

**EVALUATING PROJECT MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON SERVICE
DELIVERY IN ETHEKWINI MUNICIPALITY**

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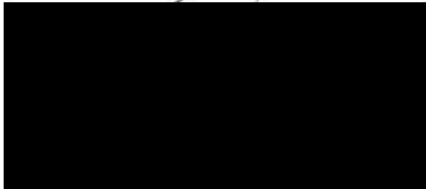
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DECLARATION

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ABSTRACT

The fundamental function and responsibility of any government, apart from protecting lives and property, is to provide services through the initiation and implementation of projects. With the increasing pressure mounted on the government for quality projects delivery, there still exists a knowledge gap on the responsiveness of the municipality to service delivery through project implementation. This study investigated the relationship between project management and service delivery. The study employed the qualitative research approach to elicit qualitative data. The exploratory research design was used to advance the limit of the research gap. The study sample comprised eight (8) managers who were purposively selected, and the data were collected using face-to-face semi-structured interviews. The NVivo (v.12) qualitative software was used to identify themes from the interview transcripts, and content analysis was used to analyze these different themes. The study shows a range of decision-making processes in initializing projects at the eThekweni municipality, including community engagement, feasibility study, management initiation, and political leadership. The concerns of low financial allocation and time frame for the release of funds were shown to constrain effective project management and implementation. The study further reveals the challenges of political interference and the politicization of projects by different political parties. The study makes a case for appropriate measures for improved community engagement for effective service delivery, monitoring and inspection of projects after completion, and the need to address the challenge of political pressure, interference, and politicization of projects.

Keywords: Projects Management, Service Delivery, Local Government, eThekweni Municipality

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction and background to the study

This study evaluates project management systems and service delivery, using eThekweni Municipality as a point of reference. Over the past two decades, debates in this discourse remain inconclusive concerning how project management systems have been used to upturn service delivery (Sa Couto, 2008; Morris, Pinto and Söderlund, 2010). This study seeks to close this chasm by contributing to existing knowledge on the subject of project management systems and service delivery. To do this, it utilizes decision-making processes, risks associated with managing projects, and financial resource allocation as project management systems in understanding service delivery in eThekweni Municipality, Durban, South Africa.

The background to the study is presented, together with the problem statement and the significance of the study on project management and its influence on service delivery. The specific objectives emanating from the overall aim of the study are well-articulated, and the research questions resulting from the statement of the problem are also stated. Literature is carefully reviewed, considering the constellation of themes about project management systems and service delivery. Other issues highlighted in this study include a theoretical framework that underpins the research and a clear explanation of the methodological approach to answer the various research questions. Others are the analysis and conclusions of the study.

The importance of effective project management has become an emergent issue of concern in developing countries, as it forms an essential bedrock for viable service delivery across the board (Wang, Bao and Jia, 2010). While the increasing level of poor governance has been highlighted as a significant concern hampering the developmental agenda of many countries, South Africa included, it is not far-fetched that ineffective management of public projects is a fundamental constraint in this discourse (Jonas, 2010). With this submission, the need for assessing how project management influences service delivery becomes essential.

Similarly, the many challenges reflecting the inappropriate management of public projects have been marshaled to have severe implications for services outcomes, particularly within the South African context (Hall, 2012). Therefore, for its effectiveness, the project management system should ordinarily be fair and transparent to achieve the intended objectives of providing efficient services. However, similar studies have shown, within the context of South Africa, that with the considerable importance attached to public sector project management systems, little evidence is available showing that project management systems have engendered efficient and sustainable services to the citizens (Mullay, 2006; Vargo and Lusch, 2008; Jonas, 2010). With these accounts, the task of this study reflects a departure from other existing studies as it seeks to assess how project management systems have influenced service delivery within the distinct context of the eThekweni Municipality. To do this, the study intends to understand the different project management initiatives and how they have influenced service delivery in eThekweni Municipality. In addition, the task of this study also extends to uncovering the many challenges affecting sustainable service delivery through project management systems. Lastly, the study circumspectly examines the role of the government in the management of projects towards achieving effective delivery of services for all.

1.2 Research background

The eThekweni municipality is located on the East Coast of South Africa in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. The geographical reach of the municipality covers a total area of 255 km², including different ranges of social, environmental, and economic challenges (Statistics South Africa, 2018). The city has seen an increase in population in the last ten years. For example, in 2001, the municipality's population was estimated at approximately 2.09 million people. This increased to 3.44 percent in 2011 (Statistics South Africa, 2018). In 2020, the population was estimated at 3.85 million people (Statistics South Africa, 2020). The municipality has witnessed a range of challenges, including unemployment, scarcity of human development, increasing poverty, and the constraint of poor service quality (Statistics South Africa, 2018). In addition, among other economic indices, the municipality is said to be housing one of the busiest ports in Africa. Although statistics have shown that the municipality's poverty rate has continued to decrease year to year, the municipality is still signaled as having the second-highest number of persons living with poverty in the KwaZulu-Natal province.

1.3 Problem statement

The problem of poor project management has been and remained one of the significant factors constricting Africa's economic development. In contrast, various researchers have identified that many African countries have not effectively paid utmost attention to the management of public projects (Hall, 2012). In other words, an efficient project management system is crucial to the development of African countries and an expression of the national commitment to ensuring effective delivery of services (Sa Couto, 2008). In South Africa, studies have shown that South Africa, as a developing nation, encounters major dilemmas relating to the rising level of poverty, lack of social amenities, and other social crimes, especially among the black population (Morris, Pinto and Söderlund, 2010). The government agencies and departments have a huge role to play in addressing these challenges. However, the ability of government agencies and departments for committed sustainable project management with respect to the decision-making process, risks associated with managing projects, and financial resource allocation that can guarantee service delivery effectiveness remains unclear (Savolainen, Ahonen and Richardson, 2012).

One of the most profound service delivery challenges confronting many municipalities in South Africa is related to the many years of infrastructural mismanagement, which has culminated into the severe deterioration of other existing infrastructure as the case may be (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008). However, there are non-existing infrastructures in some cases, which roused the need for capital investment through projects initiation and implementation, essentially by the public sector (Golini, Kalchschmidt and Landoni, 2015). In the Centre for Development Support argument, the lack and shortage of service delivery in South Africa cannot be detached from the challenge of poor governance, political interference, lack of maintenance culture, and the rising rate of corrupt practices in the local government. In other words, what remains a bottleneck in the dilemma of policymakers is the lack of understanding of the context and nature of expected service delivery through the management and implementation of projects (Nilsson and Soderholm, 2014). The challenge is further compounded by the new public management school of thought that conceives public service beneficiaries as 'customers,' thus focusing on providing service to customers (Cserháti and Szabó, 2014). With this constraint in mind, municipality managers lack the appropriate channel to unravel and understand their constituent's opinions for improved service delivery through project management initiation and implementation.

The absence of essential service delivery affects community members' health status, welfare, and social capital development. It involves the complete socio-political and socio-economic conditions of members of the communities (Bersanetim and Carvalho, 2015). Thus, the lack of essential services negatively affects the overall standard and quality of life (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008). It is crucial to understand that there was a high rate of expectations that the new democratic South Africa would provide basic service delivery to the millions of South Africans who have been previously marginalized and denied access to basic services (Nilsson and Soderholm, 2014). Because of this, Cserháti and Szabó (2014) argued that the commitment to improve upon the service delivery initiatives through project implementation had been stalled by several factors, not excluding the politicization of projects meant for the welfare of members of the community. While there are pockets of improvements in government delivery of services, gaps still exist in the effective utilization of projects for service delivery (Bersanetim and Carvalho, 2015).

While there are many studies on project management and service delivery (Hall, 2012; Bersanetim and Carvalho, 2015; Chih and Zwikael, 2015), few of these studies have been investigated within the context of eThekweni Municipality. Therefore, this study seeks to fill this gap. In addition, the increasing impact of project management on service delivery has continued to take center stage of government discussion agenda without progress, particularly within the context of South Africa (Jonas, 2010). While this is established, several problems have been identified as plausible factors constricting project management for effective service delivery within the public sector. This includes the lack of collaborative teamwork in the execution of projects, the power and authority between and among the rank and files public officials, the tense political environment, and skills and experience of public officials to execute and manage public projects for effective service delivery among others (Hall, 2012). Therefore, critical to this study is the necessity to understand how projects have been managed for effective service delivery within the context of the eThekweni Municipality. This is fundamental to evaluate the challenges constraining effective project management as a pathway for sustainable service delivery. Notably, the importance of this study rests on the need to unravel the extent to which project management has effectively or otherwise been channeled to improve the services and livelihood of people, with a focus on the eThekweni Municipality.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The following research objectives were addressed in this study:

1. To assess the impact of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekwini Municipality
2. To determine the processes that eThekwini Municipality have to manage risks associated with projects/projects management
3. To analyze the impact of the financial resource allocation for effective project management in eThekwini Municipality
4. To ascertain challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekwini Municipality.

1.5 Research questions

The following research questions were addressed in order to achieve the set objectives:

1. What are the impacts of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekwini Municipality?
2. How does eThekwini Municipality manage risk associated with projects/project management?
3. What are the impacts of financial resource allocation on effective project management in eThekwini Municipality?
4. What are the challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekwini Municipality?

1.6 Justification of the study

The ushering in of the new democratic South Africa has not been able to stem the tide of poor service delivery through appropriate project management initiatives. Therefore, the present study is justified in several instances. First, there is a limited number of discussions in the literature on the link between project management and service delivery, especially in the context of eThekwini municipality. In addition, through empirical discourse, the study anticipates addressing service delivery challenges in the eThekwini municipality through informed policy recommendations. Fundamentally, an investigation on the nexus between project management

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will contribute to the academic literature by clearly addressing the research chasm in the literature through the prism of the eThekweni municipality. This is sufficient to contend that the relevance of this study would emanate from both policy and theoretical implications. From the viewpoint of the policy implication, the study anticipates contributing solutions to the challenges of service delivery through the appropriation of effective management and implementation of projects in the eThekweni municipality. From a theoretical standpoint, the study envisions complementing existing theoretical discourse on project management and service delivery.

1.7 Scope of the study

The increasing failure of government in service delivery through appropriate implementation and management of projects has remained a long-time problem affecting the welfare and livelihood of many South Africans. In other words, the focus of this study is on understanding the nexus between project management and services in the eThekweni municipality. Therefore, this study's findings and other related issues are expressly confined to the eThekweni municipality. The selection of this municipality is not essentially justified as being a metro but unarguably the most economically vibrant among other municipalities in the KZN province. With the attempt to understand the link between project management and service delivery, the study also understands the impact of financial resource allocation on projects initiation and implementation and the range of challenges limiting the realization of service delivery initiatives through profound project management measures.

1.8 Limitations of the study

One of the limitations is connected to the secrecy of information gathered from the eThekweni municipality. This challenge was noticed when some respondents initially declined to participate in the research. However, with consistent appeal and clarifications, the researcher was able to address this challenge. In addition, the constraint of finance limited the research to the eThekweni municipality rather than an attempt to interrogate two municipalities in a comparative study. However, with this limitation in mind, this constraint can be extended and investigated in future research. Put together; these varying limitations did not reflect in the findings of the study in any way. This was done by ensuring appropriate measures were constituted to control these limitations and achieve the study's objectives.

1.9 Structure of the study

The study is structured into seven chapters, with each chapter addressing a different segment of the study.

Chapter 1: Addresses issues relating to the conceptualization of the study by problematizing the research. The chapter also discusses the research objectives and questions and the explicit explanation of the research relevance. In addition, the chapter also captures explanations on the research settings of the study, being the eThekweni municipality. This is necessary to present a brief account of the workings and activities of the research settings and explain the research limitations followed this.

Chapter 2: This chapter present the literature review . Different themes and issues were reviewed to present a grounding arguments for the study.

Chapter 3: Present the theoretical basis for the study. The assumptions of the Principal Agency and Organisational Justice Theories were reviewed to create a theoretical basis for the study.

Chapter 4: This chapter commences with the justification for applying the interpretivist research philosophy as the practical research philosophy for this study. The chapter explains other methodological approaches, including the research design, the study population and sample size, sampling techniques, and recruitment strategy. The issue of data collection and analysis was also clearly presented in this chapter.

Chapter 5: This chapter addresses data analysis and presentation of findings.

Chapter 6: The findings of the data were discussed in this chapter with major implications inferred from the major findings.

Chapter 7: This chapter presents the summary, conclusions, and recommendations of the study. The chapter also present areas for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

Discussion on how project management and its implementation has contributed to improved service delivery in South Africa has remained a continuous contention, specifically with sparse available evidence in the eThekweni Municipality of the KwaZulu-Natal province. This claim reflects how projects are managed in the former apartheid regime for the exclusive benefits of the white dominating class. Since the emergence of the new democratic South Africa in 1994, the former apartheid has been confronted with implementing and managing projects for service delivery (Chih and Zwikael, 2015). However, one of the crucial means that South African citizens can relish the benefits of this democracy is the need to pay utmost attention to service delivery. While the significance of project management and its implementation is a fundamental thrust for ensuring the efficient provision of services such as tap water, infrastructure, health care facilities, and qualitative education, among others, it is not entirely wrong to argue that little of these needs have been met by the government of South Africa (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008). To put in context, this chapter aims to understand if project management is a prerequisite for service delivery.

Thus, this chapter seeks to uncover academic debates about the nexus between project management and service delivery through the lens of conceptual and empirical arguments. To do this, however, the review is sectionalized into different components in such a manner that captures various empirical contentions through peer-reviews articles and other scholarly contributions. Therefore, the first section of this chapter begins with conceptualizations of project management and service delivery. The chapter also reviews extant trends of scholarly contributions regarding the link between project management and service delivery. The constellation of project management issues examined in a bid to uncover this link include decision-making and service delivery, risk management and service delivery, and financial resources and service delivery, in addition to the challenges associated with the management of projects for service delivery.

2.2 Conceptualising project management

Projects are explained as any sequence of activities and tasks constrained by specific objectives for completion within the defined duration. They have a start and finish time; consume both human and material resources (Chih and Zwikael, 2015). In other words, a project is therefore conceived as the complete process required to engender a new product, service, process, and other systems within a given budget (Besner and Hobbs, 2012). To be precise, projects encapsulate the management of activities with a concise beginning and end intention. The outputs are controlled by time, budgets, quality, and human and material resources (Bersanetim and Carvalho, 2015). This is sufficient to admit that the project's end goal is to deliver service to improve people's livelihood.

Furthermore, Soderlund (2012) conceptualizes a project as an impermanent endeavor to engender exceptional products or services. However, making sense from this definition, the word impermanent expressly connotes that the project is bounded by a deadline for delivery. In addition, a project has been generally construed as a human endeavor. It is widely perceived or viewed by its stakeholders as a project when it incorporates or has to do with an exceptional scope of execution that is monitored by cost, time, and budgets, the intent of which is to produce or adjust an existing product for the benefits of the general population (Gobeli and Larson, 2013; Gareis, 2014). However, linking the conceptualization of projects to engendering substantial output, Cova and Holstius (2014) argue that a project should be construed as a value chain based on details, which is expected for completion under an agreed time, work allowance, resources, and other external conditions (Chih and Zwikael, 2015). Put together, one unifying theme emanating from the above crop of definitions is the verity that projects are unique in their delivery with a fixed commencement and end time.

On the other hand, project management is construed as integrating knowledge, abilities, and technique to actualize project requirements in terms of starting, end, and expected projects outputs (Besner and Hobbs, 2012). Therefore, actualizing project management intention involves initiation, planning, executing, evaluating, and monitoring functions (Blomquist, Hillgren, Nilsson and Soderholm, 2014). These different project management functional areas demand an approach that can appropriately and efficiently manage these features either in the context of private organization strategic objectives or public execution of projects for service delivery

initiatives (Coobms, 2015). However, to establish a nexus between project management and the public sector, which forms the crux of this study, studies have shown why project management should remain a vital point for policymakers (Chih and Zwikael, 2015; Turner, 2006). Essentially, within the context of the public sector, studies have shown the need for policymakers to transmute the end-to-end policy into deliverable plans and actions for service delivery (Bersanetim and Carvalho, 2015; Besner and Hobbs, 2012).

However, a constellation of studies with regard to the concept of project management shows the significant role of robust organizational structures and competent public officials, who must be positioned for effective management of public projects for improved service delivery outcome (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008; Cserháti and Szabó, 2014). In other words, similar studies have recounted the need for a complete analysis of public service providers and politicians if service delivery is for the citizens' interest (Turner, 2006; Kemoni, Ngulube and Stilwell, 2012). Put together, and effective project management encapsulates the necessity of skills and competency for public officials and the need to understand their behavioral antecedents for plausible service outcomes. In addition, project management can be construed as an assortment of tools and techniques employed to direct the use of different resources with the intent of completing a unique, intricate task within a specified period (Cserháti and Szabó, 2014). Thus, this definition lends credence to planning and organizing as a critical aspect of accomplishing effective project management. For instance, Chih and Zwikael (2015) argued that the nitty-gritty of project management is clearly understood from the narratives of planning, organizing, controlling, and monitoring all strands of a project with the support of all involved stakeholders for efficient outputs (Chih and Zwikael, 2015).

Institutions and agencies of government often embark on varied projects to improve the functional capacity of the existing projects or to create new ones, as the case may be. However, the constellation of these projects most often necessitates relevant skills and procedures that complement technical prowess that require good and thorough skills to manage a sparsely available budget with robust monitoring functions for optimum delivery (Dalcher, 2012; Kemoni, Ngulube and Stilwell, 2012). Thus, the application of project management within the confines of the public sector has been spotted as an important method that could aid in upturning management efficiencies and help the public sector accurately accomplish sustainable projects

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delivery (Dalcher, 2012). Lastly, Golini, Kalchschmidt, and Landoni (2015) detailed that project management is the science and art of translating vision into reality. Project management, hence, can be utilized by organizations or public institutions to enhance personal and concerted productivity. This can be attained by instituting a standardized system that incorporates best practices into the process and execution of projects (Coobms, 2015). Having conceptualized project management, the next section of the review distills the concept of service delivery through the lens of the public sector.

2.3 Service delivery: evidence from the local government perspective

Placing service delivery within a specific context can sometimes be a sedulous task. While the concept generally connotes delivery in terms of provisions and other welfare needs, the context of its usage greatly determines its specifics. These contentions among scholars have remained a debate of morass. For instance, the enormous available studies have narrowed the significance of 'service' to provisions (Mullay, 2006; Partington, Pellegrinelli and Young, 2011). In contrast, the present study extends this frontier by arguing for service delivery, as not only the provision and delivery of amenities but including the need to ensure that such provision and amenities serve the immediate needs of a group of people within the context of public service (Midler and Silberzahn, 2008; Sense, 2013). In other words, service delivery in the realm of public service is intensely monitored by rules and compliance for effective outcomes (Wellman, 2007). At the core of governmental function is the provision of regulated activities geared towards providing service to the citizens, mainly as there are guided by the rule of law requirements (Morris, Crawford and Hodgson, 2006).

As described by the authors, service delivery commences with effective project management (Partington, Pellegrinelli and Young, 2011). For instance, this is sufficient to contend that government agencies and departments can only deliver service if they have adequate knowledge and information on the available projects they are managing (Mullay, 2006). Thus, proper project management backs service delivery in many instances (Jonas, 2010). For Partington, Pellegrinelli, and Young (2011), effective project management is imperative for realizing the government's goal of delivering services to the citizens. Aligning these contentions to the case of South Africa, there have been several pressure and need for a renewed service delivery procedure, reflecting through the many political and socio-economic transformation that has since characterized South

Africa in recent times (William and Parr, 2008). Put in perspective, service delivery is conceptualized depending on the nature of service being offered to ease a group of people (Mullay, 2006). However, in this study, service delivery is contextualized as government departments and agencies' constitutional remit of delivering services not limited to healthcare, infrastructure, education, electricity, and other basic amenities for improved welfare of the citizens.

Service delivery at the municipality level can be construed as the provision of service, including the need to ensure streets and township are kept clean by promptly evacuating refuse and ensuring streets are adequately lit up (Ive and Rintala, 2012). Khalid's (2014) conceptualization aligns with this argument. However, the author argued further that depending on the type and nature of service delivered, each service strand has a primary agenda of transforming the communities in which the service is being offered (Khalid, 2014). In other words, as one of the critical agendas of government and its institutions, the public service should deliver timely and usable service as required by members of the communities. To achieve this, the onus is on government institutions to establish a robust organizational structure constituting suitably qualified professionals who must be monitored and supported to effectively deliver services to public members (Partington, Pellegrinelli and Young, 2011).

