

**LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AFFECTING THE PROVISION OF EFFECTIVE SERVICE  
DELIVERY IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY**

BY

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## DECLARATION

I, NKHUMELENI DAMBUWO MAANDA, hereby declare that the mini dissertation for the degree of Master of Public Management at the University of Venda is my own work and it has never been submitted before to any institution of higher learning in South Africa or anywhere else. I also declare that all sources used herein, or quoted, have been acknowledged as such.

*Nkhumelani M*

## DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents - Mr. V.P Mugabi and Mrs. N.A Mugabi. Your words of wisdom and encouragement have contributed significantly towards my academic success. The Almighty God whose grace was sufficient from the beginning to the end of this journey.

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## ABSTRACT

Leadership is the process of motivating and inspiring others to achieve a goal. A leader's role is crucial to promoting a healthy employee work ethics and influencing behaviour across all organizations, especially in the public sector. The purpose of this study was to identify leadership challenges affecting the delivery of effective services in Thulamela Local Municipality and to recommend mechanisms and strategies that would address these challenges to ensure good governance and delivery of effective services. An interpretive approach was used in the study. For selecting respondents in the Municipality, a non-probability sampling technique was used, specifically, the purposive sampling technique. Qualitative, as well as quantitative methods of research were used for this study. Primary data was collected through telephone interviews with 50 respondents from the target group. Data from the qualitative sources was analysed thematically, and data from quantitative sources was analysed using SPSS version 20. According to the results, leadership challenges have been created by the hiring of unqualified personnel into leadership positions within Thulamela Local Municipality; these personnel lack the knowledge and skills needed to carry out their duties.

**Key words: Leadership qualities, service delivery, good governance, Thulamela Local Municipality, cadre deployment**

## LIST OF ACRONYMS

AG	Auditor-General
ANC	African National Congress
AGSA	Auditor-general-South Africa
COGTA	Cooperative-Governance-and-Traditional-Affairs
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
IDP	Integrated-Development-Plan
LGTAS	Local-Government-Turnaround-Strategy
Municipal IQ	Municipal Data and intelligence
NCOP	National Council of Provinces
RSA	Republic of South Africa
SAHRC	South African-Human Rights-Commission
UN	United Nations

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## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

#### 1.1 Introduction

In South Africa, democracy has brought about new challenges and unfortunately, service delivery to the public, is one such challenge. Without effective leadership and good governance, government will not be able to lead and overcome service delivery challenges. Scholars such as Naidoo (2004), Maserumule (2011), and Thornhill and Dlamini (2012) emphasize that local government is the most significant sphere of government because it is at the coalface of service delivery and the closest to the people. This sphere of government has a constitutional obligation to deliver basic services such as water, electricity, sanitation and housing to the community. The effectiveness of the local government in delivering these essential services to the communities is dependent, to a certain extent, on leadership that provides guidance and governance that allows the citizenry to be stakeholders in the service delivery process. The purpose of this study was to investigate the leadership qualities that influence the effective delivery of services in Thulamela Local Municipality. In this chapter, the background, the research problem statement, and purpose of the study are presented. Additionally, outlined are the objectives, questions, operational definitions of key terms, as well as the overall study's structure.

#### 1.2 Background of the study

Leadership is a broad concept and can be defined as a process of influencing others in order to achieve set objectives in a working environment (Kumar and Sharma, 2013). Leadership as a concept is seen as fundamental in the delivery of services (Northouse 2013). Johnson (2018) further states that the process of leadership poses various challenges that carry with them dire consequences that affect the status quo, predetermined developmental objectives, the process of rendering services and meeting expected results. Leaders in government are those who should be capable of directing services and activities to ensure the delivery of public goods (Shava & Chamisa, 2018). Local municipalities have the responsibility to render effective services to the public. According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa No. 108 of 1996, the objectives of local government are “to provide democratic and accountable government for local

communities, to ensure the provision of services to communities in a suitable manner, to promote social and economic development, to promote a safe and healthy environment and also to encourage the involvement of communities and community organizations in the matters of local government”. Municipalities are responsible for ensuring that services are delivered to local communities. As a democratic country, South Africa also requires municipalities to consider the views of the public through public participation or community involvement.

Municipalities are responsible for their administration, planning process and their budgeting in a manner that takes the best interest of the citizen as a high priority for social and economic development (Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act No 108 of 1996). In order to implement this properly, there should be effective leadership within local government. Municipalities must plan properly; they must manage their finances efficiently and there should be transparency and value for money. “Municipalities should also priorities basic needs that require immediate attention to the public, for example, in a community where there is water shortage and shortage of tarred roads, the municipality should priorities water as it is a necessity for human survival” (Madumo, 2013).

The Local Government Turnaround Strategy report (2009) produced findings that asserted that local municipalities in South Africa are facing various challenges with lack of service delivery also contributing to these challenges. Maladministration, corruption and lack of administrative capacity are also key features that have been identified to be contributory factors to municipalities not functioning effectively or rendering quality and adequate services to the public (Madumo 2013). According to Sefara (2014), South Africa is facing poor governance in public service delivery, caused by ineffective leadership and poor governance. This study investigated the leadership challenges associated with poor service delivery, with a particular focus on addressing those challenges. Effective leaders play a great part in shaping transformation and also renewing an organization (Bell, 2006). In addition, leadership is said to be more about the actions a particular person takes rather than about the position they occupy. Leaders adapt naturally by portraying expertise, experience and knowledge that develop their organizations. Coles (2006) explains that leadership is about sustainable development of an organization’s culture through several leadership functions such as inspiring, empowering and guiding the team, putting in place necessary corrective measures and reversing unwanted practices.

Pycroft (2000) states that South African local government was transformed from one based on an apartheid regime to a democratic institution with a developmental mandate, hence, in 2000, a new system for municipalities was established. The local government has made a transformation in achieving good service delivery results and has also managed to reach the marginalized areas, however, the challenges that municipalities face remain formidable (de Visser 2008). The public has negative views and has lost confidence in the government as a whole; rather they see their municipal leaders as corrupt, unreachable, and unqualified. The root causes of these seeming management catastrophes and deficit are multifaceted. One most troubling matter about the chosen government legislatures is that they are unresponsive and ineffective. The public perceives the council, especially the ward councillors, as people who only have self-interest, are neglectful, and only concerned about political dynamics and administration technicalities (Odaro, 2012). It is often asserted that councilors are failures in service delivery aspects that the municipality itself has little or no control over them (de Visser, 2010). South Africa as a developing country, corruption is found to be detrimental as it reduces the quality of governance of the country (Gumede 2012). To prevent corruption, Kroukamp (2014) is of the view that leadership should be targeted as it contributes immensely to the operations of an organization. Khanyane and Khondlo (2010) urge that “any public servant or politician in any institution should present themselves in a professional manner and portray high standards of ethics that are non-negotiable”. Leaders are expected to be thoughtful and to provide direction beyond expectations while focusing on the organization’s vision of achieving its objectives. Essentially, leaders should be seen as champions of service delivery and should be expected to effectively lead the processes until services are delivered to the public. Despite this negative perception and accusations of poor leadership, there are leaders who demonstrate a sense of responsibility and display positive attitudes and enthusiasm in the workplace (Kroukam 2014); the public feels valued when served by such leaders (Kuye & Mafunisa, 2003).

### 1.3 Problem Statement

Effective leadership should be able to provide informed guidance, be able to stand scrutiny, be innovative, collaborative, goal-oriented, and ethical; these are just a few of a whole lot of other virtues expected from a leader (Mathonsi & Sithole, 2017). Since the beginning of democracy, municipalities in South Africa have gone through a number of difficulties, ranging from poor leadership, corruption, cadre deployment, and financial distress (Glasser, & Wright 2020). Cadre deployment, vacancy in prominent leadership positions and political interference have been proven to be sources of poor performance within municipalities; this creates an environment which fails to deliver services to the public (Pretorius, 2017). Much of the poor living conditions have been attributed and manifested as a result of ineffective leadership and poor governance (Sefara, 2014). Literature reviewed from researchers such as Naidoo (2004) and Maserumule (2011) have revealed that ineffective leadership, poor governance and inability of the elected representatives to deliver on their promises are the main impediments to efficient service delivery. To further support this assertion, the Auditor General's report (AGSA, 2019) showed unfavourable results from municipalities which were responsible for wasteful and fruitless expenditure at a cost of two billion rands in the 2018/2019 financial year.

