Sawubona,

Igama lami ngingu Nelisiwe Mbongwa. Ngingumfundi eNyuvesi yaKwaZulu-Natal, e-Westville Campus emnyangweni we-**UKZN Graduate School of Business**. Inombolo yami yokuxhumana ithi [REDACTED] kanye nekheli le-imeyili lithi 221082100@stu.ukzn.ac.za

Uyamenywa ukuthi ubambe iqhaza ocwaningweni olumayelana nesikhathi okuphendula ngaso uMasipala uma kunezinkinga zamanzi ezibikwe umphakathi. Inhloso nenjongo yalolu cwaningo ukuthola ukuthi ngabe uphiko lwaManzi nokuThuthwa kweNdle kuMasipala weTheku luyabhekana yini namaphutha abikwayo okuthola amanzi ngokuhambisana nemigomo kaMasipala. Lolu cwaningo kulindeleke ukuthi lubhalise abantu abayi-100 okuzoba yinhlanguanisela yabasebenzi bakaMasipala kanye namalungu omphakathi ahlala endaweni engaphansi kukaMasipala ababikele uMasipala ngamaphutha ahlobene namanzi. Kuzobandakanya izingxoxo njengethuluzi lokuqoqwa kolwazi, imiphumela yenhlolokhono izobe isilotshwa futhi ihlaziye ukuze ukwazi ukuphetha ngocwaningo. Isikhathi sokubamba kwakho iqhaza uma ukhetha ukubhalisa nokuhlala ocwaningweni kulindeleke ukuthi kube yimizuzu engama-30. Ayikho imali yocwaningo.

Ucwaningo alubandakanyi ubungozi noma ukulimala. Siyethemba ukuthi lolu cwaningo luzosiza ekuqinisekiseni ukuthi uMasipala uyawahlizeka yini umphakathi ngosizo ngendlela elindelekile. Ucwaningo ngeke lunikeze inzuzo. Kodwa-ke, ukwazi ukuthi umasipala usebenza kanjani ngokuphambene nezindinganiso ezibekiwe kuzoba wusizo kuMasipala nakumalungu omphakathi ahlala endaweni yawo.

Lolu cwaningo lubuyekwezwe ngokokuziphatha futhi lwagunyazwa yiKomidi le-UKZN Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics (inombolo yokugunyaza _____).

Uma kuba nezinkinga noma ukukhathazeka/imibuzo ungathintana nomcwaningi kule mininingwane yokuxhumana engenhla noma iKomidi le-UKZN Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics, imininingwane yokuxhumana kanje:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

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

Awuphoqelekile ukuthi ubambe iqhaza kulolu cwaningo, ungahoxa noma nini. Ngeke ujeziswe noma ulahlekelwe yilutho ngokuhoxa kwakho. Uma ufisa ukuhoxa, ungathintana nomcwaningi futhi uzohoxiswa ngokushesha.

Azikho izindleko ezilindelekile lapho ubamba iqhaza kulolu cwaningo, futhi azikho izinxephezelo noma izimbuyiselo zokubamba iqhaza.

Ngesikhathi senhlokhono, alikho igama elizoshiwo kuphela inombolo yombambi qhaza 1,2,3 njalonzalo. Ulwazi olusetshenziswe ngesikhathi kuqoqwa imininingwane luzogcinwa luphephile e-UKZN futhi luzolahlwa ngemva kweminyaka emi-5.

IMVUME

Mina (igama eliphelele labahlanganyeli) nginayo baziswe ngalolu cwaningo olunesihloko esithi, **A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit** olwenziwa uNelisiwe Mbongwa.

Ngiyayiqonda inhloso nezinqubo zocwaningo.

Nginikezwe ithuba lokuphendula imibuzo mayelana nocwaningo futhi ngibe nezimpendulo ngokwaneliseka kwami.

Ngiyazisa ukuthi ukuhlanganyela kwami kulolu cwaningo kungokuzithandela futhi ngingahoxa noma nini ngaphandle kokuphazamisa noma yiziphi izinzuzo engivame ukuba nelungelo lokuzithola.

Uma ngineminye imibuzo/izinto ezingikhathazayo noma imibuzo ehlobene nocwaningo ngiyaqonda ukuthi ngingaxhumana nomcwaningi kokuthi (nikeza imininingwane).