Accordingly, in his explanation, Tamrakar (2012) contends that an appreciation delivers public service of the link between recipients of the service, politicians, and service providers. For instance, Khalid (2014) argued that it is crucial to examine the inducements that govern politicians' and service providers' performance if service fulfills the desired interest of the beneficiaries. Thus, it is safe to argue that the chief concern for ensuring service delivery is the need to understand how parties' responsibilities are defined and enforced.

In a bid to narrow the discourse of service delivery to municipalities in South Africa, William and Parr (2008) contend that one of the most fantastic puzzles of service delivery confronting a large number of Municipalities in South Africa cannot be distanced from the many years of infrastructural desertion, which has ensued with the severe weakening of extant infrastructure and the public good. While it is a verity that in some cases, the infrastructure is instead not in existence, and enhanced infrastructure within the context of municipalities and communities possesses the potent of creating job openings and service delivery (Pollock, Shaoul and Vickers,

2010). Accordingly, Barata and Cain's (2011) study argued that the many service delivery-related challenges had been instigated by a clear case of poor governance and policy implementation, political wrangle among politicians within the local government context, and poor management culture. Therefore, one of the limitations to addressing the poor service delivery has less to do with financial resources. Still, more with a robust understanding of the nature and type of services policy-makers are out to offer the members of the communities and the varied types of service that are essential to different members of the communities (William and Parr, 2008).

Furthermore, several contentions have been put forward concerning the devastating effect of poor service delivery. For instance, Pollock et al. (2010) argue that the prevalent deficiency of basic service affects the health status of members of the communities and reflects an impact on the socio-political and socio-economic formation of the overall communities. This is, however, safe to conclude that deficiency in basic service affects the overall quality of life of members of communities. Again, in the context of South Africa, the expectations that come with the post-apartheid government in ensuring basic services are distributed to the majority of South Africans who have been previously disadvantaged cannot be utterly substantiated. In the opinion of Barata and Cain (2011), although the South African government, through her public services, has perfected plans for improving the nature of service delivery to members of the communities, yet the necessity to enhance was undermined by the government's acceptance of the fact that challenges constraining access to and effective delivery of services were no longer freedoms to be relished by the few, but the due expectations of all, particularly the previously disadvantaged (Barata and Cain, 2011).

To some extent, there are pockets of evidence of excellence with regard to government delivery of services. However, twenty-five years after the emergence of the first democratic elections in South Africa, there are still challenges with respect to how best the government can ensure basic services are delivered to the majority of South Africans through a working governmental framework (Naidoo, 2010). Therefore, the remit of any developmental state is the desire and capability of the government to engender a knowledgeable managerial apparatus within the confines of the state, within which political leaders are carefully deployed in ensuring that the needs of members of the communities in terms of service delivery and programs are met (Mullay, 2006). Thus, the South African government is saddled with the necessity of alleviating

the service delivery challenges of her citizens through timeous and effective service delivery (Naidoo, 2010). Having conceptualized service delivery through the lens of the public sector, this chapter's next theme seeks to establish the nexus between project management and service delivery.

With the above verity, service delivery should transmute to improved quality services for the citizens. For instance, in the developmental years of local government administration in South Africa, it was admitted that underprivileged South Africans have high expectations and forestall a substantial enhancement in their standard of living (Phillip and Bakker, 2011). In contrast, Smith (2013) rightly cautioned that local government in the contest of South Africa would require knowledge and resourcefulness if these expectations were to be fulfilled in the shortest possible time. However, what is not in doubt is that poor or slow stride of service delivery at the local level of governance has led to varied contention and protests among the deprived communities.

This line of argument is shared by McCarthy (2006), who contends that while there is evidence of major improvement in service delivery in South Africa, especially at the local level of governance, it is clear that these services are not sufficient to meet the increased demands that ensued with the emergence of democracy in South Africa. In other words, the evident service at the disposal of communities does not equate to the anticipated services offered by the local government (Shaw, 2010). Therefore, if the remit of ensuring service delivery is shouldered on the local government being the closest government arm to the people, it is logical to justify the several protests action embarked upon by South Africans due mainly as a result of their dissatisfaction with the level of services delivered by the local government.

2.4 Project management and service delivery: a nexus

The main thrust of project management in government establishments is to enhance the institution's capability to deliver efficient and quality service (Turner, 2006). In other words, this places significant responsibilities on government institutions for the ideal utilization of public resources for best outcomes (Sense, 2013). Similarly, it also extends to ensuring utmost attention on how best things should be done within a stipulated budget. A great demand is thus placed on accountability for service delivery (William and Parr, 2008). Project management can be positioned to support the attainment of public institutional goals by ensuring resources are

appropriately and effectively managed (Sanderson, 2012). Thus, integrating project management context to the execution of public projects can help with explicit explanation of and agreement on what goals are set out to be achieved, identification of what resources are required, instilling accountability for best results, and a clear focus on what results are to be achieved (Ronnback, 2012). Project management, in other words, should be the prime goal of policymakers to ensure that they can translate public policy into delivery actions and effective outcomes (Rwelamila, 2007). On the other hand, the participation of policymakers can help reinforce the entire project management process for efficient and service delivery (Ngoepe and Keakopa, 2011).

The literature searches on project management and service delivery reveal that project management planning remains one of the focal policy agendas for effective service delivery. For instance, Mapulanga's (2015) study on public procurement legislation and acquisition reports that project management planning greatly determines the success or failure of any project management for effective delivery. The author contends further that comprehensive attention to effective project management planning could engender a niche where the project management goal would neatly connect with the needs and goals of the citizens (Mapulanga, 2015). In other words, the necessity of planning in any project plays a huge role in its outcomes (Turner, 2006).

Furthermore, the significance of effective project management policies towards ensuring efficient and service delivery remains incontestable. Undeniably, the role of project management policies for achieving viable service outcomes has remained an issue of interest for public sector establishments in both the developed and developing economies (Willson and Polland, 2012). Again, while it is a fact that project management policies are to a large extent shaped by political influence, many of the project management initiatives have not reflected service delivery (Ngoepe and Keakopa, 2011). Ronnback's (2012) study clearly articulates how political considerations have constrained project management policies at all levels of government. The next section of the review is committed to discussions on the various types of project management constructs that affect service delivery.

2.4.1 Decision-making and service delivery

The Decision-making process from the human standpoint is conceived to be personal, cognitive, and multidimensional. For instance, according to Dury-Morgan and O'Dwyer (2013), the human mind works differently. The first has to do with being fast and intuitive, with the second working

slowly. During this process, it is somewhat difficult for project managers to make decisions devoid of bias, thus leading to alterations in services delivered to community members. In line with the rule of all business decisions, project management results can be linked to the nature and types of decisions made before the project's commencement. In other words, ignoring the intricacy of the decision-making process is a danger that could undesirably affect the project, and in return, the effectiveness of the services delivered (Moe and Aurum, 2012).

It is publicly acknowledged that individuals or members of a community affected by the dares of poor service delivery have the right, at least to a certain extent, to air their voices and opinions for a more service delivery system by institutions and agents of the government. Accordingly, Sandhawalia and Dalcher (2010) argued that the constellation of these viewpoints and opinions has to be considered by departments of government and agencies when decisions are being made. Therefore, the channel through which these opinions are voiced influences how information is communicated and how goals and policies are planned for service delivery (McAvoy and Butler, 2014). According to Roberts (2012), community participation in decision-making during project implementation and execution is another term for citizen power, which must be judiciously utilized to improve the welfare of members of the society. In other words, it is construed as the redeployment of authority that permits the disadvantaged citizens that are currently omitted from both the political and economic processes to be purposely included in the future as a measure of improving their welfare through the delivery of service (McAvoy and Butler, 2014). To put in context, it means that it can bring about crucial social improvement that guarantees them access to the benefits of good service delivery (Sandhawalia and Dalcher, 2010).

It is fundamental to understand that community members participating in project implementation and execution can only be permissible to an extent. Yet, appropriate involvement can only be considered apposite when the community is allowed to participate robustly in projects' implementation and execution (Korzan and Morris, 2009). For instance, Roberts' (2012) study reiterates that public participation in decision making is a process through which community members are allowed to become vigorously involved in explaining the issues of apprehension to them, and consequently make decisions on matters that affect their welfare for more service delivery measures (Neshkova and Guo, 2012). It is widely acknowledged that the chief reason

for public participation in project implementation and execution is to allow community members a rare chance to contribute to the decision-making process.

In contrast, however, the success of any project is mainly dependent on the extent to which the public can participate in such a decision-making process. Regarding the decision-making process as one of the vital components of the project management system in the public sector, Meghann (2016) argued that decision-making in the management of projects could be categorized into equality, division of work, iteration amendment, and team complacency. In addition, the role of financial resource allocation for the effective management of the project cannot be over-emphasized. For instance, John's (2013) study highlighted that the sparsity of financial resource allocation plays a crucial role in the success or failure of any project. The author argued further that many projects have failed after their initiation due to insufficient financial resources for their execution (John, 2013).

Furthermore, regarding whether allowing community members to participate in the decision-making process of project implementation and execution will engender effective and efficient service delivery, available studies on this discourse offered sparse evidence (Tosun and Timothy, 2011; John, 2013). Similarly, literature has widely documented a large chunk of the managerial cost associated with community members' participation in project implementation and execution (Kwak, 2010). For instance, a related study by Owens (2013) argued that community members' involvement in the decision-making process of project management is time-consuming. This is because, in most cases, community members have to be educated or brought up to speed on the issue at hand before they can meaningfully contribute.

According to Bader (2005), the pre-decision cost associated with public participation in managing or implementing the project is more expensive than a decision done by a singular individual on behalf of members of the community who possess the proper knowledge and experience. Of course, there are apprehensions concerning the loss of control and the likelihood of individuals representing their self-interest at the expense of the community members at large (Kwak, 2010; Timothy, 2009). However, this assertion represents the current trends in community demands for effective and efficient service delivery. Individual representatives are seen making such demands to their personal advantage, thereby leaving community members to deprivation of essential services.

Literature reveals that community members' participation in the decision-making process of project implementation is almost non-existent. For instance, Kaplan and Norton's (2014) study conducted in Ghana explicates an undesirable response from community members sampled. The study reported that public participation in decision-making of the management and implementation of the project for service delivery has not been practiced or allowed in any official developmental plan of Ghana. More important is the concern that community members cannot contribute to the decision-making process about issues that affects their lives (Jones, 2014). Kaplan and Norton's (2014) study exemplifies the many occurrences that seem to characterize the African space where a project is implemented and executed without the input of community members, thus jeopardizing their chances of securing and ensuring good services.

In South Africa, a similar study also explains the denial of community members' participation in the decision-making process of project management. However, findings from Kiyamaz's (2014) study posit a contrary perception. For instance, Kren's (2014) study reported that while the South African government acknowledge the fact that it is within the prerogative right of community members to participate in the decision-making process of project management for effective and efficient service delivery, it is not too problematic to contend that the local community has rather indicated not to participate as they have always shown less interest in how projects are managed for the delivery of service. Similarly, it was highlighted that the withdrawal of public participation in decision-making reflected community members' sparse knowledge in terms of decision-making in general (Kwak, 2010). However, in an ideal setting, there should be legislation structured to encourage local community participation in the decision-making process of project initiation and management to bring about robust service delivery in general.

2.4.2 Risk management and service delivery

Risk management in the management of projects is essential for service delivery. In a study by Lam (2014), the necessity to apply the principles of risk management neatly backs the quality improvement that is likely to be engendered from the execution of the project. In other words, risk management clearly positions the management to receive appropriate risk management information to make room for a realistic schedule for the timely execution of the project (Lam, 2014). Again, the importance of quality management within the public sector has been reported as an absolute path to effective project management. Stevenson's (2015) study argued that quality management is people-oriented. In other words, it is an approach in determining public

wants, how the project can be executed timely, and the best means to keep track of results as the project unfolds. In context, ensuring the quality management of projects is a crucial path to service delivery (Drury, 2015).

One of the pathways through which project management can engendered substantial results for optimum outcomes is the necessity of government agencies and establishments to have a fuller comprehension of potential risks, to thoroughly assess the likely impact of these risks in project execution, and thus forestall likely solutions to these myriads of the problem (Yilmaz and Triant, 2017; Drury, 2015). In other words, to ensure that any potential risks are being controlled effectively, the risk management process has to be fully incorporated into the decision-making process. Therefore, risk management is a fundamental tool employed in addressing threatening risks by evaluating the determining project viability, examining and monitoring the risks in a bid to dwindle possible costs, and assuaging risks through effective planning (Lam, 2014). the application of risk management techniques tends to improve the quality of the project and help identify a possible threat before the project commences (Zou and Che, 2017).

Within the confines of the public sector, studies have shown that risk management philosophies effectively applied in the implementation and execution of social projects turn out with improved service delivery for community members (Su and Wei, 2017; Lam, 2014). Parnell and John's (2015) study identified a substantial nexus between the number of risks public sector management often undertake and the level of service offered to community members. However, findings from the study show that a large chunk of service delivery undergoes thorough risk assessment before and during the implementation of the project (Parnell and John, 2015). In addition, the earlier the application of risk management in the execution of a project, the likely it will deliver service.

Within the context of the public sector, risk management is crucial for improving public service delivery, but more critically helpful in dwindling the diverse types of risks government establishments and institutions might face (Ludin, Zakiah and Mohamed, 2017). Effective risk management practices assist public institutions in managing their public values and managing risks in an operative manner (Grace and Leverty, 2015). In other words, it increases the performance of public institutions by reducing different operational and marginal costs in addition to the uncertainties of running an influential public institution for service delivery

(Lundqvist, 2015). A public establishment such as the local government tier that has a well-structured implementation of risk management can effectively control for both external and internal threats and as well be positioned to deliver on its social responsibility of service provisions to members of the community at large (Brown, Steen and Foreman, 2009). Thus, local government administrators are robustly encouraged to work in line with risk management principles to deliver quality service to community members such as good pipe-borne water, electricity, and infrastructure, among other social amenities (Grace and Levery, 2015).

The public sector organization develops different policies towards enhancing its public status and the need to lessen the extent of risks confronting the discharge of their social responsibility of service delivery. To do this, the implementation of risk management initiatives becomes essential at all government tiers (Lam, 2014). For example, in terms of decision-making, planning, and organizational control, risk management initiatives have proven to be an effective mechanism through which value is being added to the members of the society through service delivery (Frigo and Anderson, 2011). In a typical local government setup, the top hierarchy manages organizational strategy and long-term planning concerns. Grace and Levery's (2015) study establishes that with this verity, top management of a public sector institution such as the local government tier needs to be aware and updated on risk management practices for continuous service delivery (Ludin, et al. 2017). In other words, it is argued that implementing risk management initiatives can effectively mitigate the place of threats for project execution and put the local government towards the path of delivering sustainable service.

Managing risks associated with project implementation and execution is considered a major source of ensuring quality services are delivered to the members of society. In contrast, however, simple risk management practices do not always produce the desired service delivery outcomes (Stevenson, 2015). For instance, Njogo's (2012) study essentially highlights the need for project managers and directors to be encouraged to participate in different risk management workshops as a critical component to ensuring exemplary project implementation and execution for the overall interest of the society. In other words, service delivery can be possible with well-resolved project managers and directors within the local government who reduce project management risks by employing well-articulated risk management strategies. Again, it may be reasonable to argue that project managers' and directors' (in a local government context) robust knowledge on risk management strategies can help them be conscious with the management of risks that could

have grievous consequences, not just on the organization, but on their ability to discharge effective service delivery as well (Lam, 2014). Thus, we can contend that good knowledge of risk management initiatives can influence the relationship between project management and service delivery, as advanced by (Ludin, et al., 2017). That project managers' perception about the consequences of risks can also influence the complete approach of ensuring good services are delivered to members of the society.

An expanding number of research construe risk management strategies as an essential paradigm for managing risks confronting public institutions and establishments' effective service discharge (Lam, 2014; Stevenson, 2015; Ludin et al., 2017). Making sense of this assertion is the belief that assessing and managing the risks associated with project implementation and execution offers local government a more inclusive approach than the traditional perspective. Accordingly, Rejda's (2011) study rightly contends that assessing and evaluating the risks inherent in the management of projects is not in itself a process for circumventing risks. For instance, the author further reiterates that risk management does not mean the elimination of risk. Similarly, literature on project management argues that private or public organization can upturn their service delivery measures by adopting a holistic approach to risk management (Ludin et al., 2017).

Notwithstanding this, empirical evidence establishing the link between risk management and service delivery, specifically within the context of local government, remains sparse (Njogo, 2012; Gordon, 2012). One of the chief reasons for this lack of empirical evidence is the difficulty in explicating the relationship between risk management and service delivery, either as a direct relation or as a consequence of risk reduction (Gordon, 2012). Thus, this study seeks to address this gap by interrogating the role of risk management as a component of project management in attaining service delivery within the context of a local government.

2.4.3 Financial resources and effective service delivery

Financial resource allocation plays a significant role in practically all of the domains of public establishments and agencies. Thus, developing high-standard financial management practices is one of the critical pathways to ensuring quality service delivery, particularly at the local level of governance (Stevenson, 2015). Quality service delivery can be unpacked through different dimensional paths. However, with evidence of several quality dimensions within the public service operations, it is appropriate to argue that human resources constitute a formidable tool for

realizing service delivery. In other words, it is safe to posit that managing both financial and human resources are essential considerations for effective and efficient service delivery at the local level of governance (Hope, 2014; Lee, 2012). While the remit of project managers includes the need to plan and allocate resources for the implementation and execution of a project, the efficiency of the manager can only become visible with the appropriate estimation and use of available financial resources for the execution of projects for optimum service delivery (Gonçalves, 2014).

The necessity for judicious use of public financial resources for developmental objectives has been emphasized on many fronts. While the emphasis on creating a stimulating and interesting environment where serious development can thrive cannot be contested, the need for developing countries to be judicious and efficient with the utility of public finance can equally not be overemphasized (Bhatia, 2009). In support of the initial position, Jordan (2013) rightly argued that the local government's understanding of public finance and its utility is crucial. It represents an essential element in the national development discourse that represents a vital component of a functional government (Gonçalves, 2014). In many regions, especially the developing countries, governments are using decentralization as a tool for addressing poverty and upturning the situation of the poor through improved service delivery (Van Dooren and Bouckaert, 2015). Therefore, decentralized financial resource allocation has become pertinent, and the need for appropriate financial budgeting has been acknowledged as indispensable for development in developing countries, particularly at the lower level of governance (Stevenson, 2015).

Accordingly, Lapsley and Ríos (2015) argued that appropriate financial budgeting and allocation assist the municipality in ensuring that financial resource allocation and expected expenditure dovetail with envisaged programs and projects for community members' service. The crux, however, is the necessity to plan, budget for, and implement actions that have the propensity of inherently improving the spread, convenience, and quality of service delivery in African public organizations (Edvardsson and Olsson, 2006). In the context of South Africa, Tsheletsane and Fourie (2014) argue that financial resources fulfill a significant role in the functionality and operation of the public sector. Accordingly, the authors contend that without the place of public funds employed to offset government operational and running costs, no public institutions will deliver services to members of the community (Tsheletsane and Fourie, 2014).

The argument, however, is not a question of the South African government generating funds from the public through taxes, but the utility of such funds on projects that have culminated in effective delivery of services. With evidence of available benefits that can ensue from an explicit understanding of the link between financial resources and service delivery in the public sector, available studies about this discourse are still sparse. As Ahmad and Brosio (2012) rightly argued, the interrogation of how to advance public sector service delivery remains an essential concern for scholars and policymakers in line with the need to ensure the government's financial resources are effectively utilized. However, Stevenson (2015) posits that after more than 25 years of the new democratic South Africa, evidence of available service delivery is yet to be fully uncovered, especially services and projects expected to be implemented with taxpayers' monies (Norton, 2009).

Public sector institutions' financial resources or budgeting portfolio comprises two related components, namely political and economic (Bhatia, 2009). These two components must work harmoniously before meaningful development can take place. From the political perspective, scarce financial resources are assigned to a few individuals amidst multiple deprivation and denial of essential services to the majority of the community members. Talking economic and financial resources serve as the main tool to evaluate a jurisdiction's development (Tsheletsane and Fourie, 2014). Put together, as a communication channel, the financial resource allocation or budget portfolios of the public sector enables decision makers to make accurate informed decisions regarding service provision and the promotion of other capital assets through the promotion of robust stakeholders' participation (Tsheletsane and Fourie, 2014). Ma and Yu (2012) argued that the financial resource allocation thesis at the local governance level is the need for improved health care, education, infrastructure, and other amenities that can improve welfare. In other words, public finance has to be precise and well organized to reflect efficiency in the nature of services delivered to community members.