In the 2017/18 financial year, in Limpopo Province, there was not even a single municipality that received a clean audit with Thulamela Local Municipality being amongst the municipalities audited (AGSA, 2018). In the Vhembe District Municipality, Thulamela Local Municipality received financially unqualified audit options while Collins Chabane Local Municipality and Vhembe District Municipality received disclaimers (AGSA, 2018). According to the 2019 Auditor General's report, more than 150 municipalities have been placed under administration within the last five years. Thulamela Local Municipality does not fall under the category of municipalities placed under administration, however, it runs a risk of this because of poor leadership and lack of service delivery. This study, therefore, seeks to interrogate poor leadership qualities and their implications on the local sphere of government. The problem statement for this study is derived from the fact that ineffective leadership and poor governance lead to a decline in the provision of effective and efficient service delivery in most municipalities in South Africa, hence, service delivery is affected at the local sphere of government.



The problem statement reads as follows - ineffective leadership and poor governance affect the delivery of basic services at the Thulamela Local Municipality. It is imperative to adopt an effective leadership and good governance to ensure that the provision of services is not impeded; this shows the rationale and urgency of the current research.

#### **1.4 Aim and objectives of the study**

The aim of this study was to investigate leadership qualities that affect the provision of effective service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality with the aim of recommending an effective framework to best respond to leadership challenges. In addition, this research also aims to provide enough information on leadership and how a leader is expected to behave, and how a leader should influence others.

#### **1.5 Research Objectives**

The study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

- To investigate the leadership challenges faced by Thulamela Local municipality.
- To determine the current leadership style used in Thulamela Local municipality.
- To examine leadership qualities in Thulamela Local Municipality
- To recommend a leadership framework that would improve leadership and service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality.

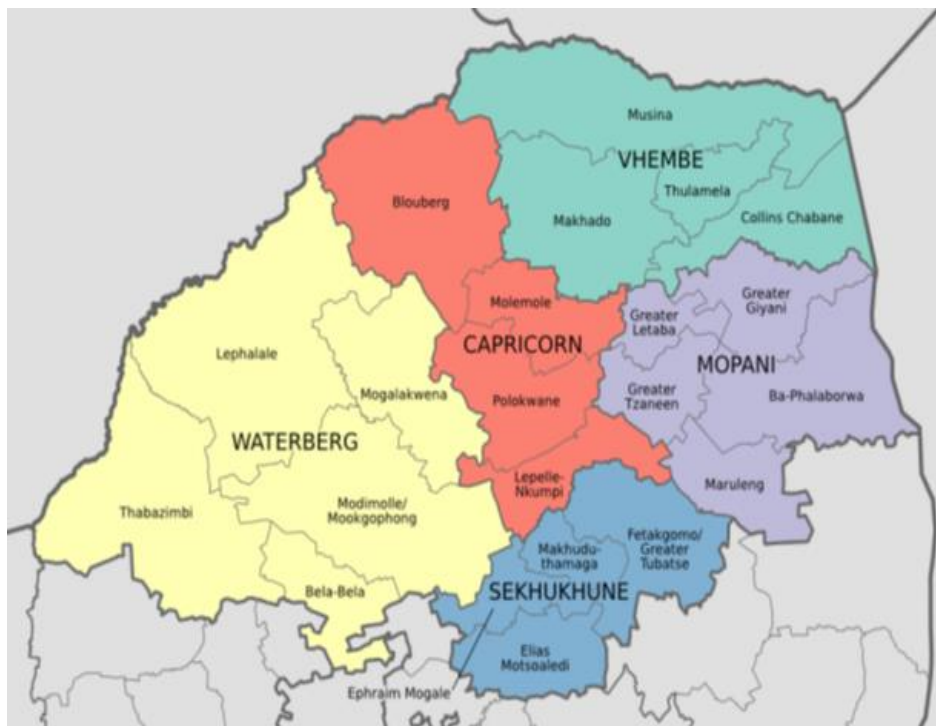
#### **1.6 Justification for the research**

It is anticipated that as a result of this study, effective strategies will be provided that can be implemented in a variety of institutional settings – private, religious, and government or in higher education. In addition to benefitting government agencies and municipalities, the study findings will also make available potential solutions that can be applicable in addressing service delivery problems. As this study will expand our knowledge and insight about leadership, it will also be of significance to other researchers in diverse settings.

## 1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate leadership qualities affecting how services are delivered in Thulamela Local Municipality. The study is delimited to focus on the critical issues of leadership in service delivery with specific reference to the Thulamela Local Municipality. A case study within the municipality was analysed through empirical evidence. This implies that the findings and recommendations of the study cannot be generalised and that they are only applicable to the identified municipality.

Thulamela Local Municipality is situated in the Vhembe District and is a category B municipality in terms of the Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998. Below is a map of Thulamela Local Municipality in relation to the Limpopo Province.



**Figure 1.1: Thulamela Local Municipality in terms of provincial context**

*Source: Thulamela Local Municipality IDP (2019/2020)*

## **1.9 Limitations of the study**

Due to the high level of occupation that the participants of the study hold, most of them had tight schedules, which caused a delay in their completion of the questionnaires. As a result, several follow-ups had to be made in order to receive the completed questionnaires. In other instances, the respondents were unavailable due to the COVID 19 outbreak. In some instances there were misunderstandings of what was expected. A measure employed to address the misunderstanding was further explaining the scope and requirements for participation in the study through telephonic communication. The study encountered certain limitation, however, most of them were resolved successfully. Another limitation was lack of finances to purchase stationery as well as travelling. Airtime was the most essential requirement; some interviews lasted for over an hour and this required finances. Finding literature related to the study was another challenge that the researcher encountered. This limitations affected the quality of the study. The study could have yielded better results if interviews were done face to face with the participants. This could have also improved the authenticity and credibility of the data.

## **1.10 Definitions of key terms**

### **Service delivery**

In the context of local government, Reddy (2016), defines service delivery as the provision of goods, activities and benefits that enhance the quality of life of local residents. In this study, service delivery is defined as the method or procedure of providing basic needs such as electricity, running water, roads, housing, and sanitation. As stipulated in Section 1.1.1 of the Batho Pele White Paper, the South African Public Service is judged on its efficiency in meeting the basic needs of all citizens. This is underscored by the following statement: "Public services should be expected in a civilized, democratic society."

## **Leadership**

“Leaders are able to enlist the aid and support of others in the accomplishment of a common goal” (Chemers, 2014). Additionally, Northouse (2013) sees leadership as the capacity of an individual to influence a group of people toward achieving a common goal; followers are affected by a leader's influence. In this research, leadership is defined as the process of providing and influencing leadership over stakeholders to accomplish an organization's objectives.

## **Local government**

Local government is primarily responsible for the delivery of public goods and services on behalf of the provincial and national spheres of government (Moeti, 2017). Additionally, Ndreu (2016) describes local government as "independent bodies elected by the people to perform executive, legislative, and administrative functions on the territories under their jurisdiction.” (P 6). In the Local Government Municipal Structures Act number 117 of 1998, local government has been defined as that division of government located at the lower governance level and closest to the people. This level is bestowed with certain authority and autonomy to manage local affairs, for example, provision of service to the people in the most effective and efficient manner. In the context of the study, local government will mean the sphere of government which is closest to the people and no longer a function of provincial or national government.

## **Good governance**

Good governance is explicated as the ability of a government to sustain social peace, guarantee law and order, ascertain a minimum level of social security, and promote conditions needed for generating economic growth (Omogbe and Idowu 2016). Muhith (2007:4), asserts that good governance is a process that involves governing collectively in response to a particular matter following principles of legitimacy and efficiency for promoting individual rights of citizens. Good governance is perceived as the most significant factor in eradicating poverty, inequality, as well as promoting development. The term “good governance” indicates a participative manner of leading that works in a responsible way and is grounded on the principles of legitimacy, efficiency, and

consistency; it is mostly aimed at endorsing the rights of citizens and the public interest. For this study, good governance, will be operationalized as a way of assessing how public institutions manage public resources and conduct public affairs.

### **1.11 STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY**

This study is divided into five chapters. They are as follows:

#### **Chapter 1 Introduction and background of the study**

This chapter introduced and discussed leadership as a concept. The problem statement was also deliberated on including the purpose of the study. Research objectives and research questions were articulated followed by justification of the study and the delimitation of the study. Finally, operational concepts were defined followed by the structure of the study and summary of the whole research.

#### **Chapter 2 Literature review**

In this chapter, the main objective is to review literature pertaining to leadership. An overview of journal articles and books regarding the concept of leadership was done. In the process, concepts connecting leadership, good governance, and service delivery were also discussed.

#### **Chapter 3 Research Methodology**

Chapter 3 focused on the research design, methodology, sampling method, population, sampling size, data collection and pilot study. Ethical considerations and the organization of the study were also discussed.

## **Chapter 4 Data presentation, analysis, and interpretation**

This chapter focused on the presentation, analysis, and interpretation of the collected data. Data was analyzed to enable comparing and identifying of concurring and divergent views on the topic. The data was presented thematically and through graphs and pie charts. Interpretation of the research findings was also be provided.