Uma nginemibuzo noma ukukhathazeka mayelana namalungelo ami njengomhlanganyeli wocwaningo, noma uma ngikhathazekile ngendawo ethize yocwaningo noma abacwaningi ngingathintana:

HUMANITIES & SOCIAL SCIENCES RESEARCH ETHICS ADMINISTRATION

Research Office, Westville Campus

Govan Mbeki Building

Private Bag X 54001

Durban

4000

KwaZulu-Natal, SOUTH AFRICA

Tel: 27 31 2604557 - Fax: 27 31 2604609

Email: HSSREC@ukzn.ac.za

Invume eyengeziwe, lapho kufanele

Nginikeza imvume ku:

Rekhoda ingxoxo (interview) yami YEBO / CHA

Isiginesha Yombambi qhaza

Usuku

**Isiginesha yofakazi
(Lapho kufanele khona)**

Usuku

**Isiginesha yoMhumushi
(Lapho kufanele khona)**

Usuku

Appendix F: Gatekeepers Letter



For attention:
Chair of Research Ethics Committee
College of Law and Management Studies
Graduate School of Business
University of KwaZulu Natal
Durban
4001
3 March 2023

RE: LETTER OF SUPPORT TO N. MBONGWA, STUDENT NUMBER 221082100 - GRANTING PERMISSION TO USE ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY AS A STUDY SITE

I am pleased to inform you that the **Water and Sanitation Unit and Municipal Institute of Learning (MILE)** in eThekweni Municipality recently considered a gatekeeper request from **NELISIWE MBONGWA (Ms)** to use eThekweni Municipality as a research study site leading towards a **Master of Commerce (Leadership Studies)** degree. The request is to conduct participant interviews for a research study entitled **"A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit."**

We wish to inform you of the **ACCEPTANCE** of this request and hereby assure the student of our utmost cooperation towards achieving her academic goals; the outcome which we believe will help eThekweni municipality improve its evidence-base on change management. The student is reminded of the data collection conditions, ethical considerations as well as the current health related regulations when conducting the research. The student must take all necessary measures to ensure her personal safety during the research period as eThekweni Municipality indemnifies itself from any incidental claims that may arise

It is mandatory for the student to contact Xola.Nqwane@durban.gov.za to arrange a learning event where the researcher will share the findings and recommendations of the research output with the beneficiary unit prior to finalization.

Wishing the student all the best in her studies.

Supported

Ms Lungi Zuma
pp. Head: Water & Sanitation Unit
eThekweni Municipality

Dr. Collin Pillay
Program Manager: MILE
eThekweni Municipality

I, Nelisiwe Mbongwa.....hereby accept as mandatory that I will comply fully as per the conditions stipulated above.

Signed: [Signature] Date: 3 March 2023

Appendix G: Ethics Approval



04 May 2023

Nelisiwe Nicolene Mbongwa (221082100)
Grad School of Bus & Leadership
Westville Campus

Dear NN Mbongwa,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00005437/2023

Project title: A critical assessment of the implementation of eThekweni municipality's service standards: a case study of water and sanitation unit.

Degree: Masters

Approval Notification – Expedited Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application received on 24 March 2023 in connection with the above, was reviewed by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSSREC) and the protocol has been granted **FULL APPROVAL**.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach and Methods must be reviewed and approved through the amendment/modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. **PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.**

This approval is valid until 04 May 2024.

To ensure uninterrupted approval of this study beyond the approval expiry date, a progress report must be submitted to the Research Office on the appropriate form 2 - 3 months before the expiry date. A close-out report to be submitted when study is finished.

HSSREC is registered with the South African National Health Research Ethics Council (REC-040414-040).

Yours sincerely,

A black rectangular box redacting the signature of Professor Dipane Hlalele.

Professor Dipane Hlalele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Appendix H: Editorial Certificate

**EDITORIAL
CERTIFICATE**

Author: Nelisiwe Nicolene Mbongwa

Document title: A Critical Assessment of the Implementation of eThekweni Municipality's Service Standards: A Case Study of Water and Sanitation Unit

Date issued: 13/06/2024

This document certifies that the above manuscript was proofread and edited by Prof Gift Mheta (PhD, Linguistics).

The document was edited for proper English language, grammar, punctuation, spelling and overall style. The editor endeavoured to ensure that the author's intended meaning was not altered during the review. All amendments were tracked with the Microsoft Word "Track Changes" feature. Therefore, the author had the option to reject or accept each change individually.

Kind regards


Prof Gift Mheta (Cell: 