2.5 Challenges associated with the implementation of project management for service delivery

One of the most apparent puzzles for the effective management of projects within the public sector context is the power and the political environment challenge. For instance, Sichelwe, Ngulube, and Stilwell (2011) reported that the implementation and execution of public projects

and programs take place in a very fluid environment involving political principles had affected the smooth management of projects for positive outcomes (Willson and Polland, 2012). Similarly, other studies have highlighted the challenge of ineffective monitoring and evaluation of project management. Sebusang and Moeti (2005) and Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011), in their separate studies, revealed that inappropriate monitoring and evaluation of public projects by public officials remain a tremendous challenge for service delivery.

Mapulanga (2015) revealed that the large scale of investment for project managers' training in the public sector of South Africa had not yielded a positive outcome for effectiveness as many project managers lack the requisite skills for effective implementation. In addition, the question of corruption and accountability explains a vital cog of public projects management (Bovis, 2007). The absence of responsibility in the conduct and affairs of public officials in the implementation and execution of projects is connected to having a project management system entangled with corruption, consequently leading to the deprivation of social amenities to the more prominent members of the community (Lewis and Roehrich, 2009).

Within the context of South Africa, the rising incidence of corruption and misappropriation of taxpayers' monies in the implementation and execution of projects birthed the Directorate of Special Operations, Special Investigation Units, and Commercial Crime Unit as legislation enacted for the control of corruption within the public sector (Lewis and Roehrich, 2009). However, according to the vast number of South Africans who have been expectant that the emergence of the new democratic order will usher in progress in terms of effective and efficient service delivery through project implementation and execution, all had their expectations not met with evidence of increased corruption in and amongst government establishments and the quality of governance offered to the members of the community in general (Bresnen, 2007).

Again, the puzzle of corruption and incompetence, among others, has been positioned as some of the major factors limiting the delivery of service through appropriate management of the public project. To support this assertion, a similar case of reference was the Pretoria News Reports in 2014, where it was explained that about twenty percent of government projects were mishandled and executed for public officials' gains, with poor monitoring functions of how projects are executed. Crawford, Pollack and England (2006) reported that these and many more are clear

cases of why many South Africans still benefit from the emergence of a new democratic order through efficient services, specifically the previously disadvantaged groups.

Furthermore, another critical challenge that has been constraining the implementation and management of projects in South Africa is the concern of deficiency in skill and knowledge capacity of many South Africans public officials (Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007). Therefore, it is fundamental that the need for achieving service delivery is neatly tied to ensuring that skilled and competent public officials are assigned to the management and execution of projects. This assertion reflects the structure of many Municipalities in South Africa, where research evidence has shown that most of the personnel do not have the required skills and competency for their various assigned job descriptions (Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007). However, in line with the government's organizational training and retraining exertion, Bovis (2007) reported that a large chunk of municipality officials across South Africa had been engaged in capacity development on project management skills for improved service delivery to the members of the society. In contrast, Carter and Easton (2011) argued that with evidence of training and retraining initiatives, there is still a crop of evidence explaining public officials' lack of prerequisite skills and competence to effectively manage projects for improved service.

The eThekweni Municipality frequently engages staff members in training and education programs. Yet, it is not too problematic to argue that these training, amongst many other initiatives, have not been transmuted to effective project management skills for increased delivery of services to the majority of the community member. Therefore, the crux is the need to ensure that project managers are adequately equipped with the desire knowledge and skills to manage and execute projects for a turnaround service delivery initiative. Thus, it is safe to contend that skill and capacity development remains a problem for realizing service delivery through project management and implementation initiatives in South Africa.

Appropriate budgeting and planning is another problem in the project management literature as a critical limitation to service delivery. The place of budgeting and planning, especially at the local governance level, explicates an essential phase of the decision-making process whereby project managers are expected to be abreast with the cost of project execution at its most efficient costs (Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss, 2012). However, studies on project implementation and management in the public sector have extensively shown that the public sector is still engrossed

mainly with poor budget competency for project management, thus affecting the outcome of services delivered to community members (Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss, 2012; Boomsma, 2009).

Importantly, empirical studies have equally shown that government institutions are still growing with effective budget planning. Therefore, often fall short of expectation about the quality and quantity of services delivered. In addition, inappropriate budgeting plans result in awkward project implementation and management activities, instigating unnecessary waste of taxpayers' monies (Boomsma, 2009). Lastly, a literature survey also reveals that the need to ensure local government compliance with project management for excellent service delivery is robustly linked to effective evaluation and monitoring functions (Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss, 2012; Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007). In other words, similar studies have shown that a robust monitoring and evaluation function integrates valuable information policy that often gives room for sound governance and accountable public policy (Martinsuo and Lehtonen, 2007). In contrast, however, a lack of effective evaluation and monitoring functions of government projects and its management will engender a flawed service delivery system (Winter and Smith, 2006).

The dearth of available studies on project management and service delivery justified the need for this study. For instance, while the literature has explicitly revealed the sparsity of studies on this discourse, a few of the available studies have largely failed to examine how project management leads to service delivery within the context of the eThekweni municipality. For instance, available evidence from the literature, and specifically within the context of South Africa, reveal that a good number of available but dissimilar studies includes Boateng (2008) study on government service delivery and supply chain functions, Jonas's (2010) analysis of the nature of project governance and project management, and Tuner's (2006) study on management involvement impact on project portfolio management performance.

From the South African experience, hardly has there been any study that seeks to interrogate project management and service delivery, specifically within the eThekweni Municipality. Similarly, some other studies conducted outside of South Africa primarily based on quantitative analysis somewhat resemble the current study. Yet, there is the fact that there exist massive dissimilarities between them. The present study explains the nexus between project management

and service delivery through a qualitative approach. Put together, therefore, this perspective neatly justifies the originality of this study to bring on board a fresh and nuanced perspective to the discourse of project management and service delivery at the local government level of administration.

2.6 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, the discourse of project management and service delivery were unpacked through the lens of empirical and conceptual accounts. First, project management and service delivery were aptly conceptualized to establish a transparent background of the review process. Similarly, the understanding of service delivery was taken further, specifically to appreciate its place and meaning through the confines of local government administration, within which this study is focused. A further attempt was made towards understanding the nexus between project management and service delivery. However, to have a comprehensive appreciation of the project management-service delivery discourse, three non-comparable components of project management (decision-making, risk management, and financial resources) were unpacked in relation to how they affect service delivery. The chapter also extends to uncovering the challenges constraining project management implementation for service delivery, including political constraint, corruption and accountability, deficiency in skill and knowledge capacity, poor budgeting plan and incompetency, and poor work ethics.

CHAPTER THREE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study analyzes the theoretical framework of the study. The previous sections of this chapter assessed the literature on project management and service delivery, specifically within the local government context. The range of issues discussed therein clearly established the nexus between project management and service delivery. However, the present segment of the chapter is devoted to uncovering discussions on the theoretical framework that guides the study, which establish the basis upon which the assumptions of this study are as well predicated. While this is noted, this section seeks to conceptualize the theory and theoretical framework concept before unearthing the premises of the theory(s) that explain this study's objectives. It is essential to state that, although the concept of theory and theoretical framework is somewhat derived from each other, there is still a shade of distinction in their meanings and relevance in research. In other words, a theory is construed as a basis needed to comprehend our everyday problems.

3.2 Theoretical framework analysis

Newman (2007) conceptualizes a theory as a set of interconnected concepts or paradigms that categorize knowledge about the social world's relevance. In other words, it is akin to a set of spontaneously related propositions placed with a much high realm of intellection through which extrapolations can be inferred in addressing social problems (Newman, 2007). The thrust of a theory aids in the provision of answers to the questions bothering our everyday existence.

Making inference from the above excerpt, a theoretical framework is explained as a structure that represents or conveys a constellation of theories (Grand and Osanloo, 2014). It describes construction of ideas or assumptions of theories geared towards explaining a research phenomenon (Grand and Osanloo, 2014). It also guides the researcher's thought about understanding the research topic, definitions, and other concepts resulting from the theory. There has been a wide range of arguments that there seems no proper or wrong theoretical framework for a study. However, it is apposite that the utility of any theoretical framework should be clearly

connected to the objectives of the study under investigation. The function of a theoretical framework must align with the research problem, questions, and significance of the study. Therefore, employing a theoretical framework becomes fundamental in a research investigation, without which the research goal will become unclear and unachievable (Grand and Osanloo, 2014).

However, to appropriately address the research problem and achieve the goal of this study, the Principal-Agency Theory (PAT) and Organisational Justice Theory were employed. These theories are employed and reviewed with the belief that the assumptions of a single theory might not be sufficient to address the research problem. Therefore, the choice of bringing in two different theories is critical to comprehend a research problem originating from two brooks of the literature – project management and service delivery. On the one hand, PAT is employed in this study to understand how the delegation of duties and responsibilities (project initiation and execution) by a principal (government) to an agent (government officials) will engender service delivery for the best interest of the members of the community. On the other hand, the Organisational Justice Theory is employed to explain community members' perception and evaluation of project service delivery fairness by both the agents and institutions of government. Put together; the two theories are clearly reviewed in this study regarding their origin, rationality for their development, assumptions, and usefulness to the current and limitations.

3.2.1 Principal-Agency Theory

The Principal-Agency Theory (PAT) became prominent with the work of foremost Economist, Adams Smith (1973), through one of his outstanding publications titled “Wealth of Nations”. Notably, the thrust of and assumptions of PAT clearly explains the delegation of organizational duties and responsibilities by a principal (government – in this context, a local government administrator) to an agent (civil servants) to provide solutions to identified societal problems (Mriithi and Crawford, 2013). However, conflict is set to ensue from the event that the agents failed not only to comply with the terms of the principal but more obviously failed to achieve the stated goals in terms of effective and efficient service delivery (Corvellec and Macheridi, 2010). Thus, from the above analogy, the assumptions of PAT centers on public outcry in terms of the provision of social amenities that can be ascertained through a strong collaboration between the principal and agent.

A wide-ranging number of government operations can be viewed in the light of the principal-agent relationship. For instance, it can be considered that the local government administrator in the context of this study within the eThekweni Municipality in focus is represented as the principal whose goal is to ensure that his agent (civil servants) comply and implement the collective plans of the government. Similarly, another typical example can also be considered in the fashion that the parliament is the principal, wherein their objective is to ensure that the government (executive) implement the programs of the government, especially in the quest to improve the social welfare of members of the society through adequate and prompt service delivery. Closely related is also an illustration of the central government representing the principal, while the provincial government depicts the agents. Put together, the rationale is tied to ensuring the principal delegates duties such as the initiation, management, and execution of projects such that the agents are enforced to monitor and ensure the project engenders public good and development (Mriithi and Crawford, 2013).

Aligning the supposition of the principal-agency to the discourse of project management and service delivery, PAT is employed in this study to understand the implementation and management of public projects by both the principal and agents and how this has transformed service delivery for public benefit. Thus, this remark is to have a fuller understanding of government roles in the implementation, execution, and management of projects for service delivery. Execution and management of public projects require a description of who is accountable to who in the discharge of duties (Gull, 2010). Therefore, in the principal-agency relationship, the principal makes decisions that influence the agents' activities (Gull, 2010). Remarkably, the principal's decisions that guide the agent in taking its own decisions constitute a contract between the principal and the agent. More closely, therefore, the local government administrator (principal) works in close relationship with the (agents) civil servants or project by reaching a contract of delivery of services to community members through project management.

Furthermore, the principal and agent relationship can be construed as one where both parties work for their selfish desires. In a typical public sector setting, the local government civil servants (agents) in charge of managing projects are often found diverting public funds for their personal use, leaving service delivery to suffer at the expense of community members' welfare (Gull, 2010). In this fashion, the principal often adopts various control mechanisms such as

p r o j e c t m o n i t o r i n g

functions to check the agents' activities (Demeester and Grahovac, 2005). Ive and Chang (2007) explained that the firm (in this context, the Public sector) is seeking to maximize its value by ensuring value and services are being provided to public members. However, the maximization of this value can only be attained through a strong relationship trend amongst the principal and agent. Clearly, as the parties' interests vary, the higher the conflict of interest increases, which can only be moderated through cordial relationships (Gull, 2010).

In line with this study, the extent of the positive relationship or otherwise between the principal and agent is a severe indicator in determining how the management of projects can be employed for sustainable service delivery. To put this in context, this position is likened to the functionality and structure of a typical local government system in Africa, where the tussle between and amongst government and its officials affects the level of services to be rendered to members of the community. For instance, the political differences between principal and agent have significantly reduced the level of development through project execution in most African countries, with grave consequences for the wellbeing of members of the society (Gull, 2010).

The importance of this theory cannot be overstated in this study. The theory is examined in terms of its usefulness in understanding how the trade-offs between the principal (government) and agents (civil servants'/project managers) affect the community's welfare through the lens of project management. In addition, the theory is advanced to appreciate how this trade-off can be managed for effective and efficient delivery of service. The Principal-Agency Theory is, however, not without its denunciations. For instance, the theory is criticized on the ground that too much emphasis is being placed on the agents as the likely party to cause problems in the principal-agency relationship without considering the possible roles of the principal in this regard. Similarly, another limitation has to do with less emphasis on the principal (government) who lies to the people, deceive, steal, and exploits the agents. Thus, the agents are deceitfully brought into a contract without a fuller understanding of the process, wherein the principal frequently acts for their selfish desires.

3.2.2 Organizational Justice Theory

The Organisational Justice Theory (OJT) was birthed through the writings of Greenberg in 1990. The basic assumption of OJT explicitly explains people's discernments of what is fair or not within the context of an organization (Bews and Uys, 2002). The concept of OJT can be

explicated from the viewpoint of wide-ranging knowledge related to fairness discourse, including its expression, its various dimensions, and its effect on people. Furthermore, OJT integrates the outcome of organizational change and the perception of the affected party because of the consequences emanating from such changes (Greene, 2013). In the context of this study, the perception of community members arising from the failure of the government to implement and execute projects within the local tier of government for service delivery is strongly in context. Therefore, the OJT is a valuable thesis that controls feelings of deprivation and discomfort (Paz, 2016).

As applicable to this study, the OJT assumptions neatly resonate with understanding how community members perceive the absence of project and service delivery as unfair and a mark of injustice, depriving them of benefiting from the many government programs (Daly and Dee, 2014). However, the interests of politicians make it somewhat difficult to appreciate what should be conceived as fairness and unfairness, especially in the context of service delivery. Greene's (2013) argument regarding the debate of justice seeks to propose pragmatic explanations to community members' behaviors in an instance where they feel a sense of injustice in terms of service delivery of government initiatives. In contrast, however, the theoretical postulation offered for the understanding of justice and fairness has largely not provided enough justification for the discourse of how people evaluate fairness and unfairness. Therefore, the three components of OJT (distributive, procedural, and interactional justices) are reviewed in this study to provide a fuller understanding of the fairness-unfairness discourse (Nabatchi, Bingham, and Good, 2007).

3.2.2.1 Distributive justice

Distributive justice is understood as the perceived fairness an individual or group of people achieved from allocating resources or rather how people evaluate the fairness from the allocation of resources (Cunningham, 2009). From the service delivery dimension, distributive justice can be explained as evaluating people attached to equal service delivery offered by the government without reference to a specific group of people. Distributive justice is one of the earliest constructs of the OJT discourse (Paz, 2016). This dimension of the theory offers all equal proportions of allocation. The equality thesis of the distributive justice theory is employed when the motive is to ensure group cohesion (Cugueró-Escofet and Fortin, 2014). In relation to the present study, the distributive justice theory debate is rooted in ensuring that project execution

and management are shared evenly among the different members of the community for equal service delivery. Relating this assumption to project management–service delivery nexus, the presupposition of the distributive justice theory would mean that there should be equal service delivery to community members through robust project management and implementation without prejudice.

3.2.2.2 Procedural justice

Procedural justice explains the decision-making process embedded in the allocation of fair judgment (Matteson, 2012). This component of OJT entails employing the principle of objectivity, prospect for all to be heard and respected, specifically in the allocation of resources or delivery of service. In other words, it is exemplified as the degree to which justice is employed as a check and complied within service delivery to the community members. Altogether, procedural justice explains the methods, mechanisms, and procedures employed in judging an event as being fair or unfair (Cunningham, 2009). Relating this assumption to the debate of project management and service delivery, the various project management initiatives such as decision-making, risk management, and financial resource allocation should be understood before the project implementation phase. Otherwise, the goal of ensuring all members of the society are offered equitable service would hardly be achieved. Similarly, ensuring that the procedure and process employed in the allocation of resources or services are fair necessitate that factors that could hamstring the realization of equity and justice are appositely addressed.

3.2.2.3 Interactional justice

The position of interactional justice describes how equality is being applied in the treatment of people (Paz, 2016). Notably, it has to do with the treatment placed on community members by those in charge of service delivery and allocation of resources (Daly and Dee, 2014). The position of interactional justice as a component of the OJT further explains the magnitude to which people are treated with fairness, self-worth, and admiration by establishments in charge of service delivery and allocation of resources in the community (Daly and Dee, 2014). In other words, it is not too problematic to argue that achieving justice and fairness in the delivery of service and allocation of resources through project management initiatives exemplify the assumption of the interactional justice position. For instance, it is expected that community

members who have been denied project and service delivery should be treated with the highest form of respect and dignity as a compensating them with the past injustices of the apartheid reign (Matteson, 2012). Similarly, ensuring appropriate procedures are spelled out and followed in the management of projects and service delivery can further foster justice and fairness in allocating resources for service delivery.

3.3 Summary of the chapter

In conclusion, this chapter further reviewed two theoretical analysis frameworks, including the Principal-Agency Theory and Organizational Justice Theory, to explain the research assumption. These theories were carefully selected and reviewed to understand how project management and its implementation can contribute to improved service delivery. Each of these theories was examined to understand different areas of this study. The assumptions of PAT were employed to understand how the delegation of authorities informs the decision-making process regarding project initiation at the local government level.

Similarly, the presuppositions of the OJT become a crucial theoretical leaning in understanding how the application of justice and fairness can mitigate or manage risks associated with the implementation of projects. Again, to understand appropriate financial resource allocation for an effective project management system, the OJT assumptions were also applied to see the extent of fairness and justice in allocating financial resources for project management implementation and execution. Lastly, the basis of authority and delegation of duties was employed to see how the principals channel authorities to agents towards improving service delivery at the local government level through project initiation and management.

CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY AND METHODS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the methodology and methods utilized in evaluating project management systems and their influence on service delivery in eThekweni municipality. Before giving the details concerning the methodology and methods employed in answering the research questions, it is needful to establish a relationship between the concepts of methodology and methods. This becomes important as both concepts are often used interchangeably, even when they possess different meanings in the actual sense. To begin with, research methodology can be construed as an organized process through which a research investigation should be undertaken (Sekaran and Bougie, 2016). In other words, it captures the question of what, when, and how of research (Gill and Johnson, 2010).

On the other hand, research methods explain the different techniques utilized to collect and analyze research data (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). To clarify the meaning differences between methodology and methods used in this study, the chapter is divided into different sections, including research philosophies, research approaches, research design, the population of the study, and sample size. Other important sections are sampling techniques and recruitment strategy, research instrument, data quality control, data collection procedure, method of data analysis, ethical considerations, and puzzles encountered during data collection. The research objectives and questions are rehearsed below.

4.2 Research objectives

The following research objectives shall be addressed in this study:

1. To assess the impact of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekweni Municipality.
2. To determine the processes that eThekweni Municipality has in place to manage risks associated with implementing projects.

3. To analyze the impact of the financial resource allocation for effective project management in eThekweni Municipality
4. To ascertain challenges associated with improving quality project management for service delivery success in eThekweni Municipality.

4.3 Research philosophies

Research philosophies explain the different types of worldviews utilized in a study, which directs the choice of research design, research methods, and analytical tools that appropriately explain the assumptions of research philosophies assist in the conceptualization of what we intend to investigate and the best means to explore it (Samuel, 2012). Therefore, the four types of research philosophies are carefully discussed in this study, with the necessary justification(s) for the most appropriate one. These are positivism, realism, interpretivism, and pragmatism.