## **Chapter 5 Findings, recommendations and conclusion**

Chapter 5 summarizes the study's findings, as well as offering recommendations and conclusion. Deviations and gaps in the findings, in relation to the literature are highlighted, while the significance of the findings are discussed. Proposed inputs for the betterment of operations in the Thulamela Local Municipality are made based on the study findings. A need for further relevant research on the topic is recommended. The conclusion details the processes followed and the results obtained from the study.

### **1.12 Conclusion**

The introduction and background of the study are discussed in this chapter. The chapter highlighted background on leadership and what it means to be a leader within the municipality context. The problem statement was articulated as well as the objectives and research aim. The justification, the delimitation, limitation, operational terms and structure of the research of the study were explained. In the following chapter, reviews of literature pertaining to leadership qualities affecting service delivery are focused upon.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 2.1. Introduction

This chapter is a review of pertinent literature around leadership qualities affecting the provision of effective service delivery. According to Kreuger and Neuman (2006), literature reviews are done, for researchers to gain knowledge on a specific field of study, by reading relevant literature to aid one's interpretation. The authors argue that this is also a method of revealing some accepted and established facts regarding a study and the process enables researchers to understand the past theories previously used by others. Secondary sources that date such as academic books, journals were used to support the discussion. Other authentic sources such as government official documents that dates back from 1997, policies and legislations and electronic books were also utilized to support the arguments being put forward. This was done in alignment with the overall structure of the thesis, the research questions and research objectives.

#### 2.2 Overview of the concept leadership

Leadership as a concept is a popular one and of interest in a wide range of contexts and these include, in governments, politics, business, health care, religion, sports, and education (Ruben 2017). The subject of leadership has extensively been debated upon by various sectors, such as government departments, religious institutions, and individuals, such as professionals, students and scholars, each for multiple audiences (Mafunisa, 2013). Many publications on the concept of leadership are available and they range from autobiographies, such as “Long Walk to Freedom” by Nelson Mandela, academic and religious books such as “Globalization and Leadership in Africa” by Okechukwu and the Bible; other publications include journals and newspaper articles. These publications have different formats and they differ in terms of their approach (Naidoo 2010).

The concept of leadership also incorporates a series of academic courses, professional development programs, consulting services and personal improvement seminars (Forte, 2014). Leadership is considered as a solution to so many issues, causing authors, such as Naidoo (2010), to complain about exaggerating leadership as a solution for the entirety of social and organizational ills. In this study, the focus is on leadership challenges within municipal contexts. This is an essential area in public administration as it is important across all organizations in the public and private sectors. The definition of leadership remains nebulous. As a concept, leadership has challenged efforts of it to be explained into a single statement or definition (Taffinder 2006). The four factors that are best able to explain the concept of leadership have been identified by Sharma and Jain (2013). These factors are discussed in the paragraphs below.

### **2.2.1. The Followers**

According to Sharma & Jain (2013), people are unique, and they require various styles of leadership. An example of this is a new employee would require extensive supervision more than someone who is experienced. Other people do not have motivation and these ones require an approach that accommodates them and motivates them to do what is required from them. For a leader to be successful, he or she needs to understand these different and personal needs, such as emotions and character. A successful leader should have an understanding of human nature and what makes people act and think in the way that they do (Sharma & Jain, 2013).

### **2.2.2. A Leader**

Sharma & Jain (2013) maintain that leaders must demonstrate honesty and have an understanding of - who they are, what they can do and what they know. In most cases, the followers are the ones who determine the success of the leader. For a leader to be successful, he/she must be able to convince the followers that he or she can be entrusted with the job and is worthy of being followed



### **2.2.3. Communication**

A leader must demonstrate leadership through a two-way communication. This can be done through non-verbal and verbal means (Sharma & Jain, 2013). An example would be a leader communicating with his or her followers, verbally, through sending a message that a certain task needs to be done or sending the same message to the followers through using non-verbal communication (Sharma & Jain, 2013).

### **2.2 4. Situation**

The final component to leadership is situation. Sharma and Jain (2013) contend that all situations are unique, and how a leader responds in one situation may be totally different to how he/she responds in another context. Leaders must be able to exercise their judgment in making decisions to the best of their abilities in any given situation; an example would be a leader having to confront an employee regarding a behavior that is inappropriate. It matters the kind of approach that the leader takes in certain situations because, some situations may need a strategic leader who can determine which approach can yield positive results in the end (Sharma & Jain, 2013).

## **2.3 Leadership and governance in Africa**

Leadership and governance are comprehensive concepts that are frequently hard to measure with exactitude and conviction (Phago, 2013). As evidenced by the struggles people face on a daily basis, for example service delivery, Phago (2013) argues whether Africans are capable of looking at one another with understanding and make concrete contributions toward changing the plight of Africans. Africans need to have purposeful, responsible organizations that can persuasively report to relevant electorates on how they are using public resources (Phago, 2013). In Africa, unethical conduct comes from the highest levels of the political and public leadership down to the lowest levels (Phago 2013). If the purpose of leadership is to provide effective leadership, then once a leader becomes corrupt, the followers are left with no hope (Mafunisa, 2013). For instance, a politician who is influential and engages in corrupt activities may predispose the senior public servant to follow the same path because they see nothing wrong with his/her leading.

In addressing concerns about leadership, when it comes to the absence of democratic processes in Africa, Kuye & Shuping (2012) note that this seems to have been accepted.

## **2.4 Leadership within the local government**

Koma (2011) explains that the sphere close to the community is the local sphere and it has the responsibility for delivering basic needs to the public. Van der Waldt (2006), asserts that local government is the cornerstone of delivery of services in the local sphere. Concrete decisions are taken at the local sphere of government with the aim of making sure that communities are transformed and are receiving basic services at the local sphere of government. The local sphere of government is the sphere that has direct contact between government institutions and community members (Thornhill (2008). The local sphere of government is responsible for making concrete decisions on service delivery with the aim of ensuring that communities receive adequate services (Masehela, Mamogale and Makhado, 2012). The plans made and decisions that are taken have the potential to affect organizations, private business and individual lives of citizens (Nkuna and Nemutanzhela, 2012). It is the responsibility of the local sphere of government to deliver a variety of services that benefit people who live within its area of jurisdiction. The local sphere of government has a constant impact on the human beings' social environment and on the physical environment they occupy. Local sphere of government has a direct impact in the way people go about their daily lives; for example, people on a daily basis use water to take showers and for basic household activities. The local government is the one that has the responsibility of ensuring that every household has water and other basic services. According to Picard & Mogale (2015), the local sphere of government was created for the purpose of administrative authority, decentralizing planning, hence, decision-making is placed close to the citizens for them to have access to basic services.

To promote community participation and engagement, service delivery powers are decentralized to the lowest sphere of government (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012). It is believed that the primary reason for decentralizing planning and implementing service provision at the local level of governance in South Africa is to address inequality, empower communities, improve living

conditions, and provide greater access to resources, especially in rural communities. Decentralization can enhance the provision of services to local communities by mobilizing material, financial, and human resources, locally. In addition, local government provides a platform for the allocation of scarce resources to maximize citizens' health and well-being (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012). Malefane (2008) asserts that citizens accept the fact that the local sphere of government is the one that has the responsibility to deliver basic services to the public. The national and the provincial spheres work towards being reactive to needs that are basic to the public. Due to their connection with the local sphere of government, the other levels of government are also negatively affected if the local sphere fails to deliver services (Malefane, 2008).

The local sphere of government as an arm of government should have adequate capabilities at all levels - from human resources, institutional and financial resources, to material resources, and technological capabilities. Providing technical and strategic support for local governments at the district, provincial, and national levels require a properly structured leadership and management structure. The local government system is recognized by the South Africa's constitution as its third sphere of government. According to section 152 of the Republic of South African Constitution, the mandates for local government are as follows:

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

The objectives listed in subsection (1) above must be met as much as possible within the municipality's financial and administrative capacity. Meyer and Cloete, (2006) argue that the implementation process must be guided by robust, comprehensible, and transformative political and decision-making leadership; this is to accomplish organizational objectives coordinated by committed administrative support services whose actions do not contradict each other. A concerted

effort must be made to recruit personnel who have the necessary skills and competencies to ensure there is adequate capacity in the areas listed above.

To build an accountable, responsive, and caring local government system, Maserumule (2008) argues that competent individuals must possess adequate skills. In reality, however, cadres are sometimes deployed into positions for which they are unqualified (Twala, 2014). The deployment of cadres is not a bad idea according to Tshishonga (2014), provided they have the required skills and expertise. Governments attempt to deploy cadres with relevant skills and competencies at the national and provincial levels, on the understanding that such individuals, put in management role, both at the provincial national levels, have the necessary educational background (Tshishonga, 2014). Local government service delivery collapses because of individuals who are given the positions of leadership without them having the required knowledge and ability (Kok, 2017); Picard and Mogale in (2015) also note the shortcomings of local government. Their report noted that under Jacob Zuma, the local public sector appeared to have deteriorated as compared to Mbeki's presidency. Recently, there have been significant capacity challenges, the deployment of unskilled personnel, non-funded directives, financial shortfalls, and also signs of partiality among officials of local government, causing concerns on matters of good governance. It is possible for a conclusion to be made that local government is currently experiencing challenges in providing services, due to insufficient capacity (Picard & Mogale 2015). One can conclude, therefore, that the leaders within government have failed to build a reliable and well-organized service delivery arrangement that is capable of providing the public with decent services. Much progress has been made in dealing with some of these challenges, however, quite a lot is still left to be done (Tshishonga 2014).

President Jacob Zuma outlined the causes of poor service delivery in his National Council of Provinces (NCOP) address in 2015. Weaknesses in governance and political instability were recognised as the main ones causing poor service delivery (Zuma, 2015). This was also noted by the Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) which assessed the state-of-local government in 2009. The COGTA report (2009) titled "National Local Government Assessment"

noted that partisan factions, division of benefits and the consequent construction of different political associations have undeniably influenced the continual worsening of the functioning of local government. In addition, the report showed concerns about how the interface between politics and administration has led to bias on a scale that, in some areas, resembles a battle for access to state resources rather than conceptual or political variances.

The definition of “corruption” in Thornhill (2012) is the indirect or direct offering or granting of assets of monetary value or the benefits of such favours, gifts, promises or advantages to self or to someone else, illegally. “Corrupt behaviour” is defined by Munzhedzi (2016) as the abuse of authority with the intention of gaining personal advantage. Fraud and financial misappropriation are among the most prevalent forms of corruption. The Corruption Watch ranked South African local government as the most corrupt institution (Business Tech, 2015). Nekhavhambe (2014:1) highlights that “the lack of effective service delivery is due to the prevalence of non-collaboration between municipalities and traditional leaders”. It is fundamental for the benefit of service delivery and communities that the municipality, as a democratically elected organization, has legitimate authority to handle service delivery matters. Mhlanga (2012) “recommends that interventions in the local government are certainly mandatory for progressive service delivery and harmonization of roles, responsibilities, duties and sustainable collaboration among the municipality, ward councilors and traditional leaders”. The formulation of a structure that will monitor their relationship, solve issues, recommend remedial interventions or appeal to the Member of the Executive Council of Provinces, therefore, is essential. This implies that traditional leadership requires and deserves respect from the current elected leadership and vice versa. While legislation that recognizes the important role of traditional leadership in local government development currently exists, this alone does not guarantee sufficient development in areas under traditional jurisdiction.

It is, therefore, essential to empower and support traditional leaders for them to be effectively involved in municipal developmental roles of shared governance. This would be a win-win approach for municipal leadership and rural communities. De Visser (2010:1) emphasizes that “there is the daunting challenge of dealing with inappropriate interference by politicians in

administrative matters as well as the tension between key political and administrative officials”. Maserumule, 2008 believes that this is rooted in the separation of powers between the executive authority and the legislative authority. The author adds that the administrative and political components of the municipality should possess skills, abilities, and knowledge that are compatible with the imperatives of democratic governance. For municipalities to achieve their strategic vision and objectives, skill development and knowledge acquisition should be top of the agenda (Maserumule, 2008).

## **2.5. Ubuntu in African leadership and governance**

According to Dolamo (2013), Ubuntu as a concept originated in Egypt. There are seven fundamental values of ubuntu - justice, truth, sharing, propriety, respect, balance and harmony. The concept of ubuntu is a widespread African prehistoric phenomenon that is based on the values of caring, humanness, sharing, compassion and respect. Similarly, for most academics, Ubuntu is a concept entwined with humanity, love, respect, relatedness, and a desire to promote collective good (Dolamo, 2013). Theletsane (2012), shows that there are various languages on the African continent that contain words related to Ubuntu. People of Lesotho call it *botho*, the Zulu and Xhosa people call it *ubuntu*, people who are Shona call it *unhu*, the Venda people call it *vhuthu*; in English, it is referred to as “brotherhood”, and the Afrikaaners refer to it as “broederskap”. In the DRC (Congo) it is referred to as *bobangia bomoto* and in Angola, it is called *gikwese* (Theletsane, 2012). Matshabaphala (2015) suggests that the concept of Ubuntu must be practiced by officials as they need to demonstrate that they respect the interests of the public. Within the South African context, *ubuntu* as a concept is used in building democracy; it is viewed by Theron and Swart (2008) as a tool for building a democratic South Africa, as well as the basis of a democratic and independent country. The concept ubuntu is considered as an everyday part of the African political vocabulary and is utilized to emphasize the need for togetherness and unity.

As Putnam (2016) argues, Africa has been in the middle-ages mindset for decades, unable, not only to resolve internal identity conflicts, but also to contend with the formation of its perceived identity outside of Africa and that poor leadership and poor public administration in Africa are to blame for the failure of its countries to deliver services. Mayanja (2013) echoes Putnam's view,

contending that Africa's leadership crisis is caused by corruption, abuse of power, non-disclosure of constitutional rights, and a lack of leadership and governance. According to Maathai (2009) African underdevelopment, insecurity, and social injustices can be attributed to a philosophical crisis in political leadership.

## **2.6 Theoretical framework**

The theoretical foundation of this study is derived from situational theory and trait theory. A study by Bolden, Gosling, Marturano and Dennison (2003) points out that literature on leadership reveals a range of schools of thought from traits theories to great man theories. Other frameworks focus more on cognitive, effective, and interpersonal qualities of leaders, other than simply defining behaviours (Bolden *et al* 2003). Northouse (2016) argues that the main theories of leadership revolve around four themes - trait theory, (which mainly focuses on the perception that leadership abilities rely on certain characteristics shared by leaders to influence others); behaviour theories (which suggest that the behaviour of leaders determine their effectiveness in leadership); contingency theories (which suggest that the situation at a particular time will guide the leader whether prepared or not); and lastly, the leader member exchange theory (which mainly concerns the charismatic characteristics of the leader and transformational aspects (Northouse 2016). In this study, the applicable theories are the situational and trait theories.

### **2.6.1 Situational theory**

Situational leadership is one of the widely-recognized theories of leadership. It was developed by Hersey and Blanchard (1969) based on Reddin's (1967) 3-D management style theory (Northouse 2016). Situational leadership focuses on providing effective leadership in challenging situations. The Auditor General's Report of (2018/19), indicates that many municipalities are in a state of calamity and this requires leaders who are capable of turning the situation around. Different situations require different types of leadership, according to this theory, hence, for a leader to be effective, he/she must be adaptive to the demands that come with different situations, for the sake of progress and effective leadership (Northouse, 2016).

This theory stresses that leadership is composed of both directive and supportive dimension, and that each must be applied appropriately in each situation. Using this theory, a leader can determine what is needed in a particular situation by assessing how competent and committed his or her followers are (Northouse, 2016). This theory is very relevant in this case as it can make an effective contribution as to how leaders in Thulamela Local Municipality must lead their subordinates in their respective fields. This theory advocates that certain types of leaders are more suitable in certain areas of responsibilities.

This theory also places emphasis on the notion that the success of a leader can be attributed, primarily, to how the leader responds in certain situation that require effective leadership. Author Munroe (2014) reiterated that true leadership is seen at a time of adversity and pandemonium. In these situations, a leader is tasked with the goal of turning the situation around. A great demonstration of this theory is what Nelson Mandela did during the apartheid era. In this study, this theory is applicable given the state of service delivery within municipalities. Municipalities are in a state of disaster, according to the 2019 Auditor General's report. Situational leaders are urgently needed at this moment to relieve municipalities of the quagmire that they are in.

### **2.6.2 Trait theory**

Using the trait leadership theory, Bolden, Gosling, Marturano, and Dennison (2003) identified the key characteristics of successful leaders. As identified in this theory, there are some critical features that are crucial as far as leadership is concerned - the skill of management, leadership innovation, task motivation, friendliness, task application, social skills, group support and emotional intelligence. It is, therefore, imperative that the leaders of Thulamela Local Municipality possess technical skills, self-motivation as well as friendliness, since people have the need to be near to their leader. Leadership is a serious issue for most people, and they want to have access to their leaders whenever they need to (Northouse 2016). In addition, people are rational when they reveal their feelings, confess deeds and declare their desires. In Northouse's (2016) definition, a "good leader" is an individual who shows the ability to reassure critics by drawing practical conclusions from the revealed experience and then acting consistently thereafter. Based on the above theoretical approach, this study sets out to identify the best and most useful characteristics



of local government leaders that will enable them to perform efficiently and effectively. For leaders to be able to perform their duties, they need traits such as - creativity, capacity to motivate people, assertiveness and determination, enthusiasm to accept accountability, adaptability, and flexibility (Northouse 2016). This theory is applicable in the context of Thulamela Local Municipality based on the reason that leaders should be able to motivate and have influence on their followers.