4.3.1 Positivism

The assumption of the positivism research philosophy is related to tangible social reality and generalization, as evident in the physical and natural science discipline (Minner, Levy, and Century, 2010). In other words, the positivist appreciates and work in tandem with the laws of cause and effect wherein scientific applications are employed to understand research problem (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). The central presupposition of the positivist philosophy is directly linked to experimentation and survey research, through which cause and effect relationship is engendered between two or more variables (Bryman and Bell, 2011). Therefore, research outcomes stemming from the positivist research philosophy stance are religiously explained in objective terms, and the quantitative research approach is only employed through statistical estimation (Sekeran, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). However, the assumption of the positivist philosophy does not align with the methodological position of this study. For instance, evaluating the nexus between project management systems and service delivery is distanced from the measurement of constructs through the manipulation of variables but an in-depth exploration of social problems through a qualitative approach.

4.3.2 Realism

The realist philosophical assumption is based on external belief and objective reality (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). Specifically, this philosophical assumption rebukes the position of the

positivist that truth can be measured or evaluated through accurate measurement of variables. Rather than an effort towards understanding reality should be conceived from the prism of certainty (Samuel, 2012). In other words, the measurement of variables concerning understanding a problem as mainly conveyed by the positivist is subjectively biased (Creswell and Clark, 2011). Therefore, by understanding reality through employing certainty, the measurement of variables through statistical estimations is flawed mainly according to the realist philosophical position (Samuel, 2012). With this in mind, the methodological approach of the current study greatly departs from the need to understand reality but a need to comprehend a social problem through qualitative interrogation. Thus, the assumption of the realist philosophy is thoroughly refuted in this study.

4.3.3 Interpretivism

In negation to the positivist assumption where the emphasis is predicated on cause and effect nexus, the main thrust of the interpretivist philosophical belief departs from this stance by advocating that a more potent understanding of puzzles in our everyday existence should be the distance from the traditions of generalizing research outcomes (Boksberger and Melsen, 2011). Therefore, rather than generalizing the acceptance or rejection of research hypotheses, the interpretivist research philosophy advocates for the need for researchers to show some form of compassion to effectively understand the research problem through the experiences and perspective of the research respondents (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). Therefore, the need to evaluate the nexus between project management systems and service delivery neatly captures the assumption of the interpretivist research philosophy. Hence, the interpretivist research philosophy is adopted as the research philosophy for this study.

4.3.4 Pragmatism

The need to integrate two sets of philosophical assumptions in a single study is gradually becoming a tradition within the broad discipline of the social sciences and other allied management research areas (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). Unlike other strands of philosophical assumption, the pragmatist advocates for using different approaches towards investigating a research problem. For instance, the use of the quantitative and qualitative research methods in a single study. In this kind of inquiry, the quantitative and qualitative data are expected to be elicited with appropriate data analysis techniques to comprehend the research problem. In

addition, the application of the pragmatist research philosophy is predicated on the research questions as stated in a particular study. The questions must signpost both quantitative and qualitative questions. However, while this study is staunchly grounded in the methodological approach of the qualitative research methods to evaluate the nexus between project management systems and service delivery, the presupposition of the pragmatist philosophy emphasizes the integration of the quantitative and qualitative research method is refuted.

4.3.5 Justification for the research philosophy that appropriately suit the methodological approach of this study

Having explicitly explained the different strands of research philosophies as seen in the preceding paragraphs, this study utilizes the assumptions of the interpretivist as the philosophical basis of its methodological stance. In other words, the assumptions of the interpretivist become necessary to interpret and understand the relationship between project management systems and service delivery. In addition, the utility of the interpretivist research philosophy neatly validates the qualitative research methods used in this study. Thus, emphasis on the measurement of variables or the investigation of reality departs greatly from the methodological approach of this study. Thus, the study employs qualitative research methods for an in-depth exploration of the research problem with emphasis on small unit managers. Similarly, this philosophical position is justified to reveal and unearth the subjective importance of project management systems as a precursor for service delivery through the lens of selected unit managers. Of course, the subjective investigation only validates the application of qualitative research methods through corresponding qualitative research instruments such as interviews or focus group discussion (FGD). For this study, the semi-structured interview is employed to understand the link between project management systems and service delivery.

4.4 Research design

Research design or strategies explicate the complete process or plan employed in a study wherein the research problem and questions can be clearly addressed. In other words, it explains the comprehensive plan upon which the foundation of the research is predicated (Wilson, 2010). Therefore, there are different kinds of research designs. For example, while some lean towards the deductive research approach, others are justified by the inductive research approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2011). With this in mind, it is essential to argue that no research design is more

relevant than the other, as the adoption of a particular research design should be directed by the nature of questions to be answered and the aim of the study in particular (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). The most prominent research designs include experimental, survey, action, and ethnography research designs. Others are grounded theory, archival research, and explanatory research designs (Wilson, 2010). Having examined the strength and assumptions of these different research designs, the study employs the exploratory research design as its research strategy.

The exploratory research design is profoundly applied to advance the limits of knowledge concerning a research investigation (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). For clarity, when knowledge on a phenomenon is either sparse or not known, the assumption of the exploratory design becomes important. Therefore, the study employs the exploratory research design to explore what seems unknown regarding the nexus between project management systems and service delivery in eThekweni Municipality. Furthermore, to accomplish the intents of this study, the exploratory research design was employed on the following rationalizations. First, the presuppositions of the exploratory research design precisely support the customs of the qualitative research methods as the research method adopted in this study. In addition, the problem statement under investigation is clearly social in nature. The justification of the exploratory design is utilized to uncover answers to this social problem with a deep exploration of the literature to identify a research gap.

Second, the utility of the exploratory research design is validated on the premise that the study's objectives show a great departure from the necessity to employ a large sample size for generalization of research findings, in which case the survey research design will become the required. In addition to this, exploring the perceptions, views, experiences of unit managers towards understanding the link between project management systems and service delivery is far from the need to investigate single or multiple cases wherein the assumption of the case study design might become relevant. Lastly, advancing new knowledge on research interests with scant or diminutive knowledge clearly validates the utility of the exploratory research design in this study. For instance, the exploratory research design is adopted to address the sparse expertise on project management systems and service delivery, specifically within Municipality in South Africa.

4.5 Research approaches

There are two different research approaches – the deductive and inductive research approaches (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). Traditionally, the adoption of either approach is primarily informed by the philosophical standpoint used in a study (Boksberger and Melsen, 2011). For instance, the philosophical presupposition of the positivist is tied to the deductive research perspective, while the interpretivist assumption resonates with the inductive research approach respectively (Hay, 2011). In other words, the deductive research contention is explained through the measurement of variables, while the inductive argument is tied to the subjective interrogation of social problems (Gill and Johnson, 2010). The two research approaches are explained below with justification(s) for the one most appropriate for this study.

4.5.1 Deductive and inductive research approaches

The crux of the deductive research approach is grounded in the natural science discipline in which objective investigations are uncovered by manipulating variables (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). One of the chief characteristics of the deductive research approach is establishing a casual relationship between two or more variables (Yin, 2016). To achieve this, the manipulated variables must clearly be reflected in the formulated hypotheses. However, evaluating project management systems and service delivery depart from the measurement of variables and formulation of research hypotheses, but more keenly on exploring a social problem requiring a wide range of investigation that can be uncovered qualitatively through participants' real world.

In addition, the thrust of the inductive research approach clearly explains research observation through the prism of participants' real world (Franz, Worrell, and Vögele, 2013). For instance, an investigation seeking to answer why and how its approach will have leaned on the inductive research approach, rather than the deductive research where estimations are made through manipulating variables (Saunders et al., 2009). Thus it suffices to say that the inductive research approach is employed to study a small number of respondents rather than many samples. As it applies to this study, a small sample of unit managers in eThekweni municipality were interviewed. Therefore, the inductive research approach is results-oriented, especially as participants are interrogated about their perception, feelings, and experiences about a social problem.

However, having clearly explained the two research approaches in the preceding, the current study staunchly employs the inductive research approach as its research approach preference. This stance aligns with the presupposition of the inductive approach wherein deep exploration of social problems is unearthed by employing qualitative research instruments and corresponding data analysis techniques. With this, the inductive approach validates the utility of a small sample of respondents for deep examination of a research problem. On this note, the study validates this presupposition as prominence is only based on a small sample of unit managers in eThekweni Municipality. In general, this study's lack of variables and hypothetical statement neatly shows a great departure from the objective measurement of the deductive research approach for a more in-depth exploration of the nexus between project management and service delivery from the perspective of selected unit managers in eThekweni Municipality. Finally, the qualitative method as a suitable research method of the inductive research approach was utilized to provoke in-depth responses through employing the semi-structured interview method.

4.6 Population of study and sample size

A population is defined as the number or group of persons under investigation in which a researcher seeks to study to infer the meaning of a research problem (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, it explains a group or collection of all elements that constitute a study wherein a research problem is interrogated (Bellot, 2011). More precisely, it refers to a constellation of defined cases where the sample is drawn (Maylor and Blackmon, 2005). Thus, as it applies to this study, the defined case is selected unit managers in eThekweni Municipality, South Africa. The need to evaluate project management systems and service delivery is uncovered from the ambit of service providers at the local government level, such as the eThekweni Municipality. In other words, the sample of unit managers selected for this study is predicated on the need to understand how the management of projects has initiated service delivery or otherwise from the perspective of service providers, service providers being unit managers of the eThekweni Municipality. The target population for this study included four departmental units within eThekweni municipality: Human Settlement, Engineering, Transport Authority, and Architecture.

Furthermore, a sample denotes the subsection of a population selected from a population (Evans, Coon, and Ume, 2011). Since it is not possible to study or sample the whole population, a sample is chosen so that findings can be generalized to a large population of the study (Minner, Levy

and Century, 2010). With this study being qualitative in orientation, the need to draw a large sample size via a survey approach does not appropriately fit the research. In other words, based on this assumption, eight (8) unit managers, with two each from the community and emergency services, human settlement, engineering and transport, economic development planning, and trading services department of eThekweni Municipality were purposively sampled for this study (Table 4.1). This sample size is justified for a qualitative study of this nature to appropriately understand the nexus between project management systems and service delivery since a qualitative study does not relish a large number of samples, rather a small number of samples to provoke an in-depth exploration of the research problem. This is further justified by Guest, Bruce, and Johnson (2006) in their contention that a sample size within the range of 8-12 is enough and appropriate to understand a research phenomenon in a qualitative study.

Table 4.1 Sample distribution of respondents

Units	Level	Sample
Human Settlement	Project Manager	2
Engineering	Project Manager	2
eThekweni Transport Authority	Project Manager	2
Architecture	Project Manager	2
Total		8

Source: *Author's compilation*

4.7 Sampling and recruitment strategy

The sampling technique can be explained from two points of view, probability and non-probability sampling (Saunders et al, 2009). Probability sampling permits equal probability for all elements in a population the chance of being a representative sample (Creswell and Clark, 2011). Specifically, it enjoys accurate representation where generalization of findings is being made through the manipulation of variables. Non-probability sampling, on the other hand, explains that all elements within a population have equal opportunity to be selected as a representative sample, and research questions with statistical connotations are not considered with the non-probability sampling technique. Judging from the above explanations, it is clear that the traditions of probability sampling fit with the quantitative research methods, while the qualitative research methods support non-probability sampling. Therefore, with the orientation of this study being qualitative, non-probability sampling only becomes desired.

Non-probability sampling consists of several sampling strategies: quota, convenience, snowball, and purposive sampling (Morgan, 2007). However, this study validates the purposive sampling and its recruitment strategy. To start with, purposive sampling is utilized to elicit information from specific sets of persons who have a robust knowledge of the inquiry at hand (Creswell, 2014). For the case of this study, purposive sampling becomes vital as it aids in eliciting information from selected unit managers in the eThekweni Municipality, especially those who are considered knowledgeable on the themes of project management systems and service delivery within the municipality. In terms of recruitment of samples, all the unit managers were initially enquired about how project management systems and service delivery are linked in the municipality. The need to ask this question was to ensure that only relevant data is gathered from unit managers with the requisite knowledge and views on the subject matter. Thus, the purposive selection of unit managers is justified because only unit managers of eThekweni municipality with robust understanding of how project management systems can translate to service delivery can partake in a study of this nature requiring deep and relevant responses.

4.8 Research instrument

The study employed the interview as its research instrument for data collection. An interview is a deliberate and decisive discussion between two or more persons with the intent of revealing answers to a specific question(s) (Sekeran and Bougie, 2016). An interview is sectionalized into cogs such as structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interviews (Suanders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2009). This study employs the semi-structured interview as its data collection tool for understanding the project management systems and service delivery in eThekweni Municipality. In addition, it is crucial to state that the semi-structured interview allows for the examination of complementary questions as the interview progresses to appositely address the aim of the study, particularly when there is a trend of deviation noticed from the responses supplied by the respondents.

Furthermore, an interview guide containing a list of questions was utilized to guide the flow of questions as the interview unfolds and ensure that similar questions were posed to all respondents (Appendix C). However, the use of the interview guide was never intended to either restrict the probe of questions and the extent of responses supplied by the respondents (Morgan, 2007). In addition, it is essential to state that the probe was not meant to change the direction of

the questions enquired but to bring clarity to questions that seem not clear. The assortment of interviewees selected from unit managers in eThekweni Municipality provoked a robust understanding of the research problem. The duration of each interview was between 30 and 45 minutes, and all the feedback from the interviews was audiotaped. This is necessary to ensure that relevant information is not missed out during data transcription and analysis. The interview was conducted with each respondent on a one-on-one basis in a quiet environment for easy data transcription.

4.9 Data quality control

The necessity for certifying data quality effectively produces high-quality research works (Creswell, 2014). For instance, the degree or extent to which a research instrument ensures high-quality control greatly informs the importance of assuring high-quality research outcomes (Hay, 2011). The need to ensure the quality control of data in a qualitative study is different from the processes in providing the quality control of quantitative research instruments (Ivankova, Creswell and Clark, 2011). For this study, Trochim and Donnelly (2007), four components of trustworthiness (credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability) were employed to ensure the instrument's quality and data collected.

The credibility of the data was ascertained by confirming that all the respondents' opinions and perspectives were fully reported and reflected in the outcome of the study, especially with the report of all the respondents' views verbatim. Transferability was equally guaranteed by ensuring the qualitative data reported transferable to a similar or another context. Thus, the idea of guaranteeing the transferability of data is to ensure that the data reported can be replicated in a similar or another context. Furthermore, the dependability of the data reported was the control for quality by providing comprehensive ethics in the entire research process. For instance, this was done by ensuring the anonymity and secrecy of all information supplied in terms of data for this study. Lastly, the quality control of data was ensured through conformability of data by giving room for stakeholder's critical assessment of the interview scripts and the research outcome to establish consistency between the data reported and the research findings.

4.10 Data collection procedure

Several procedural steps were undertaken in ensuring that valid data were gathered to provoke explicit answers to the research questions. As it applies to this study, two different procedures were followed in the collection of data. First, the need to obtain a gatekeeper's letter from the eThekweni municipality followed with explicit explanations to appropriate authority of the municipality on the goal and aim of the study and words of assurance was given concerning abiding by the code of ethics in the conduct of the study. About the primary data collection, the process was sectionalized into two stages. First, each interviewee was given different dates wherein the interview would be conducted. However, before the commencement of the interview, the aim of the study was explained again to each individual participant, wherein they were asked to conceive the interview questions only in the light of research and address them with sincerity.

Notably, before the commencement of the interview, a consent form was issued to participants to clearly indicate their interest in participating in the research or willingness not to participate. The interview responses were all audio-taped using an electronic device, and a follow-up of note-taking was also done to ensure that the data was backed up in two different places if the responses supplied in the interview were not clear enough. The whole interview process lasted for two months (between November 25 and January 31). In addition to the interview, another data collection procedure was the need to visit some finished and ongoing projects of the municipality to see how they can engender good service quality for the different communities.

4.11 Method of data analysis

The content analysis was employed to analyze the qualitative data gathered to understand the nexus between project management systems and service delivery from elected unit managers of eThekweni Municipality. Content analysis is a qualitative tool used to analyze text, transcripts, and other documentary reports (Boksberger and Melsen, 2011). The crux of analyzing the content of a document is to make fuller meaning of the themes that developed from the document or transcripts. Thus, identifying different themes from the transcribed data was made using the NVivo qualitative software (ver. 11). In other words, the utility of the NVivo qualitative software aided in reducing the transcripts so that only the main themes and sub-themes that relate to the research questions were identified. In addition, Miles and Hubberman (1994) three stages of

analyzing qualitative data (data reduction, data display, and making inferences) were employed including.

The different themes were re-organized, and only relevant themes and sub-themes directly linked to the research questions were recognized. However, the re-organization of the themes and sub-themes does not exclude other non-relevant themes, specifically as themes with secondary importance on the research questions were included in the analysis. Furthermore, the re-organized themes were summarized and presented in an explicit manner to address the research objectives and questions. Lastly, the study's findings and major insinuations were drawn from the compressed themes, wherein conclusions were further drawn.

4.12 Ethical considerations

In terms of ensuring ethical standards, this study complied with several ethical considerations in providing both the data collection and analysis processes were ethically worthy. Precisely, the conduct of this study strictly conforms to the ethical principles of the University of KwaZulu-Natal Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee with the ethical clearance issued November 19, 2019, with protocol reference number HSSREC/00000797/2019 (see Appendix B). In addition, another issue of ethics considered in this study is the issuance of gatekeepers' letters (see Appendix A) from the eThekweni Municipality, South Africa, signaling permission to conduct the study in the municipality. The participants were given informed consent forms containing all relevant information were made to sign to acknowledge their participation to the study. The anonymity and secrecy of all participating project managers selected from the municipality were strictly protected such that their names or other forms of identification were concealed during the interview and in the report of findings.

The lists of questions enquired were strictly phrased so that the privacy of all participants was not desecrated, and the need to inquire questions reflecting respondents' identity was all equally discouraged. It was ensured that the opinions of all respondents were accorded reverence regardless of whether they fit with the questions asked or not. Before the commencement of the interview, all participants were well informed regarding the study's goal, wherein a consent form was issued to specify their inclination to participate in the study. This was necessary to ensure that all participants had a clear understanding of the nature of the study before participating in it. Again, among other ethical issues was the need to explain to participants that they had the free

will to choose not to participate or decline in participating at any given time. All these measures were put in place to ascertain that the rights of all persons were given the desired protection they deserved. Finally, the confidentiality of the interviews and the participating unit managers were safeguarded correctly to making sure that all the audio-recorded interviews and transcripts were protected under safe care by the custodian of the University research office.

4.13 Problems encountered during data collection

Several problems ensued in the course of gathering data for this study. First, the delay observed with respect to gatekeepers signaling permission to conduct the study in eThekweni Municipality cannot go unnoticed. The constant visit to the municipality as a reminder to ensure that gatekeeper's letter was issued caused the researcher several constraints and administrative challenges, culminating in extra time for data collection than the initial time envisaged for the entire process. Similarly, identifying appropriate unit managers who will participate in the study was also another of the challenges recorded. For example, it was difficult to accept the invitation to participate at first, with some managers showing reluctance, especially for fear of being victimized should they participate in the study.

However, after a thorough explanation of the study's aims that the study is only for research purposes with clear modalities given for utmost protection, the managers then decided to participate on the ground of anonymity. As the interview progresses with different appointment dates agreed with all participants, some of the identified unit managers were readily not available to participate in their scheduled interview. New appointment dates were agreed for the conduct of the interviews. These changes clearly constrained the effective conduct of the interview in that extra time has to be added. Finally, the challenge of finance also hindered the quick conduct of the interview altogether as the investigator mainly bore the cost of transportation, printing of research work and data analysis.

4.14 Summary of the chapter

This chapter has carefully explained the methodology and methods employed towards addressing the research questions. In other words, an explicit explanation with robust justification has been advanced for all the methodology and methods employed. Importantly, with regard to the philosophical assumption, explicit explanation has been provided for the utility of the

interpretivist research philosophy. Similarly, the exploratory research design was employed as the research design wherein the nexus between project management systems and service delivery was carefully unearthed through the qualitative research method. The population of the study was purposively selected from unit managers in the eThekweni Municipality. The semi-structured interview was employed as the research instrument to collect qualitative data from unit chosen managers. The data gathered was analyzed with the aid of content analysis technique, while the NVivo (v.12) qualitative software was utilized to identify themes from the interview transcript. The entire research process followed strict ethical procedures in both the collection of data and analysis, respectively.

CHAPTER FIVE

RESULTS AND DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study presents the results of the qualitative data employed to understand the project management and service delivery in the eThekweni Municipality, Durban, South Africa. The qualitative data were elicited through the exploratory research design, and eight (8) unit managers were recruited for the interview. With the aid of frequency and percentage distributions, descriptive statistics were initially employed to analyze and explain respondents' demographic data. In a bid to explain the link between project management and service delivery, the NVivo (v.12) qualitative software was employed to identify themes and sub-themes from the interview transcript, and the qualitative content analysis was employed to analyze the data. Overall, this chapter is categorized into two sections; the first section explains the implications of the descriptive data, while the second section captures the qualitative analyses that provide answers to the stated research questions.