## **2.7 Leadership challenges in municipalities**

A good standard of living for the public depends on efficient and effective service delivery in municipalities (Naidoo 2010)). Findings from a study conducted by Madumo (2013) indicate that municipalities come across challenges because of not achieving their set standards and predetermined objectives. The failure to provide services is often linked with leadership challenges that are present within municipalities where the elected officials, including administration personnel, lack the necessary skills required to perform expected tasks. Folarin (2013) states that African political leadership have been associated with - political assassinations, political corruption, failed policies, manipulation of electoral processes and ideological contestations - these have resulted in maladministration, disunity in many instances and contributed to poor service delivery. Madumo (2013), continues that municipalities have the responsibility of ensuring the promotion of collective efforts to pursue the endeavors which members of the community would deem proper and fit. Leadership challenges that have been recognized as including - lack of human resources, lack of proper planning, political interference, and lack of commitment (Madumo 2013). A study conducted by Shava and Chamisa (2018) in South Africa revealed that in government institutions, particularly municipalities, there are leadership challenges that hinder effective service delivery. The results of their study showed that one of the contributory factors causing weak leadership is cadre deployment.

These concerns have caused an increase in protests that are linked to the delivery of services which are regularly characterised by ferocity (Mbele 2010). Within municipalities, Beyers (2015) identified a variety of issues, which are also of concern to COGTA. Some of the problems

identified were - weak financial management, poor governance and accountability, high levels of vacancies in critical senior management positions, and inability to deliver even core critical municipal services, effectively and efficiently. Corruption and non-compliance with the law when issuing tenders were identified as being amongst the challenges within municipalities that hamper their service delivery attempts (Beyers 2015). The Auditor General's Report (2019) published the figures on performance of municipalities in South African. The report testified that role players in government have been implementing audit recommendation, very slowly, and in some instances, they have totally disregarded the recommendations suggested. The central message from the auditor general's latest report is that, because of unheeded advice to implement the recommendations made by the office, local government accountability for performance and financial management have continued to deteriorate. The Auditor General audited 257 municipalities and the report showed that only 18 municipalities were able to produce performance and financial records that were of good quality. Municipalities, thus, must comply with key legislations to effectively deliver services to the citizens (Madumo 2013). The Auditor General's report narrates a staggering 92% of material non-compliance with key legislations, by municipalities. Irregular expenditure also was recorded with a high figure of R25.2 billion. The Auditor General's report indicates that the main contributory factor of these failures is poor leadership. The report adds that, the leadership, senior management, and officials failed to develop, implement and monitor effective systems and processes of internal control, including corrective action (Auditor General South Africa, 2019). The report also pointed out that this is caused by key officials who lack required skills and abilities in reporting financial matters; this has contributed to negative financial planning, reporting and record keeping.

Dorasamy (2010) maintains that "the incidences of discontent and lack of accurate reporting on financial matters at local spheres of government raise concerns over municipalities' abilities to provide good service." Poor leadership (political and managerial) is perceived to be the cause of poor vision, truncated integrity, and the inability to take good decisions in service delivery. In public service, unethical behavior, corruption, and maladministration are not only seen as practices carried out by individuals, but in addition, as an unethical act by the entire leadership and this impacts the public's perception about the government's ability to provide effective service delivery

or practice good governance. One of the governing documents to help public servants create an innovative, results-driven, committed, and committed communities has been the White Paper on Transforming Public Service (Batho Pele White Paper), (Nzimakwe and Mpehle, 2012). In essence, instead of providing reasons why services cannot be delivered, the Paper encourages public servants to arrive at ways and means of delivering services. Public leaders, mainly managers, have the responsibility of creating a conducive environment for employees and empowering them to interact with beneficiaries. This means managers should motivate employees, provide support, and ensure that they have the required resources to execute their duties, especially, when working under pressure. A plan, with clearly articulated objectives, has been explicitly laid out, through the introduction of the Local Government Turnaround Strategy (2009), to restore confidence in local governments and build capacity for responsive, accountable, effective, and efficient development of local governments (Kroukamp, 2011).

These objectives led to the formulation of five strategic Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) goals, namely, to - (1) ensure local government provides the basic needs of communities, (2) ensure a clean, approachable, accountable local government, (3) encourage ethics, professionalism, and dedication in municipalities, (4) advance national and provincial policy and (5) improve and sustain the local sphere, communities and civilization. The introduction of the strategy was received with some uncertainty – it was felt the strategy was not enough to ensure the services would be effectively delivered by municipalities (LGTAS, 2009). It was, hence, recommended that the legislation be enforced and that skilled and potentially effective leaders and officials be appointed. Reitzes (2009) & Nnadozie (2013) assert that the municipal service recipients are concerned about poor quality of services delivered by municipalities. Rural communities, as a result, have limited access to basic needs such as water and electricity, while some communities are concerned about inconsistent provision of services. Mbazira (2013) contends that municipalities are still experiencing challenges of service delivery.

This is confirmed by the widespread service delivery protests throughout the country, which have increased over the years. Service delivery bottlenecks in municipalities are triggered by various negative factors, such as, implementing decentralization, mismanagement, corruption, incapacity to deliver to communities and lack of public involvement in municipal processes and decision-making. Lewin (2014) emphasizes that service delivery developmental capacity depends on the role played by officials in local government as well as available resources. Attention should be placed on the provision of better services and to address service delivery backlogs. Koma (2010) maintains that service delivery backlogs are worsened by several factors, such as population growth, proliferation of new households and limited infrastructure facilities experienced by communities. The increasing service delivery demands burden municipalities and remain a major setback. The evaluation of the performance of a municipality should be based on the nature of challenges confronted by that particular municipality, including backlogs that require extraordinary measures to address as well as capacity requirements and funding. Tsenodi (2014), highlights that some local municipalities have achieved several positive results in their attempts to rationalize structures, operations, resources and implement legislation. It is recommended that focus should be placed on non-financial parameters, such as customer satisfaction and product quality to ensure improved long-term performance; this will also help managers refocus on long-term aspects.

## 2.8. Leadership characteristics

The Table below provides an illustration on the characteristics of leadership by Daft (2005).

**Table 2.1 Leadership characteristics according to Daft 2005**

**Table 2.1 leadership characteristics according to Daft 2005.**

<b>Personal characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Energy</li> <li>• Physical stamina</li> </ul>	<b>Social background</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Education</li> <li>• Mobility</li> </ul>
<b>Intelligence and ability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Intelligence, cognitive ability</li> <li>• Knowledge</li> <li>• Judgement, decisiveness</li> </ul>	<b>Work-related characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drive, desire to excel.</li> <li>Responsibility in pursuit of goals</li> <li>Persistence against obstacles</li> </ul>
<b>Personality</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Self-confidence</li> <li>• Honesty and integrity</li> <li>• Enthusiasm</li> <li>• Desire to lead.</li> <li>• Independence</li> </ul>	<b>Social characteristics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sociability, interpersonal skills</li> <li>Co-cooperativeness</li> <li>Ability to enlist cooperation.</li> <li>Tact, diplomacy</li> </ul>

*Source: Daft (2005:48)*

Table 2.1 suggests that a good leader should have intelligence and cognitive ability; these are necessary in any leader. A leader should be able to think critically and intelligently, to avoid being misled or being manipulated into taking destructive decisions. A good leader should be also accountable; such an individual takes full responsibility and is answerable for everything good or bad surrounding a task. Other characteristics that are essential to a leader include personal characteristics of - self-confidence, enthusiasm, independence, honesty, and integrity.

These leadership characteristics are essential, and they assist a leader to develop a clear direction that leads to the achievement of the predetermined objective, according to Marilyn (2010). This simply means that good characteristics are imperative, and they can assist the leader in achieving or overcoming various obstacles to reach a certain goal. Spears (2010) suggests that the relevant leadership characteristics that a leader should have include - excellent listening skills, empathy, personal commitment for the growth of people and stewardship. These characteristics should complement each other to provide effective service delivery. Personal characteristics such as energy and physical stamina are also required when providing effective leadership. A leader should then have knowledge, intelligence, cognitive ability as well as physical abilities to lead followers, successfully.