5.2 Data presentation

This chapter mainly presents the data gathered from the semi-structured interview representing the qualitative analysis. These data are analyzed in tandem with the presentation of all the respondents' verbatim responses as they relate to the research objectives. In reporting these responses, all respondents are represented by a distinct code and symbol. For example, participant one is represented by P1, and IDI denotes in-depth Interviews.

5.3 Impact of decision-making processes in project initialization

Essentially, this objective aims to uncover and understand the impact of decision-making in project initialization. To do this, several themes emerged from the transcript interview depicting important decision-making processes in project initialization in the eThekweni municipality. The range of these themes is comprehensively discussed in the ensuing paragraphs as shown in figure 5.1 below.

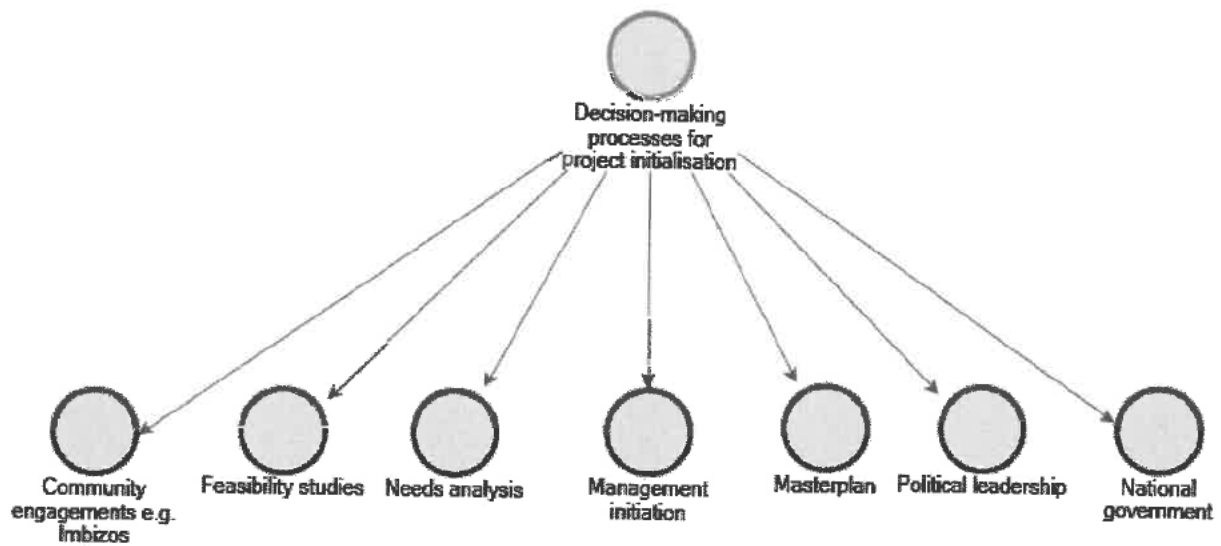


Figure 5.1 Impact of the decision-making process in project initialization for service delivery

5.3.1 Community Engagements

The vast majority of the respondents who participated in this study clearly narrated the importance of community engagement's impact on decision-making processes in project initialization in the eThekweni municipality. The general perception exemplifies the necessity of ensuring the community is thoroughly engaged in making decisions for project initialization for service delivery. Most of the respondents argued the need for appropriate community engagement as critical achieving performance-related objectives of service delivery for the eThekweni municipality. The concept of community engagement is explicitly explained as the consultation of members of the host community in the project for deciding the initialization of a project for service delivery. In relation to this study, the majority of the respondents argued for the establishment of appropriate community engagement consultative forums where community members can be represented with their mandate in the decision-making process of project initialization for service delivery. Furthermore, it was revealed that such contributions must be considered in the project initialization stage for performance output. One of the respondents explained below:

I think the decision-making process for project initialization should be done through appropriate community engagement in my opinion. I think this would have a good impact on the robustness of any decision-making process. This would also ensure that people can voice their concerns about

their needs when it comes to project initialization and what is expected in terms of outcome. This can be done through the constitution of town hall meeting where various community heads are consulted and engaged on project initialization in expectation for service delivery (IDI/P3/2020).

The majority of the unit managers interviewed reported one of the practical steps to ensuring appropriate community engagement is in the focus of bringing government closer to the people and this would mean ensuring that the local government is nearer to the people for prompt service delivery through adequate engagement. Most of the respondents explained that community engagement focuses on bringing the community affected on board in the decision-making process of ensuring projects are initializing at all levels of the local government by the municipality. According to most of the respondents, the whole impression is to ensure the challenges of service delivery are effectively addressed through community engagement channels. One of the unit managers clarified further:

I think we emphasize community engagement; the message should be passed appropriately. For me as a unit manager, there is no way the impact of our decision-making process can be evident on project initialization if we fail to bring in community members representatives through community engagement approach. In other words, what this means is that we are bringing the government closer to the people for them to have an input in the decision-making of issues that affect such as project initialization so we can be able to deliver service (IDI/P5/2020).

5.3.2 Feasibility study

The place of the feasibility study as an essential criterion for decision-making for service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. The need to identify appropriate projects for service delivery cannot be effectively done without a thorough feasibility study. For many of the respondents, the issue of feasibility study has consistently remained a major bottleneck for appropriate project initialization and service delivery. Taking a glimpse from this narrative, it was reported by a large number of the respondents that most of the project initialization in the eThekweni municipality often come through a first assessment and feasibility of the project in which case decision will be made as to the cost and duration of the project completion. Anchored on the necessity of ensuring appropriate service delivery is achieved in the eThekweni municipality, the majority of the respondents interviewed agreed that a thoroughly put feasibility study has been one of the yardstick and decision route employed by the municipality to ensure projects are effectively assessed during and after initialization for performance-driven service.

One of how decisions are made for project initialization is by ensuring that all projects goes through the appropriate units within the municipality wherein they must conduct feasibility study

prior to the initiation of such project. The emphasis here according to the rule of the municipality is to ensure that all hands are on ground in terms of the finance and manpower required for the actualization of such project (IDI/P6/2020).

Respondents also narrated the importance of needs analysis in the decision-making phase for project initialization. For instance, it was explained that needs analysis is often performed to identify community members' wants and the gap in service delivery before the initiation of a project. According to most of the respondents, this is required to have a comprehensive idea of the needs of community members for effective decision-making for service delivery.

For me, I think we need to look at need's analysis critically as a component of ensuring the required decision is made for project initiation. I think this is decision-making in the real sense because a decision towards project initiation that does not consider the needs analysis of the community members cannot births the desired service delivery. So, part of the decision-making process must incorporate the needs analysis of the community (IDI/P1/2020).

5.3.3 Management initiation

The role of management and other relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process of project initialization for service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. The structure embedded in project initialization in the eThekweni municipality captures so much of the responsibilities of line managers and councilors at the various wards level. Most of the respondents agreed that the decision-making regarding project initialization is always bottled down from line managers to the political representatives of the people who disseminate the required information to community members about service delivery. It was also collectively argued that other stakeholders in project initialization and monitoring are well involved in the decision-making process of project initialization and service delivery in the eThekweni municipality. For instance, one of the respondents recounted below:

I am aware that the decision-making process in the municipality with regard to project initialization and service delivery often involved both the management and other government representatives, especially at the local government levels. For instance, line managers are often appointed to liaise with councilors at the ward levels with are now further expected to disseminate such decision to other members of the community about a project initiation and service delivery as the case maybe (IDI/P1/2020).

Other respondents shared similar opinions regarding management initiation of the project at the municipality. It was argued that line managers and other relevant stakeholders within and outside of the municipality are grossly involved in the decision-making process of project initialization

for service delivery. Importantly, it was narrated that the members of the community are hardly interested in this decision-making process. One of the respondents reports as follows:

At the initialization stage of most project at the level of local government line managers of the municipality and other relevant stakeholders are the once involved in the initialization and decision-making process. I mean both internal and external stakeholders. As a matter fact, community members are hardly involved in the decision-making process (IDI/P1/2020).

5.3.4 Political leadership

The world over, the impact of political leadership on project initialization and service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. In addition, aside from the societal expectation placed on implementing policies for service delivery, the role of political leadership has grossly been linked to project monitoring and initialization. The general perception around the political hijacking of projects, while community members suffer untold hardship, has further affected politicians' decision-making towards improving the welfare of the people. During this study, it was revealed that the politicians are the bane behind the poor management of projects and service delivery at the local government level. In other words, the study shows that several of the policies enacted by politicians for service delivery are politically motivated for their selfish aggrandizement.

Furthermore, aside from the factor of poor political leadership, several of the issues affecting decision-making for project initialization cannot be distanced from addressing the concerns of personal interest through the award of projects to self and other members of political affiliation. To put in perspective, many South African politicians are not agitating for the provision of service, as the personal accumulation of South African taxpayers' monies has become the order of the day. Recounting the poor decision-making attitude of political leadership towards project initialization and service delivery, one of the respondents narrates as follows:

When we talk about decision-making for project initialization and service delivery, I think the politicians are more involved in this process than the management of the eThekweni themselves who often carry out the need's analysis of these projects. For instance, it is very clear that before the municipality begins initiating a service delivery project, the politicians must be carried along as they are closer to the people. There have been many instances that the politicians' decision at this stage always stalled the initiation of such projects, which always affect the service delivery goal. So, I think the political leadership impact has a long way to go on how decisions are made for project initiation and service delivery (IDI/P7/2020).

To reaffirm the involvement of political leadership in the decision-making process of project initialization, another respondent reported that the challenge of lack of project supervision after initiation on the part of political leaders reflects poor service delivery for members of the community at large.

You see, for me, I would look at it from the prism of how these political leaders try with their political will to be included in the decision-making process of project initiation for service delivery and later on are nowhere to be found. I must be specific that these trends are becoming the norms rather than exception wherein they disappear from the scene of things after having included their decisions, which is for their benefit. These things affect service delivery in many ways I must say (IDI/P7/2020).

The above responses clearly narrate the various strands of decision-making processes affecting project initiation for service delivery at the local government level of governance. Expectedly, one of the processes highlighted by many respondents is the impact of community engagement on the decision-making process of project initiation at the municipality. While it is appropriate to argue for the inclusion of the community members in the decision-making process, the impact of the feasibility study was also clearly mentioned by respondents. This narrative was advanced to picture the necessity of having a blue map before the initiation process to understand the cost and workforce required. Again, a spotlight was also placed on the impact of management initiation. This impact was argued as the basis of all project initialization process for service delivery. Lastly, the result of political leadership on the decision-making process of project initialization also contended. Specifically, respondents argued that the interference of political office holders has greatly impacted the project initiation process and service delivery at the eThekweni municipality.

5.4 Processes in place to manage risks associated with the implementation of projects

The emphasis of this objective is to understand the various processes out in place by the eThekweni municipality in the mitigation of risk associated with the implementation of projects. To accurately answer these objectives, five distinct themes emerged from the transcript interview as processes utilized by the eThekweni municipality to manage risk associated with project implementation. These themes, as shown in Figure 5.2 below, are further discussed in the following paragraph.

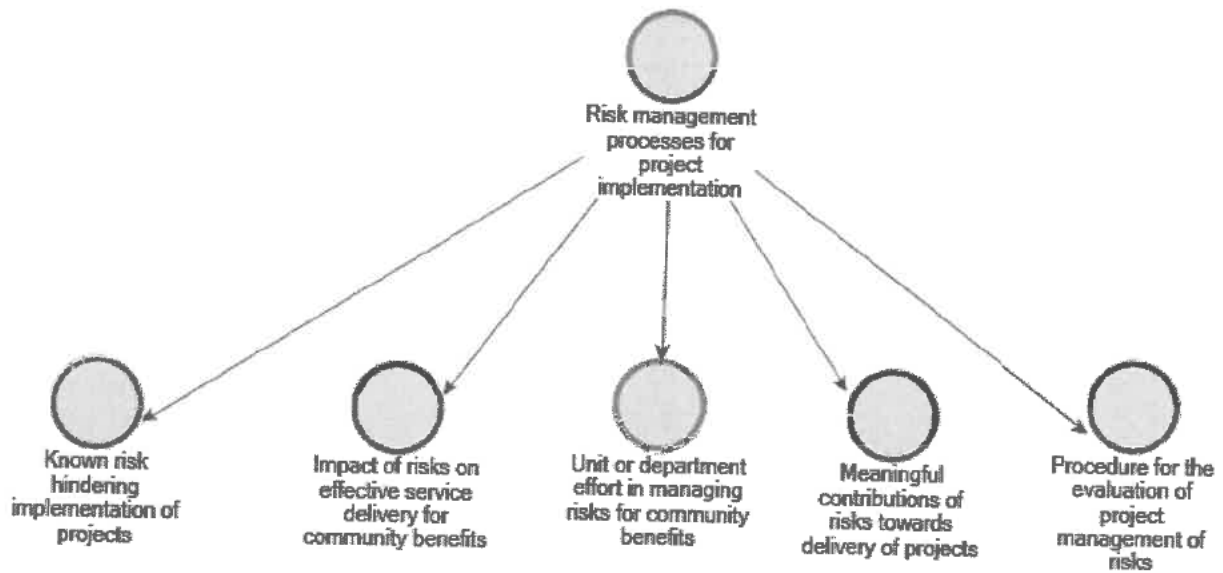


Figure 5.2 Processes in the management of risks associated with the implementation of projects

5.4.1 Acknowledging the risk associated with the implementation of projects

Projects initialization is intended plans and actions set out by the local government towards the actualization of service delivery. Several project initialization and service delivery objectives have not engendered the desired outcome because of militating risks within the municipality. Globally, the unprecedented political buy-in and interference have been acknowledged as risks affecting the implementation of projects at all government levels. For instance, in South Africa, there has been an increase in political interference on project implementation and service delivery initiatives. Again, it is not strange in this part of the world to see political office holders demanding a buy-in from the proceeds meant for the implementation of projects, thus posing significant risks to the swift implementation of the tasks for the benefit of the community.

In addition, another acknowledged risk is the consistent protests resulting from poor implementation of projects for service delivery. In South Africa, especially at the local government level, the consistent rise in protests against inadequate service delivery has further culminated into severe damages destroying resources meant for the community's assistance at large. In other words, for the municipality, these two factors are the basic ways of acknowledging the risk associated with the implementation of projects in the municipality as reported by many of the participants. Essentially, one of the participants reported as follows:

One of the primary challenges affecting project implementation is the factor of buy-in from stakeholders and political interference on the part of politicians. I must tell you that this has long been identified as a major risk for the municipality in terms of project implementation for the service delivery for members of the community and the municipality is working tirelessly to ensure a minimal intervention from the part of intervention through stakeholders' engagement and other processes (IDI/P7/2020).

It was further narrated that the concern of risk affecting project implementation is not limited to political interference, as the challenge of consistent community protest has been identified to hinder the performance of service delivery projects. Interestingly, most of the respondents collectively agreed that plans are under way from the orbit of the municipality towards relapsing the significant adverse effects of protest on the smooth implementation of the project for community benefits.

One of the main risks hindering the implementation of projects is service delivery protests which can also result in damages to resources which would have assisted the community in rendering service delivery. In my opinion, therefore, I am aware that the municipality is fully in acknowledgement of these challenges as a string risk towards projects implementation for service delivery and all hands are on deck in ensuring appropriate community engagement in this regard in order to allow for smooth implementation of projects so the large majority of the community can benefit from service delivery (IDI/P4/2020).

5.4.2 Assessing the risk on service delivery for community members

The importance of service delivery is a tool for the realization of the development of objectives. The need to identify the impact of risk on realizing this goal becomes imperative for any development or service delivery initiatives within the municipality. For many respondents, the challenge of these risks mentioned above on the attainment of service delivery for the benefits of the community members has, over time, resulting in a range of developmental challenges for the municipality. Taking a glimpse from this, it was reported by a large number of the respondents that these risks have resulted in a range of delays in the provision of services for members of the community on the one hand and that this has equally led to the inability of the community members to effectively utilize the implemented or completed projects for their benefits on the other hand. For instance, one of the respondents reports as follows:

For me, one of the ways to assess the risk on service delivery for the interest of community members is to try to understand it from the perspective of the several delays witnessed in the implementation of projects that have rubbed off community members their expected benefits. So we need to talk about how projects implementation is unceasingly delayed because of these risks and this cannot in any way help us improve the service delivery imitative of the people. So, we need to think and see how these risks can be mitigated and addressed so the members of the community can at least enjoy the dividends of democracy through project implementation (IDI/P4/2020).

Another respondent also re-echoed the impact of these identified risks on project implementation in the municipality with severe consequences for service delivery. According to the respondent, this challenge has engendered severe setbacks for the development of the community in terms of project implementation and execution.

Sincerely, the impact of these risks is mammoth. For instance, the negative impact on project implementation is obvious. The accompanying delay in execution time has engender benefits denial for most community members at large (IDI/P1/2020).

5.4.3 Departments efforts in managing risks for community benefits

The global responsibilities of governments are hinged on providing adequate service and basic amenities to the governed. Government departments and units manage these responsibilities. However, with the instance of South Africa, government departments are not only constricted to the formulation of project policies and their implementation. Still, they are now more engrossed with the management and supervision of projects for service delivery. Many of the respondents interviewed expressed the vital role being played by several units of the eThekweni municipality in managing risk associated with project implementation and service delivery, respectively. Other opinions shared by respondents show that the units, through the Community Liaison Officer, are always on the ground for interaction with community members towards the mitigation of any known risks associated with project implementation in the municipality. One of the respondents shared the following thoughts:

Well, I can tell you of the enormous efforts of the department towards ensuring that risk associated with project implementation are effectively managed for the benefits of the community members. For instance, in the eThekweni municipality, I can confidently tell you that units always embarked on several community participation programs to inform members of the progress of project through the community the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) who is the middleman between the project and the community. In a way, the CLO is representing the municipality in itself. He is responsible for ensuring all risk linked to project implementation is effectively handled and managed (IDI/P8/2020).

For many respondents, the department also utilized the public participation medium to address some of the challenges relating to project implementation. This is done through public consultation where community representatives are to air their grievances in relation to the range of risk militating the implementation of projects in their community for service delivery. In specific, one of the respondents explains below:

One of the ways through which risk against the implementation of projects are addressed in the municipality is that the municipality constituted units whose responsibilities are to ensure that prior to the initiation of projects, community members and all relevant stakeholders agree about the modalities of the project and sets out step to address any rising risk through public participation engagement assisted also by the ward leadership (IDI/P3/2020).

5.4.4 Meaningful contributions of risk towards the delivery of projects

This theme aims to comprehend how the identified risks have been meaningful towards the delivery of projects. From the findings, available evidence shows that the identified risks have contributed meaningfully to the delivery of projects in the municipality. For instance, most of the respondents argued in support of how the feedback from the risk has improved upon the municipality project implementation initiatives and service delivery plan. The contention from this explanation captures that the risk measures have opened up opportunities on how best to improve the service delivery efforts of the departments for performance-driven services. Particularly, it was reported that the feedback from the risk management of projects implementation had given more room for the avoidance of similar risks that could jeopardize the service delivery effort of the municipality in the future. This exposition clearly explains that the management of risk associated with project initiation and implementation positively contributes to attaining service delivery. One of the respondents argued thus far:

I have to say that the risks have contributed meaningful feedback to the municipality on project initiation and management. In specific, it has thoroughly allowed the department to appropriately plan and improved upon the nature and style of service delivery. In order words, it has provided for and ensure the timeous implementation and execution of projects across board for the benefits of members of the community (IDI/P6/2020).

To support the above opinion, another respondent narrates how the various risk management strategies have engendered major and positive contributions to the municipality in advising the department on what the community should expect in terms of the improvement of their welfare through service delivery. The responses are shared below:

I think the management of these risks have brought enormous positive contributions to the department, especially in the area of advising the unit on what the community members are in expectation of with regards to service delivery, especially so that future risk for project implementation and execution can be avoided (IDI/P2/2020).

5.4.5 Procedures for the evaluation of projects implementation of risks

The importance of evaluating project risks plays a critical role in implementing projects and service delivery outcomes. However, the essence of ensuring projects are implemented must be followed with clear procedural monitoring and evaluation efforts on the part of the municipality for the benefit of community members. Evaluation of project implementation risks does not only stop with the various department in the eThekweni but also extend to other stakeholders who are jointly connected in ensuring adequate service delivery for the community members. The majority of the respondents argued that the known procedure for evaluating project implementation risks includes an assessment conducted at the end of the completion of each project and on a large scale through the identification of the risks and their impact. Respondents further argue that the identification of these risks is essentially evaluated and monitored for best performance output in terms of service delivery.