## **2.9 Leadership traits**

According to Khoshhal & Guraya (2016), “leadership is the capacity to articulate a plan or a good road map that leads to accomplishing the desired goals”. A successful leader, thus, should have leadership characters and attributes that are vital in leadership roles (Frieder, Wang, & Oh 2018), however, Kirkpatrick, & Locke (1991) insist that leadership traits alone do not guarantee successful results in leadership roles. The leadership trait approach focuses on the attributes of a person such as personality and physical characteristics (Northouse, 2013). Fleenor (2006) published a study on leadership and concluded that a leader must possess the following traits: understanding of followers and their needs; capacity to motivate people; assertiveness; physical vitality and stamina; eagerness to accept responsibility and decisiveness. A research carried out by Khoshhal & Guraya (2016) described an effective leadership as also requiring good leadership traits such as, physical abilities, power relationships and behavior that influences followers to accomplish a goal. According to Mathews (2016), leadership traits were traditionally seen as those peculiar characters that one possesses. Cochran, Kaplan & Nesse (2014), revealed that there are skills that make a distinction between non-leaders and leaders; those skills include cognitive skills, professional problem-solving skills and social problem-solving skills that can assist before a problem occurs.

### **2.9.1 Physical traits**

Physical traits include enthusiasm, vitality, profound energy levels and substantial physical stamina. Leaders need to be physically fit and stay fit to sustain their leadership role (Khoshhal & Guraya 2016).

### **2.9.2 Gender trait**

A study conducted by Mathews (2016) claims that it is significant for the connection between leadership and gender to be considered. The study reiterated that individuals from a multi-dimensional and diverse background who possess musculature traits performed more effectively in comparison to the feminine traits. This point supports the stereotypical claims that women are weak, hence, are often overlooked in leadership posts. A previous study conducted by Cochran, Kaplan & Nesse (2014) for the purpose of finding out the role of gender in leadership, provided substantial evidence on gender trait in leadership. The study established that women are just as competent in leaderships as men. There are many women who have proven that they are better suited to be in leadership positions and performed well. DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman & Humphrey (2011) also conducted a meta-analysis study evaluating the validity of leadership traits along gender lines. The study revealed that women are as capable as men to be in positions of power, hence, they are also able to provide efficient leadership to followers.

### **2.10 Qualities of a good leader**

A leader is considered to have good qualities if he or she demonstrate the ability to lead effectively (Anderson, 2015). Muteswa (2016) adds that leaders must have the capacity to identify needs and various action plan to achieve their objective in addressing the situation and improving the setting. In addition, Anderson (2013) notes that a good leader should be able to communicate problems to the followers in an appropriate way that is understood by follows and be able to steer them for the purpose of identifying issues and concerns.

A leader must be a visionary with identified positive future outcomes to attend to future challenges. A quality leader does not focus on creating followers but rather on creating more leaders (Anderson 2013). A good leader acknowledges team members and gives them inspiration for a job to be well done. For Khoshhal & Guraya (2016) a good and genuine leader must have:

- honesty
- competency
- ability to be forward looking
- inspiration
- intelligence
- be fair minded
- broad mindedness
- courage and
- Straightforwardness.

## **2.11 Developing leadership skills**

Cochran *et al* (2014) maintain that the process of leadership development involves capacity building that nurtures the leader for him/her to be able to anticipate unforeseen obstacles and to tackle situations that are complex. Panait (2017) reiterated that leadership development and performance are progressive and must be structured; these are hierarchical, therefore, they move from a novice and finally to the skilled level, where the person is an expert. A leader that is genuine is one that has extraordinary capacity and the credibility to acquire competence during their period of leadership. A good leader must also possess the ability to listen to his/her followers and surround himself/herself with good followers. Cochran *et al* (2014) used the analogy that leadership is no different from swimming; one does not learn swimming just by reading alone. The same applies to leadership. Leadership skills are not very easy to develop, that is why one needs to have practical exposure to leadership, for the skill to develop (Cochran *et al* 2014).



## 2.12 Leadership styles

Pownall (2010) asserts that not everyone is born a leader, hence, some are leaders by nature while others learn to become leaders. Leaders differ, and respond in different ways to certain situations. Fairholm (2004) advises that there are two main approaches to studying leadership, with one focusing on the qualities of a leader and what they are doing and another approach which is philosophical in nature which deals with the dimensions of the leadership term. Khajeh (2018) emphasized that there are different styles of leadership - charismatic, democratic, transactional, bureaucratic and autocratic. His study revealed that transformational, democratic, autocratic, and bureaucratic leaderships have a positive impact on an organization's performance, however, transactional and charismatic leadership have a negative impact; this is because these leadership styles do not provide freedom and opportunities to employees (Khajeh 2018). The findings of the study recommended that transactional and charismatic leadership have a negative correlation with organizational function. On the other hand, democratic, autocratic, and transformational leadership styles showed a positive correlation to performance within an organization (Khajeh 2018). Janse (2018) explains that autocratic leadership style is utilised by leaders who enjoy retaining or keeping power to themselves. This type of leader takes most of the decisions and expects implementation of the decisions taken. This leadership is considered effective for short term and urgent projects because it makes provision for fast decision-making (Janse 2018). Harms *et al.*, (2017) conducted a study published in the journal, "The Leadership Quarterly". The study was conducted with the aim of finding a better understanding of authoritarianism and leadership. In the study, Harms *et al.*, (2017) posit that autocratic leadership is generally understood to reflect a particular style of leadership where power and authority are concentrated in the leader. The researchers further argue that autocratic leadership is more likely to be reflective of the desire of authoritarian and strong leaders. Smither (1991) explicates that autocratic leadership entails the leader taking much or almost all responsibility for subordinates' performance, as well.

The behaviour of autocratic leaders is often viewed as negative for team morale and performance (Dehong 2014). Smith (1991) provides that a leader who has a good reputation with employees, and the task at hand is highly structured, ensures that employees are highly effective. The findings further revealed that democratic leader takes great care in involving all members of the team, unlike the autocratic leadership. Schwates (2010) believes that workers in democratic

organizations are much more submissive as compared to those in autocratic organizations. His findings showed that autocratic leaders, usually, express anger and frustration because of the leadership style within their organizations.

### **2.13 The importance of leadership in local government**

Nealer and Naude (2011) elaborate that South African local government has made great strides in moving away from the historical record of racially-separated municipalities. The former eight hundred (800) municipalities merged to form the current 297 municipalities which cover all the provinces of the country; these are focused on local government development, reaching out to previously-neglected areas, for economic growth, and maintenance of basic municipal provisions. Khosa (2000) articulates that as there are many influencing factors in service delivery, such as infrastructure, backlogs, and unsatisfactory practices, especially in rural areas; the government, therefore, will have to consider prioritizing pressing service-delivery issues in a more proactive manner and addressing them in a more coordinated and practical manner that will benefit all citizens. Shabangu and Khalo (2008) highlight that the new democratic South Africa has brought about various government leadership changes in the local government and these were established in the South African Constitution, 1996.

The focus on leadership in the local government resulted in the election of municipal councilors in various areas of the country, including areas under traditional leaders' authority which required cooperative governance by traditional leaders and ward councilors. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 outlines only the powers and functions of traditional leadership, therefore, their service delivery responsibilities continue to be of interest. It is still a concern in that, even though functions and powers of councilors are also outlined in Section 156 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, they overlap with those exercised by traditional leaders. In a nutshell, only roles and responsibilities of municipal councilors are legislated in sections 152 (b) and 153(b) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996; the sections stipulate that councilors are responsible for ensuring the provision of services to local communities in a sustainable manner and structuring and managing municipal administration, budgeting, and planning processes, in a way that is responsive to community needs.

In addition to international organizations like the United Nations and the African Union, nations like the United States, Britain, France and Germany have taken measures that ensure that all their affairs and countries are conducted according to democratic principles and the rule of law (Kuye 2010). According to the South African Constitution, leaders are expected to promote and uphold high moral standards since the public needs to be catered for effectively and efficiently. Sefara (2014) claims that South Africa as a country requires effective leadership particularly from a government that offers services to the public, because when the public is dissatisfied with service delivery, its members often engage in strikes which in turn cause more problems. In Fourie's (2011) view, lacking skills, insufficient capacity to create their own environment, as well as incompatible customary structures, contribute to ineffective leadership; this results in a lack of response and delivery to the community.

In the public sector, effective leadership and good governance are pivotal to providing well-organized services. The issue of poor governance and ineffective leadership contributes to situations where service delivery is poor, according to Matshabaphala (2008). Similarly, Sindane and Nambalirwa (2012) write that in South Africa, most complaints about service delivery are caused by inefficient governance and leadership. The authors argue that service delivery challenges in the country must be addressed first by addressing leadership and governance. Good governance and effective leadership seem to be the key factors to service excellence across the three spheres of government according to Kuye (2007), Kroukamp (2007) and Maserumule (2011). Providing public services is the responsibility of provincial and local governments, thus, leaders have a responsibility, in these spheres, to make sure that the necessary services are provided at low cost, in a well-organized manner, in a reasonable manner and according to the principles in the Constitution. Providing effective and efficient service delivery is the duty of a leader. Failure to do so leads to widespread violent protests around service delivery, while constitutional obligations are not being met. The opinion of Paton (2014) is that South Africa is a nation of protesters, stone throwers, and noise makers who are destroying the economy and democracy of the country. Leadership should be competent enough to detect concerns before they get out of control, particularly, in connection with the sphere closest to the people, which is also the core of service delivery - the local government (Nkwana 2012). The task of the local sphere of government is the

provision of basic services to citizens in a sustainable manner. Political office bearers and administrative personnel are entrusted with the role of providing leadership in municipalities for the purpose of ensuring that services are delivered economically, effectively, and efficiently (Nkwana 2012).

In line with the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, the local sphere of government should operate following objectives enshrined in section 152. The Section states that local government has an objective to promote social and economic development, to provide services to communities in a sustainable manner, to encourage the involvement of communities and organizations in the matter of local government and to promote a safe and healthy environment. In local government, leadership is accepted as an essential component of good governance. Local government is one of the focal points of the developmental initiatives since it is the one that is the closest to the communities or the public. The local government has a mandate and objectives according to the Constitution of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, to provide democratic and accountable government for local communities. This means that the local government should be accountable at all costs and should provide a platform that allows for the public to be involved in decision-making through public participation. Translating intention into action and then sustaining it is one of the most difficult challenges facing any person in leadership position (Charlton 1993). In South Africa, effective leadership is vital, especially, in local government because in most cases, when citizens are dissatisfied with public service, they demonstrate their frustrations in streets complaining about poor service delivery. They normally blame leadership as the cause of failure to provide services.

Fourie (2011) believes that the lack of skills, and an environment that does not build innovation and hierarchical traditional structures can be viewed as contributory factors that lead to ineffective leadership. In South Africa, most protests linked to service delivery have a direct correlation with ineffective leadership and poor governance (Nambalirwa and Sindane 2012). A study conducted by Alexandra (2010) showed that South Africa has experienced a trend of service delivery protests amounting to rebellion of the poor. These protests were entirely about poor service delivery in

local government against self-serving, corrupt, and uncaring leaders in municipalities (Alexandra 2010). South Africa needs efficient and effective leadership in local government because when citizens are dissatisfied with service delivery, they often resort to protesting about leadership which has failed them (Sefara 2014). Municipalities provide basic services to communities which makes them the base unit of government in South Africa. The findings by Alexandra (2010) are corroborated by Akinloye, Chanceline and Mokwena (2012), whose study showed dissatisfaction by the public, particularly, with service delivery; among other factors that were identified was lack of leadership in municipalities.

These results show that without effective leadership within municipalities, service delivery remains compromised (Akinloye, Chanceline and Mokwena 2012). The study was conducted in four municipalities in Sedibeng District and the data was also consistent with previous research conducted on service delivery in South Africa. Good governance and effective leadership are regarded as critical for efficient service delivery. In instances where there is poor service delivery, poor governance and poor leadership are partially to blame (Matshabephala 2008). Sindane (2014) and Nambalira (2012), reiterate that most service delivery protests are mainly caused by ineffective leadership and poor governance. These authors raise an argument that aspects of governance and leadership must be attended to and addressed in order to deal with challenges of service delivery in the country. Academics such as Maserumule (2011), Kuye (2007) and Kroukamp (2007) concur that in all three spheres of government, service excellence is credited to good governance and effective leadership. Leaders have the responsibility to ensure that services are delivered to the public, effectively and in an equitable manner, following the principles of the constitution (Paton 2014).

#### **2.14 Legislative framework on service delivery in South Africa**

The dawn of democracy has seen South African local government going through several adjustments and challenges in realizing the purpose of democracy and citizens' development. These include addressing the ills of apartheid and various underdevelopments in the local sphere, in a bid to promote participatory governance, unite local government and to strengthen and sustain

the developmental role of service delivery (Van Donk and Swilling, 2008). These local government developments are supported by several legislative frameworks to support service delivery (Pretorius & Schurink 2007). The following legislation gives mandate to service delivery operations of local government and its leadership:

#### **2.14.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (1996)**

Local government is mandated in section 152(1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 to facilitate democratic and accountable government for the local communities; to ensure that they are provided with their basic needs in a sustainable manner; to promote a safe and conducive environment which would provide, and encourage social and economic development, as well as promote community participation in local government development processes.

#### **2.14.2 White Paper on Local Government (1998)**

Municipal councillors' operations are regulated and directed by the structure set out in the White Paper on Local Government (1998); this encourages the local government developmental mechanism which supports sustainable means to fulfil socio-economic needs of communities, mainly focusing on underprivileged communities.

#### **2.14.3 Local Government Municipal Systems Act (32 of 2000)**

The Local Government Municipal Systems Act (2000) promotes and guides principled municipalities to progressively work towards the socio-economic development of local communities and ensure reasonable access to basic needs for all. It outlines the municipality's legal system as:

“(1) including the local community within the municipal area, (2) collaborating with other municipalities' political and administrative structures, (3) giving guidance on how municipal powers and functions are exercised and implemented, (4) promoting and facilitating community involvement, (5) establishing rational approaches and frameworks for municipal fundamental processes and planning, performance management, resource

utilisation and organisational innovation which strengthen the concept of developmental local government, (6) forming a framework for local public management and human resource development to equip the poor and (7) ensuring service tariffs and credit control policies take peoples' needs into consideration and provide an agenda for service provisions”.

#### **2.14.4 Local Government Municipal Structures Act (117 of 1998)**

The Act gives structure to local government organisations. In principle, the municipality is a combination of political and administrative structures that serve the communities under their administrative authority. From the above-mentioned legislation, leaders are the relevant drivers of service delivery and are entrusted to work towards surpassing the injustices of the past and improve the lives of all citizens in a sustainable manner. In 1998 the approach of a Developmental Local Government was adopted and solidified through two Acts, namely the Municipal Structures Act (1998) and the Municipal Systems Act (2000). Individual municipalities were restructured in 2001 from 1 000 to 284 municipalities. The purpose of the municipal restructuring was to support and promote effective use of limited development resources, such as finances. The Ward Committee system was established in 2004 to promote participative democracy as legislated in the Municipal Structures and Municipal Systems Acts. The Ward Committee System became the main structure for community participation in local government processes.

#### **2.15 Leadership and good governance**

Leadership and good governance are entwined and they are critical in achieving the objectives that are supposed to be met, within a particular organization (Northouse, 2013). Leadership and good governance are one of the most persistent discussions within the subject of public admiration (Nicholas-Omoregbe, Kehinde, Imhonopi, and Evbuoma 2016). What distinguishes efficient leaders from the average is that, the former have a clear vision of the predetermined objective and they have the skill to work with and manage people. Spears (2010) suggests that the role of leadership should be bestowed on people or individuals who have a desire to be servants to the public and it begins with a passion and a natural feeling to be a servant. Good governance signifies

a participative manner of governing that operates based on the principles of legitimacy, efficiency and is concerned with the purpose of ensuring the welfare of society, promotion of the individual right of citizens and public interest and the sustainable development with societal justice (Muhtch, 2007).

In the context of this study, the term “governance” means that administrative practices and legislative framework are applied efficiently by public officials for the purpose of effective service delivery. Dwivedi and Mishra (2007) note that good governance is necessary for the government to produce efficient service delivery and maximum outcomes to improve the standard of living for the public, hence, for good governance to occur, there should be efficient and effective leadership. Taking into consideration the above discussion and definition of the concept, good governance process is central to service delivery and public service performance to the society. For Fakir (2014), poor service delivery is often caused by poor governance and leadership which then cause the public to protest out of frustration. Municipalities require leadership and good governance for them to run effectively. Good governance at the local government is combined with various principles.

These principles include - transparency (which is not only about building confidence and trust, but ensuring efficiency in the political process); civic leadership (which is primarily concerned with the ability to develop a vision for a particular area together with government arrangements that safeguard accountability and effective delivery of the services) (Hambleton 2016). Good governance suggests that public officials should be acquainted with both administrative and political skills and competences; these are for the purpose of executing their responsibilities, efficiently to the public. Good leadership advocates that individuals in leadership positions should possess the following characteristics - empathy, listening skills, persuasion, awareness, conceptualization, ability to build a community and the commitment to the growth of people. The United Nations (1998) recommends that every country around the world should uphold its constitution as it is the foundation of governance and other laws should be in line with the provisions stated in the constitution. Public officials should exercise state authority and conform



to the constitution as it is the supreme law. Good governance and leadership are vital for society to progress and prosper towards sustainability and socio-economic development (Hambleton 2016).