Although while the responses agreed that there is a gap in the various procedural steps for the evaluation of project implementation risks, it was however agreed that there is an urgent need for the development of realistic monitoring and evaluation effort that will closely monitor the evaluation of project implementation risk for robust service delivery. Accordingly, with detailed evaluation and monitoring function, it will be likely to effectively address the risks associated with the implementation of projects risks, particularly those that fall within the core of service delivery. This position can be linked to the fact that the poor monitoring and evaluation efforts relished on projects on the part of the eThekweni municipality and other relevant stakeholders are evident with the re-occurrence of similar risks, thus affecting the service delivery initiative of the municipality. One of the respondents talked about the importance of evaluation and monitoring of project implementation risk as follows:

One of the well-known procedures for the evaluation of project implementation risks that I am familiar with is through appropriate identification of the risk. This is further done by analyzing the impact of the risk and close monitor for best service delivery effort. The way this is done is that some units in the department are assigned the task of setting out specific procedures for evaluating project implementation risk and establishing any known risk that could affect the service delivery effort of the municipality. Upon evaluation, the same unit are requested to set up another team whose duties is to review the project and tell if there is any risk attached to the project implementation. The essence of these various procedures is to clearly establish that the service delivery effort is not jeopardize in anyway (IDI/P8/2020).

The analyses have shown four different processes in the management of risk associated with the implementation of projects at the eThekweni municipality, which include acknowledging the risk associated with project implementation, assessing the risk on service delivery, department efforts in the management of risk, meaningful contributions of risk to the management of projects and procedures for the evaluation of risks respectively. As many of the respondents explained, acknowledging the risk associated with the implementation of projects for service delivery can be used to identify future risks that can halt the progress of a project. An assessment of the risk on service delivery was also argued as one of the essential processes in managing risk associated with the implementation of projects. The results also showed the place of meaningful contributions of risk for project management in the eThekweni municipality. Lastly, the analyses also narrate the importance of ensuring appropriate procedures are put in place to evaluate and monitor risk for service delivery.

5.5 Impact of financial resource allocation on effective project management

This section of the study seeks to understand the impact of financial resource allocation on the effective management of projects. More like in any public enterprise, the bureaucracy attached to financial allocation and expenditure is well known. However, despite this measure, several of the financial allocations have resulted in misappropriation of public payers' tax leading to poor service delivery for the community members. For this study, several financial resource allocation impacts on project management were explained, including the treasury unit's impact, the time frame of allocation on effective project management and delivery, how financial resource allocation has increased service delivery, and the proper financial mechanism put in place for continuous project delivery. These themes are presented in figure 5.3 below and further explained in the flowing paragraphs.

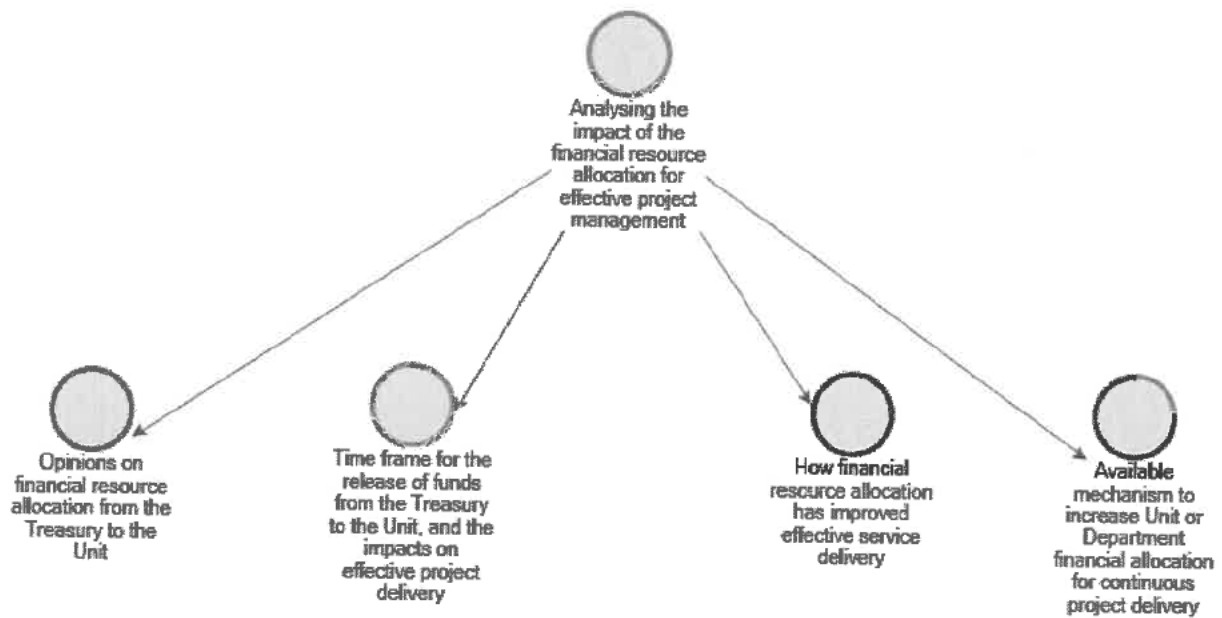


Figure 5.3 Impact of financial resource allocation on effective project management

5.5.1 Impact of financial allocation from the treasury on project management

The need to effectively implement projects for robust service delivery cannot be distanced from the constitution of appropriate financial allocation procedures. Most of the respondents interviewed clarify that one of the ways projects are implemented and financed for the interest of the community members is through a financial allocation from the national government up until the local government. However, most of the opinions shared are anchored on the disappointing role of the national government in terms of the financial budget set aside for the three tiers of government. The majority of the respondents lamented that these trends have negatively affected the number of projects implemented and completed in the community. Other opinions shared captured the inadequacy of such allocation leaving the units to often prioritize budgets at the detriment of delivery service for community members. One of the respondents recounts explicitly below:

Without doubt, the issue of financial allocation has remained a long battle for us at the department and the municipality at large. Over the years, the turnout from the treasury has been so low and poor. For instance, the national focus of the government on the implementation of projects for service delivery has been greatly affected especially with this COVID-19 global pandemic. So, this has caused the municipality to start prioritizing projects, affecting how far service delivery can be offered to the people. In a nutshell, the national treasury's financial allocation is low and affects service delivery (IDI/P7/2020).

Another respondent further reiterated that the challenge of a low financial budget from the national treasury affects the project initiation and service delivery in the eThekweni municipality. The respondent further argued that, aside from the disruption of the COVID-19 pandemic that has cut the national budget, the widespread corruption among government officials has affected the financial allocation to the municipality, thus affecting service delivery efforts. The respondent explained as follows:

It is true to say that the financial allocation the municipality is receiving from the national government is poor and sparse, thus affecting the extent of services delivered primarily with the recent disruption of the COVID-19, yet there is that there is massive corruption among government officials that is greatly affecting the financial allocation coming down to the municipality to execute basic project for the interest of the members of the communities (IDI/P7/2020).

5.5.2 Impact of the time frame of financial allocation on effective project delivery

The importance of time frame in the allocation of finance for service delivery cannot be over-emphasized. In other words, the bulk of service delivery initiatives must be supported with a timeous budget and financial allocation for appropriate project implementation. However, most of the respondents interviewed averred that the time frame for financial allocation greatly depends on the period-specific projects initiated. In other words, it was also explained that the time frame is related to the priority of the project in question and the significance it possesses to the generality of the community members. To a large extent, respondents agreed that any timeous financial allocation greatly depends on the motivation of the project leader to release such allocation and its importance. For example, one of the respondents recounted as follows:

The time frame for the financial allocation of funds depends on the projects initiated. For instance, some funds are released when needed, while others take longer to be released for the project. Importantly, it has been shown that the significance and urgency of projects in terms of the propensity to increase the people's livelihood get quicker attention and are often released fast than others who do not. Again, what I can tell you about the time frame of financial allocation for the project is that most projects that get swift financial attention are motivated by the group leader of the projects, who is expected to explain the plans, goals, and benefits of the projects to the management before such finance are released (IDI/P7/2020).

Another respondent recounted the inadequacy of finance allocated to the municipality and subsequent departments to execute projects across the board. It was further narrated that the lack of enough financial allocation has affected the number of projects to be completed within a specified period, with severe setbacks for service delivery.

You see, what I am aware of is that the financial allocation for the execution of projects has not only been delayed across the different levels of government but sincerely there have been very inadequate to be able to achieve the project targets of the municipality. And the consequence of all of these is that service delivery would suffer greatly (IDI/P5/2020).

5.5.3 Financial resource allocation and service delivery

Financial resource allocation is intended to manage and execute projects for the improved welfare of community members. Essentially, these finances are structured towards ensuring community members have a sense of belonging and partake in the dividends of democracy. Several of the respondents interviewed explained the long-term benefits of financial resource allocation on service delivery for community members. Globally, the mass of government financial allocation is set aside for the attention of societal issues ranging from infrastructure, education, and health, among others. In South Africa, there has been increasing debate on the need for continuous allocation of resources to degrading areas of the lives of the majority of the community members. One of the respondents explained the effect of financial resource allocation on service delivery.

The allocation of financial resources has improved project delivery in the manner that projects have benefited even the remote areas that previously did not benefit. It has also enabled the upgrade of the dilapidated infrastructure, thus depicting an service delivery (IDI/P5/2020).

In affirmation of the above contention, another respondent report below:

Financial resource allocation has enabled the Unit to ensure that projects are executed and completed, which ultimately ensures that communities can enjoy and benefit from these projects, thus improving service delivery in all parts of eThekweni Municipality (IDI/P3/2020).

5.5.4 Mechanism for increase financial allocation for continuous project delivery

The majority of the respondents advanced the need for constituting appropriate mechanisms for increase in financial allocation for continuous project delivery. However, several of the contentions shared reflect that the current global health pandemic has created bottlenecks. The existing mechanism can be adjusted to increase the financial allocation to departments, giving room for more execution of projects for the benefit of community members. Similarly, respondents argued that the global health pandemic had created a drastic cut in government expenditure across the three tiers of government. Money allocated is no longer enough to realize existing and proposed projects. In addition to this position, other respondents argued that there are no adequate mechanisms to increase the municipality's financial allocation. For instance, it

was argued by most of the respondents that the existing bureaucracy and red tape have greatly hindered the increase of funds for project management and execution. Accordingly, one of the respondents reported thus:

In my opinion, at the moment, it is highly unlikely to have adequate mechanism, due to the fact that the government has reduced and cut the budget allocation to the department and municipality in general and this has been making it difficult for members of the community to receive anything they so desire in terms of service delivery. I would also like to add that the current global health pandemic has further deteriorated things and affected any known mechanism, if at all (IDI/P5/2020).

Another respondent shared similar insight on the inadequacy of existing mechanisms to be used as a source of increasing the departmental financial allocation. The respondents recounted the many bureaucracies and other structures constricting this objective as follows:

I can confidently tell you that at the moment, there is no known mechanism in place to be used to increase the department's financial allocation. In addition, it is interesting to highlight that there are too much bureaucracies and red tape that are constraining this if at all (IDI/P2/2020).

5.6 Challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery

The goal of this research objective was to understand the various challenges related to enhancing the quality management for service delivery. The different difficulties uncovered from the findings include:

- i. the awarding of contracts to service providers who have little or no expertise in the task assigned,
- ii. contractors cutting corners to save cost resulting in sub-standard quality output, lack of resources and inadequate inspection after project completion,
- iii. interference from political leaders and the problem of politicization of projects by different political stakeholders, and
- iv. exclusion of stakeholders from the decision-making process.

These various themes are displayed in figure 5.4 and further analyzed in the subsequent paragraphs as follows:

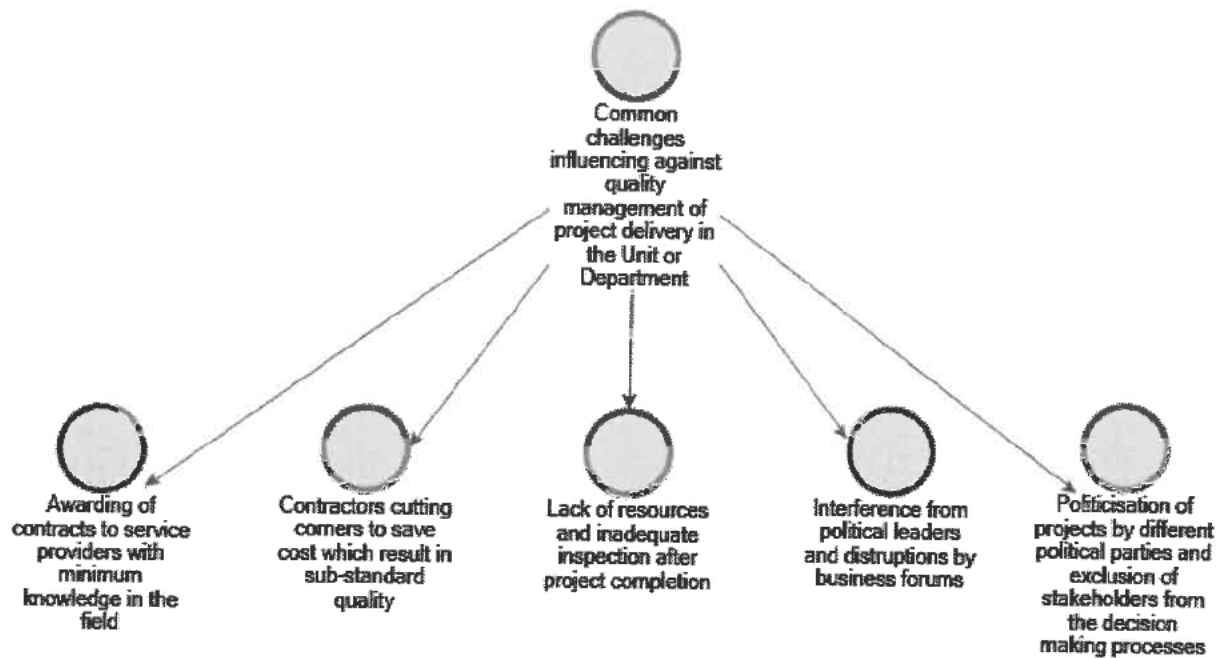


Figure 5.4 Challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekweni Municipality.

5.6.1 Awarding contract to service providers with minimum knowledge in the field

The increase in the award of contracts to service providers who are not qualified enough to provide quality service is becoming the norm rather than an exception in the public sector. For instance, a large number of these practices include awarding contracts to family members, relatives, or allies who are not competent enough with the agreement to collect kickbacks by government officials. The respondents interviewed revealed that most of the projects executed at the community level of governance comprised so many arranged contracts in which kickbacks are given to the awardees of such contracts. If these practices are executed, the effect is the provision of sub-standard projects, leaving community members to suffer a great loss in service delivery. Accordingly, it was reported that several top executives and middle-line managers are the custodians of these practices. In addition, findings reveal that with the mammoth level of corruption that characterized the public sector, little or no effort has been made to tame the tide of corruption that has continually left the community members to poor service delivery. One of the respondents especially comments on the award of contracts to sub-standard contractors as follows:

For me, one of the challenges militating against improved quality management and service delivery is the increasing practice of awarding contracts to sub-standard contractors who deliver a not too good project for community members. This practice is rife within the public sector here and I can tell you it is one of the major problems we are having. If you ask me, you will discover that those at the helm of affairs are the one doing this and since it is like this, no one can talk. You will see where projects are being awarded to close relatives and friends alike in return of collecting their portion. This is a big problem and like they say, the grass always suffers. So, the community members are always at the receiving end of this challenge with poor service delivery (IDI/P6/2020).

Regarding the consequence of the above practice, one of the respondents recounts how the award of contracts to sub-standard contractors has engendered severe infrastructural challenges for community members as they continue to suffer great service delivery problems. These accounts are reported below:

On many occasions we have seen that the consequence of top management awarding contracts to sub-standard service providers. Or instance, if sub-standard projects are delivered to the community, it is expected that the original problem they had would not have been solved. In most cases, the infrastructure will fail and these people will have to face the same problem that they had before (IDI/P4/2020).

5.6.2 Lack of resources and inadequate inspection after project completion

Several testimonies have revealed the unavailability of resources and inadequate inspection after the completion of projects as one of the main challenges threatening public sector development, especially in service delivery. The emergence of the covid-19 global health pandemic has dwindled the financial standing of many governments globally, hence resulting in low funding of public projects across the globe. The public sector aims to provide affordable and quality service to the community members as one of the dividends of democracy. However, the changing economic order provoked by the covid-19 pandemic has caused severe setbacks in this regard. In addition, the majority of the respondents shared the sentiments of lack of proper inspection of projects after completion as another significant problem affecting project quality in South Africa. To support this position, one of the problems with Africans is the challenge of maintenance culture as a bulk of public projects are seen degrading in quality because of a poor maintenance culture. There was a consensus among many of the respondents interviewed that the lack of inspection of projects on the part of government officials has done more harm than the unavailability of projects to members of the community. One of the respondents explain his views as follows:

You see, I would want you to agree with me that the lack of resources in the implementation and execution of projects still remains a big and huge challenge to delivering quality service to the members of the community. For instance, the problem of covid-19 has reduced government expenses and allocation and it is expected that so many projects will be stalled and those under way had to also be paused. Obviously, this will have a severe consequence for the larger members of the community (IDI/P7/2020).

An overwhelming majority of the respondents were interviewed to confirm the challenge of lack of maintenance culture after project completion as a critical component of service delivery in South Africa, especially at the eThekweni municipality. Similarly, it was explained that the practice of lack of project inspection on the part of government officials is closer to poor service delivery than the initiation of the project in the first place. For instance, one of the officials interviewed recounted as follows:

I think the challenge of quality management of projects is the lack of maintenance culture that has characterized the public service sector. For instance, it is a common practice here that you see a project being completed and for the next ten years or so you will not see any inspection on that project. I am not sure quality management and service delivery can be attained with this attitude. I think projects should be inspected from time to time when completed to ascertain the level of quality and if repairs are needed or not. But the practice in the public sector is awful as projects are not inspected and are left to degraded (IDI/P3/2020).

5.6.3 Interference from political leaders

The responsibility of any government is clearly hinged on the provision of service and other amenities, including infrastructure. These responsibilities are added to the politicians who are elected into different political offices. However, with the case of South Africa, and as obtainable in another part of the world, politicians are not just saddled with the responsibility of providing services and initiating projects for members of the community but are more inclined to interfere in the distribution of projects, hence posing challenges to the actualization of service to the members of the community. The respondents interviewed showed severe concerns with the increase in political interference in project implementation and execution at the eThekweni municipality. Other vital concerns raised include lobbying the project for specific political comrades or parties, while the community members suffer the poor handling of such projects. In addition, the challenge of political interference is also connected to the increase in the rate of pressure from the ruling political party to reserve specific projects for party members. One of the respondents' recounts as follows:

I can confidently tell you that the impact of interference from political leaders remains a very strong challenge to the actualization of quality management and service delivery to public members. On several occasions, you see the politicians coming to interfere in the municipality's activities on how project should be initiated and executed. On several occasions, they would even come and tell you what number of projects should be diverted to them not considering the effect on the welfare of the people. You can imagine how politicians interfere the task of service delivery. It is a serious situation.

For many respondents, the process of quality management and service delivery has seen a lot of interference, especially from the national ruling party. It has become a custom that agents of the party would always come to take up one or two projects. This is not the standard anywhere in the world, but our case is like this. A respondent report as follows:

I have to tell you that the ruling party is the chief interference in how jobs and projects are being done here. They come here with a lot of pressure requesting some quotas of projects for the party and you must comply because the politicians are the owners of the country (IDI/P6/2020).

5.6.4 Politicization of projects by different political parties and exclusion of stakeholders from the decision-making process

This theme seeks to address the challenge of the hijack of project management and service delivery by politicians. Importantly, it aims to address how projects are being politicized and the exclusion of relevant stakeholders from partaking in the project initiation and execution decision-making process. For instance, there have been several instances where politicians seek to exclude stakeholders from a meeting that has to do with project implementation and service delivery. Several of the respondents argued that the politicians have their way of excluding people that could hinder and constrict them from politicizing the implementation of projects. One of the respondents explains how stakeholders are occasionally being excluded from the decision-making process of project implementation.

I can confidently tell you that the tactics of the politicians are to ensure that they exclude stakeholders from any decision-making process bearing project management and service delivery for them to fully have their way with respect to the project. In other words, these politicians are the major problem while so many of our projects are yet to be initiated and some are not even completed. They have to use politics to ensure these projects favour them at all costs (IDI/P2/2020).

For another respondent, this challenge has affected service quality so badly within the community, and community members remain at the receiving end.

We have the results of politicization to include how poorly roads are constructed and handed over to community members with adequately doing a standard job by politicians after hijacking some projects. The result is poor services delivered (IDI/P6/2020).

Making sense from the above analyses, the majority of the respondents identified a range of challenges affecting project quality and service quality, including awarding contracts to service providers with minimum knowledge in the field, contractors cutting corners to save cost resulting in substandard quality, lack of resource and inadequate inspection after project completion, interference from political leaders and the politicization of projects by different political parties and exclusion of stakeholders from the decision-making process. Put together, the constellation of these challenges is mentioned as factors denying members of the community service delivery.

5.7 Summary of the chapter

In this chapter, the qualitative analysis was presented. For example, for each component of the research objective, appropriate responses/data were presented to address such objectives. The impact of the decision-making process in project initiation revealed that the decision-making process for the initialization of projects affects community engagement, management initiation, and political leadership. The chapter concludes that the impact of the decision-making process for the initialization and implementation conveys significant consequences on the community members in the areas of service delivery if such decisions are not implemented appropriately. In addition, the management of risks associated with the implementation of projects explains several measures for the control and management of risk in the implementation of the project, such as acknowledging the risk associated with the performance of projects, assessing the influence of the risk on service delivery, and an assessment of the department efforts in the management of risks. Put together, while it is acknowledged that there are arrays of risks associated with project implementation, these risks must be managed by ensuring stakeholder influence is recognized.

Lastly, the chapter reveals a collection of challenges associated with improving quality management for service delivery. For example, while it is needful to explain that there are existing bottlenecks in implementing projects at any level of government apparatus, the findings revealed in this study are not an exemption. The challenge of awarding contracts to service providers with little or no knowledge, lack of inspection and adequate resource allocation, and interference from political leaders were all explained as constraints limiting the improvement of projects for service delivery. This causes a concise understanding of the public sector

institutions' workings where corruption and political interference have become the order of the day, limiting the goal of improving the quality of lives of community members. The next chapter discusses the findings in detail.

CHAPTER SIX

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

The poor delivery of service at all tiers of South Africa should provoke serious calls and attention from stakeholders and politicians towards ensuring community members are offered service through project initiation and implementation. In the eThekweni municipality, where the focus of this study is centered, findings reveal several challenges affecting improved quality management for service delivery. These testimonies are further compounded with the context and nature of the municipality's decision-making process for project initialization. In other words, many of the known efforts to revitalize the society through project initialization and implementation have been hindered by the array of political interference and politicization, with little or no known progress of projects for the development of the society.

To put the above narratives into context, the source of this conversation is that the several efforts concerning project implementation towards uplifting the welfare of the people have been reduced in robustness by several factors constricting their effectiveness. Two of the most salient issues affecting these strategic efforts in South Africa are the lack of resources to effectively implement projects and political interference in the functions of bureaucrats and public officials. For instance, the unceasing influence of the ongoing global pandemic on government budget and allocation has constricted the attainment of many developmental projects concerning service delivery initiatives. In addition, the ascending rate of corruption that has characterized the award of contracts has also affected the achievement of effective and quality service delivery.

Put together, the municipality's responsibility is to be able to create a sustainable path through which service delivery can be attainable, especially for the designated groups who have been at the receiving end of poor service delivery. Thus, it is interesting to know if these remits have well been pursued through appropriate decision-making processes and financial allocation, amongst others. To this end, this study seeks to access and understand the

interplay between project management and service delivery in the eThekweni municipality. This chapter presents a comprehensive discussion in tandem with the findings of chapter five to provoke an explicit explanation of the research objectives. Lastly, the major conclusions discussed in this chapter are presented to either corroborate or invalidate existing studies. Therefore, the research findings are discussed in connection with the research objectives.

6.2 Assessing the impact of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekweni Municipality

These objectives show three distinctive decision-making processes and their impact on the project initialization at the eThekweni Municipality: decision-making input from community engagement, feasibility study, management initiation, and political leadership. These results provide empirical answers to research question one and objective one. Findings show that most of the respondents revealed community engagement as one of the channels through which decisions are made for project initialization in the eThekweni municipality. In other words, the essence of community engagement must consider the varying range of community members' needs and desires in terms of service delivery and development initiatives. Specifically, the contention around this finding unravels a strong community engagement discourse where the designated groups' aspirations must be fulfilled through quality project initiation and service delivery. In addition to this, another dimension to the community engagement decision-making process is anchored on the need to adequately reflect the queries and opinions of the community members thoroughly in the decision for project initialization. This, according to the large constituent of the respondents, is important to ensure the suitable projects are enacted, which would meet the desires and wants of the people.

In terms of the feasibility study, the findings show that the importance of having a feasibility study before the initiation of a project is a fundamental decision-making step towards ensuring a quality service delivery, especially for the designated people. In other words, the fundamentals of making decisions through appropriate feasibility are to ensure that proper finances are allocated and that all issues bearing on poor service delivery are neatly accounted for and implemented after the projects. To support this, findings show how this

decision-making process is being judiciously used in the project implementation phase of the municipality. Another important issue discussed from this finding is ensuring all relevant parties are involved during a feasibility study for optimum service delivery. One of the most critical concerns that ensue from this finding is the municipality's ability to control corruption through a robust feasibility study and needs analysis before the initiation and execution of projects. In other words, the decision-making process of ensuring feasibility studies are carried out keeps in check the immoderations of public officers during project initiation and implementation. It was also revealed that the decision-making process of a feasibility study is strictly aimed towards addressing the perception of corruption held against public establishments by the public. Interestingly, results show a handful of projects initiated for service delivery are made to go through robust feasibility studies before their initiation and implementation for public use.

Additionally, while it was evident that feasibility study has shown to be a crucial decision-making process through the findings, one is still left to wonder if this decision-making process has engendered the desired result in terms of service delivery for the generality of the population. Specifically, the South African public establishment and the government have consistently shown their strength in decision-making for project initiation. Hence the claim of a robust feasibility study for performance-driven services is still under scrutiny. In other words, it is logical to take a position that the poor embrace of feasibility studies as a source of decision-making for project initiation and implementation could result in the delivery of poor services for the public.

Another vital decision-making source for project initialization revealed through the findings was management initiation. Specifically, this finding shows that the management of the eThekweni municipality is responsible for ensuring appropriate projects are initiated for the benefit of society. Reflecting on this, it will not be out of place to argue that the management of the eThekweni is appropriately positioned to make decisions on projects, as they better understand the plights and needs of the community. Perhaps, this observation can be connected to the fundamental role and responsibilities of the local government in ensuring adequate, and quality service is offered to the people at the grassroots. In specific, this finding cannot be used in isolation to the eThekweni municipality in South Africa as all local

governments are empowered to decide the nature and type of projects to be initiated for their community members.

Similarly, a swift examination of local government remits in the decision-making process for project initiation and implementation in another region cannot be far-fetched. Clearly, the South African case is not an exception. Still, one that should be seriously investigated as most of the management initiation of the project at the local level of government remains questionable. Therefore, this analysis would be clearer when checked through the prism of management accountability in the project's decision-making process for community benefits.

The study also highlighted that the decision-making process of project initiation is done with the involvement of political leadership. Connected with this is the consistent mix-up of government duties and political activities. This is undoubtedly noticed with the mass involvement of political leadership in the decision-making process of project initiation and implementation at the eThekweni municipality. In other words, this position supports many commentaries about public service rule by politicians for personal aggrandizements and different personal intensions. A large majority of the respondents express the dominance of the eThekweni municipality with political interference such that the municipality's activities are being greatly affected by these political dictates. By implications, the management of the municipality is handicapped to a great extent and is being overridden by politicians' decisions regarding the initiation and implementation of projects for public benefits.

Lastly, the collection of the above findings can be linked to existing studies. For example, in line with the finding on the need for community engagement as a channel of decision-making in projects initiation, Sandhawalia, and Dalcher's (2010) study argued for the importance of community viewpoints, especially those communities affected by poor service delivery to be given utmost attention by departments of government and agencies in the implementation of decisions for project initiation and execution. The authors further argued that government and government agencies must ensure the appropriate channel for this communication to be effective. According to Roberts (2012), community members' participation in the decision-making process for project initiation and implementation is another term for citizen power, which must be judiciously utilized to improve the welfare of members of the society. In other

words, it is construed as the redeployment of power that allows disadvantaged citizens to be heard concerning quality service delivery. Furthermore, the feasibility study criterion for decision-making is accurately supported by Moe and Aurum (2012), where it was asserted that in line with business ethics, project management decisions must be backed by appropriate feasibility studies for a suitable outcome and the interest of the larger communities. Hence, ignoring the importance of this measure is itself a failure in disguise for any project initiation and implementation procedures (Moe and Aurum, 2012).

6.3 Determining the processes that eThekweni Municipality have in place to manage risks associated with the implementation of projects

The need to understand the different processes employed by the municipality in the management of risks associated with the implementation of projects reveals several findings. For instance, one of the processes unraveled through the results is the acknowledgment of risk related to the performance of projects by the management of eThekweni municipality. Emphasis was given to the role of management being always on standby to establish and acknowledge any known risk that can affect policies and decisions associated with the implementation of projects. In addition, the findings also establish the risk of buy-in from stakeholders and political interference on the part of politicians. These revelations are tied to the rate of corrupt practices that have engulfed the South Africa public service. According to the majority of the respondents, the bane of buy-in and political interference has remained a severe risk on project implementation. With this in mind, the process of managing this cankerworm is the consistent stakeholders' engagement and other robust interventions put in place by the eThekweni municipality. In addition, the concern of unceasing community mass protest was identified as a risk affecting the implementation of projects and the provision of quality service delivery. This finding identified that one of the processes employed in the management of this trend is continuous community engagement and campaigns. Significantly, community members are sensitized to the dangers of protest on the developmental goals of the municipality.

Similarly, the department's effort to manage risk for the benefit of community members was also identified as a critical process for militating against project implementation risk. This result clearly shows the importance of the municipality monitoring and evaluating projects for maximum benefit to the community. This revelation is in tandem with the conventional

monitoring efforts of government departments and agencies in the discharge of public duties. Accordingly, evidence from the majority of the respondents shows that the municipality frequently embark on community participation programs to inform the community members of the progress of projects through the Community Liaison Officer (CLO). Consequently, the task of the CLO is to ensure that all risks associated with the implementation of projects are accurately reported to the municipality for actions and management. In other words, the role of the CLO was discussed as an essential measure through which departments manage risks associated with the implementation of projects. This result forms the basis of community engagement and appropriate feedbacks from representatives of the community in the management of risk associated with the implementation of projects. This result resonates with existing studies. For instance, Lam's (2014) study explains the concept of risk management in project management as receiving management information to make room for a realistic schedule for the timely execution of projects. Similarly, Yilmaz and Triant's (2017) study corroborates this finding.

The meaningful contributions of risk towards the delivery of projects came up during interviews. For instance, it was gathered that the numerous risks associated with the implementation of projects and service delivery had become critical learning curves for the municipality's management for future improvement in the delivery of services for the benefit of community members. Similarly, it was learned that the feedback derived from many of the municipality's risk-associated projects has effectively allowed the department to appropriately plan and improve the nature and style of service delivery. However, this result forms the basis of a proper feasibility study. It needs analysis for the municipality to detect any likely risks and avert the same for future re-occurrence. In other words, while the conventional perception towards risks in the initiation and implementation of projects has largely been negative, this study has added to the sparsely available studies with a positive outlook on risk management in projects and service delivery.

Studies have shown the significance of risk management as a catalyst to the continuous delivery of service. For instance, Njogo (2012) highlighted the need for project managers to participate in different risk management workshops as a critical component to ensuring good projects are implemented for the overall interest of society. In this regard, the author further stressed that

project managers could use the knowledge derived from these workshops to upturn any risk to the advantage of the members of the community in terms of service delivery.

Among other processes identified in the management of risk in the implementation of projects is the need to evaluate projects initiated and implemented. The majority of the respondents re-echoed this finding. It was explained that to manage risk associated with the implementation of projects effectively, the municipality's management must always identify the risks without leaving any stone unturned. Further narratives were that by analyzing and evaluating the risk in implementing projects, the departments must be willing to engage in close monitoring efforts and initiatives for best service delivery initiatives. For instance, it was explained that periodic evaluation and monitoring of projects are possible ways to prevent further risks.

6.4 Analyzing the impact of the financial resource allocation for effective project management in eThekweni Municipality

Financial resource allocation plays a fundamental role in the actualization of public projects and service delivery. In other words, the need to develop a high standard for appropriate and effective financial allocation strategy by the public sector establish remains one of the cardinal paths to development. The investigation into understanding the impact of financial resource allocation for effective project management reveals a constellation of findings. For instance, results show that the national government's low financial rollout remains a setback for the actualization of projects for the benefit of community members. In South Africa, like in any other economy the world over, the emergence of the global health crisis has dwindled the revenue of economies leading to poor financial standing. This has consequently affected the developmental plans of many governments globally, leading to poor service delivery. The majority of the respondents interviewed explained that the low financial allocation from the national government has led to the prioritization of projects by the municipality, leaving some projects unattended to the disadvantage of the community members at large.

The impact of low financial allocation from the national treasury has widened the level of inequality in South Africa regarding service delivery, among others. Literature reports similar findings that validate the position of this study. The study further shows that with the verity of poor financial allocation from the national government, the concern of corruption within officials

of government cannot be separated from this challenge as many public officials are known with reducing budgeted allocation for project initialization and implementation, thus culminating in poor service delivery to the members of the community. Several studies conducted in the past corroborated this finding. For instance, Gonçalves (2014) reported that the efficiency of project managers could only become visible with the appropriate estimation and use of financial resources for the execution of projects for optimum service delivery.

Furthermore, the study shows that one of the impacts of financial resource allocation on service delivery is the time frame for the release of finance for the actualization of projects. Associated with this dilemma is the challenge of ceasing project initiation and implementation. The majority of the respondents reported that the delay in releasing funds had remained a long-time challenge because of bureaucracy. However, while reports from the findings have it that, although some projects are given swift attention in the allocation of financial resources, the large majority of the respondents, however, agreed that the bulk of the projects initiated at the eThekweni municipality are largely being affected by delays in financial resources allocation, thus engendering public inconvenience and poor service delivery.

In addition to this, the findings also narrate that aside from the constraint of delayed financial allocation, the allocation from the treasury has been inadequate to achieve the municipality's plans towards providing service for the general population. In other words, this supports the conclusion that the bureaucracy in government functions has reflected more negative developmental setbacks than positives. The literature has previously reported the concern of delayed financial resource allocation and the consequential effect on service delivery. For instance, Stevenson (2015) study reported that the importance of time frame in allocating finance for the implementation of projects is fundamental to attaining service delivery.

Another perspective most of the respondents shared with respect to the impact of financial resource allocation on service delivery is the concern of appropriate mechanisms for increasing funds required for continuous projects delivery. Results from the interviews show that there are currently no mechanisms in place to bridge the financial gap. The contention further expatiated on account of how the members of the community have been severely affected due to the non-increase in the inflow of financial resources from the national government. For instance, it was narrated that most of the financial resource allocation systems in place have existed for several

years with no attempt by the municipality to constitute a mechanism on how this can be increased to improve the lives of members of the community. Therefore, this analysis clearly depicts one of the many flaws within the public sector. Therefore, it is not unexpected that many of the initiated projects have been stalled due to poor strategy in attracting more financial resources for implementation and completion. This finding validates Tsheletsane and Fourie (2014) on the importance of local government readiness for effectiveness through the constitution of appropriate mechanism for financial resource allocation.

6.5 Ascertaining challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekweni Municipality

To understand the myriads of challenges related to enhancing quality management for service delivery success, four different themes were identified from the transcripts of the interviews. These include

- i. awarding of the contract to service providers with limited competency,
- ii. lack of resources and inadequate inspection after the completion of projects,
- iii. interference from political leaders and the politicization of projects by different political parties, and
- iv. exclusion of stakeholders from the decision-making process.

First, the concern of awarding contracts to service providers who have limited or no competency in the project has remained a bottleneck to the realization of service delivery for the municipality. Emphasis was laid on how government officials traditionally award contracts to friends and allies in return for kickbacks, among other practices. Many of the respondents reported that while this practice remains a continuous practice within the public sector, the effect on service delivery initiatives remained a severe bottleneck. This position reflects one of the many atrocities in the public hindering service delivery for the benefit of the majority of the people. Carter and Easton (2011) study explained the lack of competency and training on service providers culminating in bad and poor service delivery.

The challenge of lack of resources and inadequate inspection after project completion was also explained as a critical factor hindering the improvement of quality management for service delivery success in the eThekweni municipality. This result clearly shows the poor financial

rollout to local government from the national government for the implementation of projects and the poor maintenance culture on the part of public service officials to inspect major projects after completion. Accordingly, findings from the study reveal that the culture of lack of maintaining government projects and properties has caused more service delivery havoc to the community members than the lack of the initiation of the projects itself. The contention presented by the majority of respondents represents a scenario that the ongoing global pandemic has decreased government budgets, with a significant decrease in financial allocation to local government arms for projects implementation. One of the salient manifestations of these findings is the challenge of maintaining government properties and projects that have characterized the African public sector. Reports from the literature supported this finding. For instance, Ambe and Badenhorst-Weiss (2012) explain that project management and implementation in the public sector are still largely affected by poor budget competency resulting in poor service delivery.

Many respondents sighted the concern of interference from political leaders as a challenge on project initiation and implementation. For instance, it was gathered that the consistent interference in the unceasing interference in the responsibilities and functions of the municipality by political leaders had affected the quality and number of projects delivered for the interest of the members of the community. The findings reflect a situation where politicians even go to the extent of dictating the nature of projects initiated and implemented by government officials. Without a doubt, this narration clearly explains the conventional practice among the public sector establishment in Africa, where political interference and domination have taken over the responsibilities of providing quality and affordable service to the public members by the government. Several studies have shown the negative impact of political interference on the performance of public sector establishment with a consequential effect on the public's lives. In line with the preceding discourse, Ngoepe and Keakopa (2011) revealed that public officials' inappropriate monitoring and evaluation of public projects remains a challenge for service delivery.

Lastly, the study reveals the politicization of projects by the South African government as another obstacle to the realization of service delivery and quality management initiative. One of the most pressing concerns to this perspective is the consistent politicization of development issues by politicians for self-aggrandizement and personal accumulation. This position was

further supported by the fact that politicians come up with their tactics to exclude other stakeholders in the decision-making process for projects initiation and implementation for their gain. The large constituents of the respondents agreed that politicians and their activities remain the fundamental problem stalling project development and service delivery in South Africa. The respondents unanimously agreed that the consequences of the politicization in the distribution and implementation of projects for effective service delivery had engendered poorly constructed roads and other welfare services. This finding is supported by Willson and Polland (2012), who stated that the effective management of projects within the public sector context is power and the political environment possesses constraints to the realization of these objectives. The authors reported that the implementation and execution of public projects and programs in a fluid environment involving political principles had affected the smooth management of projects for positive outcomes.

6.6 The nexus between major findings and theoretical framework

The number of change processes that have engulfed the process of managing projects has attracted scholars' attention over the years. Many project management experts and other relevant professionals have been concerned with the impact of these changes on service delivery to community members. In effect, there have been many theoretical stances to explain how project management influences the delivery of service in several ways. In other words, this section of the chapter addresses the connection between the major findings and the theoretical framework. Essentially, four major findings were uncovered, with each relating to the research objectives. These arrays of findings were appropriately discussed in relation to the assumptions of the two theories explained in chapter three of this thesis. For instance, results from the decision-making process in the initialization of projects are presented with the Organisational Justice Theory (OJT) assumptions. For findings on the management of risks associated with the implementation of projects, the OJT was equally employed. However, findings emanating from the impact of financial resource allocation on effective project management were supported with the Principal-Agent Theory's theoretical assumptions. In contrast, the challenges associated with improving quality management of service delivery were equally supported with the Principal-Agent Theory.

6.6.1 Decision-making in project initialization

The points on community engagement, feasibility study, and management initiation, and political leadership support the OJT's assumption. It must be clearly explained that the OJT assumption shoulders the application of fairness and objectivity in the decision-making process of distributing goods and services for the common good of community members. Again, the assumption of the OJT for the application of fairness supports the contention that for a robust public service, the decision-making process of initiating and implementing projects must be done in such a fair and transparent manner such that community members will be adequately represented for equity and fairness. Similarly, the assumption of the OJT advances this finding to the extent that political leaders must uphold the culture of fairness and transparency in the decision-making process of project distribution and implementation for service delivery.

6.6.2 Financial resource allocation for effective project management

The identification of low financial rollout and delayed financial rollout clearly supports the assumption of the Principal-Agent Theory. For instance, the fallouts from inadequate resource allocation culminate into conflicts between the Principal and Agent. In this case, the principals are the government and officials in charge of allocating financial resources for the execution of projects. The basic tenet of the Principal-Agent Theory is the provocation of conflicts between the agent and principal when issues of betrayal between both parties become evident. In other words, the incitement of disputes can also be linked to the poor management of public projects due to inadequate allocation of resources, as evidenced by many protests in South Africa.

6.6.3 Challenges associated with improving quality management of service delivery

The range of challenges confronting the management and implementation of projects for service delivery are enormous. For instance, the difficulties uncovered include awarding the contract to service providers with little or no knowledge, lack of inspection and adequate resource allocation, and interference from political leaders. The assumption of the Principal-Agent Theory support and advance this finding. For instance, while it is clear that public institutions are overwhelmed with corrupt practices and the embezzlement of public funds, it is clear that the awarding of contracts is not done in line with due process. As explicated by Principal-Agent

Theory that conflict ensues with public outcry regarding the lapses in providing social amenities, this finding connects with this position. For instance, conflicts are expected to occur between members of the community (agent) and the government (principal) when a deviation in the provision of service delivery is observed or when quality is being compromised in the delivery of services.

6.7 Summary of the chapter

The discussion of findings in this chapter was presented in line with the research objectives and questions. Firstly, the findings show the impact of decision-making processes in project initialization. These processes include community engagement, feasibility study, management initiation, and political leadership. Furthermore, several processes of identifying risks associated with project implementation were also uncovered. Accordingly, these include the need to acknowledge risks associated with the initiation and implementation of projects, assessing the risk on service delivery for community members, department efforts in managing risks for the benefit of the community, meaningful contributions, and the procedures for the evaluation of project implementation. One of the major implications derived from this finding is the poor management of the risk associated with the project implementation in the municipality.

In addition, the study finds that several financial allocation issues act as constraints to the quality management of projects and service delivery initiatives. These include low finance from the treasury, the time frame for releasing funds from the treasury, and appropriate mechanisms for increasing financial allocation for continuous project delivery. Lastly, the study unravels different challenges constraining quality project management and service delivery, such as awarding the contract to incompetent services providers, lack of resources and inadequate inspection after project completion, interference from political leaders, and the bane of politicization of projects by different political parties.

CHAPTER SEVEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 Introduction

This chapter presents major highlights of the study. Using a qualitative research approach, the aim was to understand the influence of project management on service delivery, with a focus on the eThekweni municipality. The first section of this chapter distills the major research summary of each chapter, with the second section depicting the overview of major findings. The third component of this chapter presents significant conclusions from the study. The last section highlights important policy implications of the study, important ways to improve the quality of service delivered by the municipality through appropriate and adequate project initiation and implementation. The chapter also presents areas for further research focus. The research objectives are presented as follows:

1. To assess the impact of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekweni Municipality.
2. To determine the processes that eThekweni Municipality has in place to manage risks associated with the implementation of projects.
3. To analyze the impact of the financial resource allocation for effective project management in eThekweni Municipality
4. To ascertain challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekweni Municipality.

7.2 Summary of chapters

The importance of understanding the nexus between project management and service delivery in this study has demonstrated the several issues affecting the prompt and quality service delivery initiatives of the eThekweni municipality. Chapter 1 of this study clearly situates the research background, where the research problem, objectives, and questions were all spelled out and the significance of the study. Other issues captured in this chapter include the scope of the study, limitations of the study, and the organization of study.

In Chapter 2, literature was extensively reviewed to address the research questions and objectives. Some of the essential themes reviewed in this chapter include a conceptualization of project management, service delivery from the perspective of the local government, project management, and service delivery nexus. Others include the decision-making process and service delivery, risk management and service delivery, financial resource allocation and service delivery, and the challenges associated with the implementation of project management. Chapter 3 presents the theoretical frame of analysis with the review of the Principal Agency Theory and Organizational Justice Theory, respectively.

Chapter 4 present a comprehensive review and explanation of the different methodology and methods employed in the study. With a robust review of the literature and a careful evaluation of the different philosophical research approaches, the study employs the interpretivist research philosophy. This is followed by adopting the qualitative research approach, having in mind that the interpretivist research philosophy neatly supports the qualitative research approach. For the goal of the study to be achieved, the exploratory research design was adopted to answer the different research questions. While chapter 5 explains the data analysis, chapter 6 presents the discussion of the findings.

7.3 Summary of major findings

The importance of project management initiation and implementation seeks to engender some robust pathways towards understanding service delivery challenges to members of the community. With the increasing number of service delivery challenges in South Africa, literature seems to be more focused on the narrative of project implementation, with little known about the challenges constraining the service delivery initiatives through appropriate project management and project quality. While this has provoked not only the basis for understanding the nexus between project management and service delivery in the eThekweni municipality, it has also ensued with essential strategies on addressing the impact of poor project management initiatives on the attainment of service delivery in the eThekweni municipality. Therefore, the following major findings are presented.

On assessing the impact of decision-making processes in project initialization, findings show different means of decision-making in the initialization of projects and their correspondence

impact. For instance, these processes include community engagement, feasibility study, management initiation, and political leadership, respectively. However, there is some disparity in the use of these decision-making processes. For instance, the process of community engagement was echoed more robustly as a vital pathway to engendering an appropriate and inclusive decision-making process in project initialization. In other words, and by extension, the discourse of community engagement is summarized as carrying the community members along in the project initialization stage for service delivery initiatives.

The feasibility study showed the importance of needs analysis and feasibility studies that include project estimations and costs for service delivery. This, therefore, means that project managers must ensure all cost-related issues are well mapped out before implementing a project. On management initiation, the study shows the importance of management involvement in the decision-making process. For instance, the study reveals the need for managers to be abreast with the service delivery challenges of members of the community to appropriately channel the right cause of strategic actions and solutions through project implementation. Lastly, the findings show that decision-making processes for projects initialization are also conveyed through the involvement of political leadership.

Several processes for the management of risks associated with the implementation of projects were also explained. For instance, this study revealed the acknowledgment of risks associated with the implementation of projects, assessing the risk on service delivery for the benefit of the community members, the department efforts in managing risks for community members' benefits, meaningful contributions of risk towards the delivery of projects and appropriate procedure for the evaluation of project implementation risks. These findings are a clear testament that the eThekweni municipality is consistent in its efforts to avoid risks with the potential of stalling project implementation. Remarkably, the finding of meaningful contributions of risk towards the delivery of projects indicates an important milestone embarked by the municipality on the transfusion of risks for effective management of risk for the overall benefits of the community members. In other words, the study makes a case for the municipality's continued efforts in identifying meaningful risks that are convertible to positive contributions towards improvement initiatives and service delivery efforts.

Furthermore, on the impact of financial resource allocation for effective project management in the eThekweni municipality, the study shows an array of constrictions concerning the effects of financial resource allocation for project initialization and implementation. For instance, among these include low finance from the national treasury, time frame for the release of funds from the treasury, and absence of mechanisms required to increase financial allocation for continuous projects delivery. One of the most salient of these financial resource allocation issues is the time frame for the release of funds for the execution of projects. This narrative agrees with many of the bureaucratic practices enshrined in the public sector ethics. For instance, many of the abandoned government projects are linked to several delays in releasing funds for the execution of projects.

Lastly, the findings show several challenges associated with improving quality management for the success of service delivery in eThekweni municipality, including the problem of awarding contracts to service providers with limited competency, lack of resources and inadequate inspection of projects after completion, interference from political leaders and politicization of projects by different political parties and the exclusion of stakeholders from the decision-making process. One of the most critical challenges revealed is political interference in the initiation and implementation of projects. This finding exposes the array of political interference that has engulfed public sector activities and functions. This interference extends to politicians negotiating for projects or bribes from the proposed initiation of projects. Several of these activities have culminated in the delivery of poor service to members of the community.

7.4 Conclusion

The issue of service delivery has long remained a contestable issue in South Africa before the new democratic South Africa and continues to date. Regrettably, many South Africans have remained mum with questioning the government on the decaying service delivery initiatives. In line with major findings uncovered in this study, it is important to argue that any serious government must be willing to address the service delivery challenges of community members through the initiation and implementation of appropriate projects and their management. This, importantly, becomes evident as the collection of issues affecting the majority of the South Africa population is connected to poor service delivery on the part of the government. The study concluded that engaging in community deliberations, feasibility studies, and political leadership are important decision-making processes for attaining effective project management for improved

service delivery initiatives for community members. Thus, the eThekweni municipality, in its effort to achieve effective project implementation, must align the organization's decision-making processes with how project goals are achieved for improved service delivery.

The study also concludes that with evidence of risk militating against the realization of effective project implementation in the eThekweni municipality, there are serious concerns for the welfare and wellness of the majority of the community members. However, the study reasoned for robust strategic risk identification efforts for more successful project management and implementation. This conclusion suggests the need for the municipality to embrace a more conventional way of identifying and addressing risks that can disrupt the project initiation and implementation agenda of the municipality. In this role, the study concludes that the different financial allocation challenges must be effectively addressed by ensuring the national government releases funds timeously for the completion of projects. Conclusively, the study hopes that a more practical and vociferous approach will be stimulated to address the array of challenges militating the realization of effective project initiation and implementation for the good of community members.

7.5 Policy recommendations

The policy recommendations stated in this study are inferred from the major findings of this study. These recommendations are highlighted below.

7.5.1. Massive awareness on the need for improved community engagement for service delivery

In line with the finding, the study recommends a more vociferous community engagement initiative for a more positive outcome in relation to improving the lives and welfare of the community members. For instance, awareness can begin as a campaign through the constant sharing of emails and other communications platforms. The awareness can be centered on, for example, the need to deeply involve community members in the decision-making process of projects initialization and implementation. In addition, the municipality is responsible for embarking on serious campaigns within the community, especially the designated communities where service delivery has suffered tremendous setbacks. These campaigns can be actualized through live concerts, the installation of billboards, to mention a few. This is important as it has the propensity to bring the importance of community engagement measures to the people to

contribute to the decision-making process of projects initialization and service delivery, particularly relating to those issues affecting the prompt and quality of services delivered them by the government.

7.5.2. Monitoring and inspection of projects after their completion through appropriate measures

The municipality's poor monitoring and inspection functions of project initiation and implementation shows one of the critical risks affecting service delivery measures. On this, the study recommends that the department of human settlement appropriately identify with the responsibility of monitoring and inspecting the progress of projects as at when due for the benefit of the public. This recommendation remains essential in line with the reports of a decline in service delivery initiatives due to a lack of explicit monitoring and inspection of projects after completion. In South Africa, one of the hindrances to the actualization of service delivery is the lack of political will to constitute a maintenance culture for properly monitoring projects. This study, however, recommends a robust political will on the part of municipality administrators towards ensuring projects are properly monitored and inspected.

7.5.3 Addressing the problem of political pressure, interference, and politicization of projects

One of the many problems affecting the realization of project management and service delivery initiatives is the concern of politicians' political pressure and politicization of projects. Political pressure and undue interference from politicians must be addressed for a positive service delivery effort. The study recommends the constitution of a committee by the eThekweni municipality where projects lobbying and interference by politicians can be effectively addressed. Having stated the above, it is essential that the municipality's leadership must understand that any objective realization of service delivery must be clearly distinguished from politics and political interference. In addition to this, there must be a committed measure for sanctioning politicians who are bent on interfering in the municipality's functions, especially in the areas of service provisions.

7.6 Areas for further studies

The study's emphasis has been to understand the nexus between project management and service delivery in the eThekweni municipality. With a focus on the eThekweni, the study recommends

further areas where a comparative analysis of two municipalities in the KwaZulu-Natal province can be investigated. This will provide more comprehensive coverage and analysis of project management initiatives and service delivery.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A: Informed Consent



COLLEGE OF LAW AND MANAGEMENT

SCHOOL OF MANAGEMENT, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND GOVERNANCE

Master of Administration (MAdmin)

Researcher: NHLANHLA MABIKA (+27729034315)

Supervisor: Dr. J NYAWO (Tel: 065 924 0049)

Informed Consent Document

Dear Participant,

My name is **NHLANHLA MABIKA (209514215)**. I am a Master of Administration candidate studying at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus, South Africa. The title of my research is **evaluating project management systems and its influence on service delivery in eThekweni municipality**. I am interested in administering a questionnaire/interviewing you so as to share your experiences and observations on the subject matter.

Please note that:

The information that you provide will be used for scholarly research only.

- Your participation is entirely voluntary. You have a choice to participate, not to participate or stop participating in the research.
- Your views to the self-administered questionnaire/interview will be presented anonymously. Neither your name nor identity will be disclosed in any form in the study.
- The self-administered questionnaire/interview will take about 30-45 minutes
- The record as well as other items associated with the interview will be held in a password-protected file accessible only to me and my supervisor. After a period of 5 years, in line with the rules of the university, it will be disposed by shredding and

burning.

If you agree to participate please sign the declaration attached to this statement (a separate sheet will be provided for signatures)

I can be contacted at: School of Social Sciences, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College Campus, Durban. Email: 209514215@stu.ukzn.ac.za Cell: +27729034315. My supervisor is Dr. J NYAWO who is located at the School of Management, Information Technology and Governance, Westville Campus of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. Contact details: Phone number:

The Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee contact details are as follows: Ms Phumelele Ximba, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Research Office, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za, Phone number +27312603587.

Thank you for your contribution to this research.

DECLARATION

I..... (full names of participant) hereby confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research project, and I consent to participating in the research project.

I understand that I am at liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I so desire.

I understand the intention of the research. I hereby agree to participate.

I consent / do not consent to have this interview recorded (if applicable)

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT

DATE

.....

Appendix B: Interview Schedule

A. To assess the impact of decision-making processes in the project initialization at eThekweni Municipality.

1. What are the decision-making processes that the department is following for project initialization?
2. Who participates in the decision-making processes for projects that should be implemented by eThekweni municipality? Is there any involvement of community members in the decision-making processes for the projects that will benefit them? If not, why? If yes, elaborate on their involvement.
3. How long does it take for the department to reach an agreement on the projects to be implemented? Elaborate on the challenges associated with ensuring that all stakeholders have a buy-in for suggested projects to be implemented.
4. How does the department evaluate the impact of their decisions about the implemented projects?
5. What mechanisms are in place to ensure that the decision-making processes are effective and efficient for the benefit of the customers, community?

B. To determine the processes that eThekweni Municipality have in place to manage risks associated with the implementation of projects.

1. What are the known risks hindering the implementation of projects by the department?
2. How can you explain the impact of these risks on effective service delivery for the benefit of community members?
3. To the best of your knowledge, is there anything the department has been doing to manage these risks for the benefits of members of the community members? If yes, please elaborate
4. What are the procedures employed in the evaluation of project management risks? Please elaborate
5. What meaningful contributions have these risks made to the effective delivery of a project or otherwise?

C. To analyze the impact of the financial resource allocation for effective project management in eThekweni Municipality.

1. What is your opinion on financial resource allocation to the eThekweni Municipality from the central government?
2. How long does it take to release the fund from the central government to the department? Do you think this has any impact on effective project delivery? Explain

3. How can you explain management reactions to this delay or otherwise?
4. In what ways can you say the financial resource allocation has improved effective project delivery?
5. Do you think there are adequate mechanism in place to increase the department finances for continued project delivery to the members of the community

D. To ascertain challenges associated with improving quality management for success of service delivery in eThekweni Municipality.

1. What are the common challenges militating against good quality management of projects delivery in eThekweni Municipality?
2. Can you explain how these challenges affect the members of the community in the context of service delivery?
3. How has the municipality been able to curtail these challenges from the perspective of service delivery, please expatiate?
4. What do you consider to be the fundamental and core of quality management of projects delivery in the eThekweni Municipality?
5. In your view, what are the procedures with respect to improving quality management of service delivery?



07 February 2022

Nhlanhla Vumani Mabika (209514215)
School Of Man Info Tech & Gov
Westville Campus

Dear NV Mabika,

Protocol reference number: HSSREC/00000797/2019

Project title: Evaluating project management systems and its influence on service delivery in ethekwini municipality

Amended title: Evaluating project management systems and its influence on service delivery in eThekweni municipality

Approval Notification – Amendment Application

This letter serves to notify you that your application and request for an amendment received on 20 December 2021 has now been approved as follows:

- Change in title

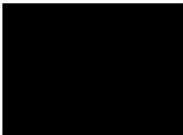
Any alterations to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form; Title of the Project, Location of the Study must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the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

PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the discipline/department for a period of 5 years.

All research conducted during the COVID-19 period must adhere to the national and UKZN guidelines.

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully



.....
Professor Dipane Hialele (Chair)

/dd

Humanities & Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee
UKZN Research Ethics Office Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000
Tel: +27 31 260 8350 / 4557 / 3587
Website: <http://research.ukzn.ac.za/Research-Ethics/>

Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville

Appendix D: Gate Keeper's Letter

OFFICE OF THE DEPUTY CITY MANAGER: HSTEA
10th Floor, Delta Towers
57 Dorothy Nyembe St, Durban, 4001
P O Box 3234, Durban, 4000
Tel: 031 311 9000, Fax: 031 304 3500



To whom it May Concern:

I Deputy City Manager : Ms B Mphakathi hereby give permission to Mr N Mabika , student No: 209514215 under the topic " Evaluating project management systems and its influence on service delivery in eThekweni Municipality". The student may conduct the study and use the name of the company in the dissertation.

.....
T M
Spe : ODCM
Dat : 2019

.....
T Manyathi
Head: eThekweni Transport Authority
Date: 11/2/2019

.....
Act Head: Human Settlements Unit
Date: 14/9/2019

UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Westville Campus

Discipline of Public Governance

23 August 2019

To whom it may concern

REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY

Mr. N. Mabika (student number: 209514215) is currently registered for Master of Administration at UKZN Westville Campus under the Discipline of Public Governance. For this student to complete this degree, he is required to complete a research project that falls within Public Administration field.

The title of the study is "Evaluating project management systems and its influence on service delivery in eThekweni Municipality". For the sample size, a total of eight (8) project managers, with two (2) each from Human Settlements, Engineering Services and eThekweni Transport and Authority (HSE&TA) Cluster of the Municipality shall be conveniently sampled, where their perception shall be qualitatively uncovered to understand the nexus between projects management and services quality. This study is not funded by any organisation but it purely for the student to complete the degree.

There will be no risks/harm involved to the participants by undertaking such study. Information provided by the participants will be treated confidential. Anonymity will be maintained by the research and the Discipline of Public Governance, and participant's responses will not be used for any purposes outside of this study. During the data collection period, the student will be carrying the Ethical Clearance letter that will be approved by the UKZN Ethics Committee as well as the informed consent for the participants.

Your permission through providing a gatekeeper's letter (letter that clearly indicate that the student can collect data under the departments/units concerned) on this matter will be appreciated. If you have any questions or concerns about this study, please contact his supervisor on the following below

Sincerely

School of Management, Information
& Governance

Postal Address: Private Bag XE4001

Durban, 4001

Telephone: +27 31 260 1111

Facsimile: +27 31 260 1112

Email: nyawo@ukzn.ac.za

1910 - 2010

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Howard College

Medical School

Pietermaritzburg

Westville

Appendix F: Editor's Receipt



CHIEFeditors

We are here to serve!

Come to us for:

High Quality Work
Original Work
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No Plagiarism
No Hidden Charges
and Many More!



Dear Sir/madam

Re: Confirmation of editing and proofreading

This letter serves to inform the responsible authorities that the work authored by **NHLANHLA MABIKA (209514215) [Evaluating Project Management Systems And Its Influence On Service Delivery In eThekweni Municipality]** has been proofread and edited by our team to the best of its ability. Our editing involves spelling check, punctuation, grammar, sentence construction, word reduction, cross reference citations, reference check, basic formatting (general layout), presentation style, indexing, and other mechanics of the English language. No technical alterations have been made.

Corrections were made using track changes, which have been clearly outlined for the author's reference.

For more information, please do not hesitate to contact us on the details provided below.

Yours,



B. Mutsvene (Coordinator)

(bmutsvene@gmail.com or sowcor@chiefeditors.co.za or 074 610 7416 or 063 022 3162)