## **2.16 The state of service delivery in municipalities**

Municipalities are categorised under the local sphere of government (Gildenhuys, 2015) and is generally concerned with delivering services to the public (Masuku and Jili, 2019). From Moeti (2017), public services can be classified into three categories - quasi collective services, particular services and collective services. Collective services have the characteristics of being - non-apportionable, non-exclusive, inexhaustible, have a monopolistic nature and can only be financed through taxation. A good example of these are roads, water drainage and traffic control. Particular services have the following characteristics: they are exclusive, apportion-able and exhaustible (Moeti, 2017). Kanyane (2014) maintains that there are service delivery challenges within municipalities that contribute to their failure to deliver public services. According to a study conducted by the South African Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC 2014), the provision of services in South Africa is affected by poor leadership and governance. The findings of this study are confirmed by Phago (2013), who notes that ineffective leadership and poor governance compromise service delivery efforts by the municipalities. As Kanyane (2014) explains, municipalities tend to be accused of poor governance, which ultimately results in them offering poor or non-distribution of services. This is demonstrated by many protests which are levelled against the municipalities by communities in various areas in South Africa (Morudu, 2017 and Alexander, 2010). These protest costs municipalities very large sums of public funds as a result of vandalism, destruction and damaging of state properties, private businesses and individual households (Samkange, Masola, Kutela, Mahabir, and Dikgang, 2018). A major challenge for most municipalities is poor leadership and service delivery (Kanyanae (2014). Corrupt practices, staff shortages, and institutional capacity limitations are among the main concerns. Councillors and municipal officials are also lacking in accountability due to a lack of transparency and dysfunctional ward committees. In addition to lacking public participation, non-compliance with municipal legislation negatively impacts service delivery. Such issues significantly impair the functioning of municipalities; consequently, this has resulted in protests due to discontentment at local government levels. It is a legal obligation for municipalities to provide basic services to their

residents. It is not only extremely difficult for residents of municipalities when municipal officials fail to deliver basic services, but it also negatively impact on social and economic development (Kanyanae 2014). The Table below presents a picture of service delivery protests from 2004 to the year 2019.

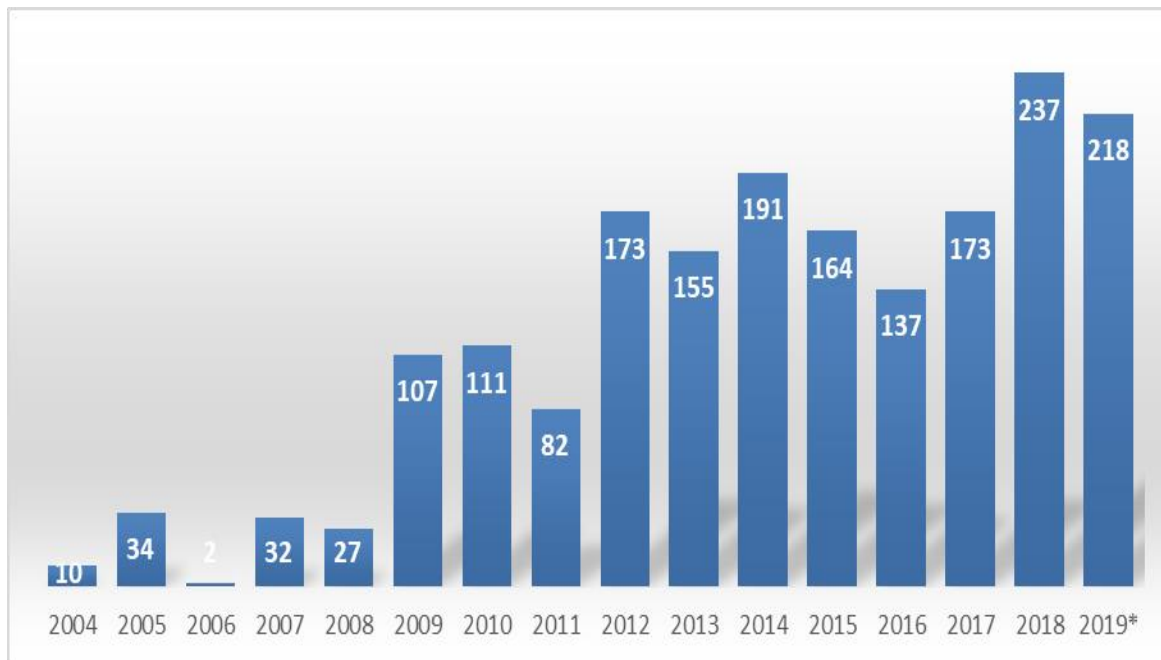


Figure 2.1 Service delivery protests (2004-201)

*Source: (Municipal IQ-Municipal Hotspots Monitor 2017)*

The Municipal Hotspots Monitor recorded a huge number of protests linked to poor service delivery and to poor leadership within municipalities for the years 2018 and 2019. This provides clear evidence that poor leadership within municipalities creates many problems for the public. Effective leadership and management are essential within municipalities. Naidoo (2010), states that it is necessary for local government to have qualified individuals in senior leadership roles; such individuals are likely to have qualities, such as communication skills, interpersonal skills, creative cooperation, human resource management and financial skills. Naidoo (2010) further argues that it is ideal for senior management and people in leadership positions to be cognisant of the political dynamics and the environment in which they operate.

## **2.17 Leadership framework that can be applicable in municipal context**

This section reviews strategic leadership approach – a framework applicable within municipalities, to address leadership challenges; it is multidimensional and characterized by unique features (Northouse 2013). The approach caters for - religious, gender, cultural, political, socio-economic and ethnic difference (Northouse 2013). Strategic leaders implement and formulate strategies for the preservation and for the impact necessary for sustainable organizational viability and efficiency (Freedman & Tregoe 2003). According to Naidoo (2010), strategic leadership is the utilization of both transformational and managerial leadership and is mainly about consistency and honesty. This approach suggests that transformational leadership and managerial leadership can co-exist within municipalities and produce positive results. It focuses on the future and is always prepared to take risks if necessary. Strategic leaders have positive expectations on performance from public servants and themselves and places emphasis on what a good leader should do. The approach engages partners and stakeholders in achieving and developing the shared vision and provides a platform for them to lead. Another fundamental role that the leader plays is the creation of an empowering environment that allows for people to think creatively and challenge assumptions regarding how inclusive and correct services to the public should be implemented (Naidoo 2010).

Mokwena, Paradza & Richards (2010) are of the opinion that local government leadership is about promoting and encouraging communities' contributions and involvement in local government affairs. This requires eligible people who are well equipped to lead people and are prepared to scrutinize and provide better outcomes on issues affecting the communities they serve. Amongst the challenges that are confronted by councilors, and is usually a cause of confusion and frustration, is the role of elected officials and people they collaborate with in support of a service delivery developmental role. As roles evolve over time, based on various factors, such as tradition, personal expectations and what seems to work in a given situation, it is necessary to have an ideal model and implementation strategy; this is because, in many cases, the regular occupations of stakeholders do not normally equip elected councilors as officials responsible for policymaking. Matshabaphala (2007) also explains that by giving leadership, at whatever level in the organization, one can influence those in higher ranks of the organization to change their behavior

for the better. The public, at the coalface of service delivery, expects quality leadership in the processes of service delivery, from all structures of the state.

George (2010) recommends that local government should consider a bilateral system in rural areas to avoid developmental barriers. In addition, collaboration between traditional councils and local municipalities must be legislatively braced, strengthened through other cooperative measures and directed by cooperative governance principles. Bvuma (2014) emphasizes that in local government, the municipality needs to develop its leadership structure to become a system that will shape the organization through teamwork, from both political and administrative leaders as the organization's objectives cannot be entirely realized without this collaboration. Oberholzer & Diedricks (2013) emphasize that leadership is a crucial pillar that holds everything together and all else revolves around it. Local government finances and service delivery development are meaningless without the role of good leadership which encourages good principles, puts words into action and leads by example. Clean audits and sustainable good performance are influenced by several factors, such as sound financial management, frequent skills empowerment, good governance, and the ability to apply appropriate corrective measures and be compliant.

In local municipalities, executive members (the mayor, the council, municipal managers, and senior officials) are expected to lead by example, be accountable and ensure that clean audits are achieved. A very crucial factor in this process is the local municipalities' mission to accomplish alignment between administrative and political leadership. Municipalities can optimize their full potential through the adoption of this framework as it incorporates various divergent perspectives and sensitivities for the improvement of service delivery within municipalities (Oberholzer & Diedricks 2013). If leaders exhibit good morals and good ethics, some of the problems that hinder service delivery can be suppressed and dealt with, resulting in optimal delivery of services to the public.

The assumption of a shared vision of how the organization should be is what a strategic leader does. South Africa is a developing country, therefore, its local government is likely to have many challenges. This is evident in its economical state, and the strikes and protests that occur because of poor service delivery Naidoo (2010). The Municipal IQ Hotspots Monitor still provides high figures of protests that occur because of poor service delivery, making it quite clear that leadership in municipalities needs to be properly addressed.

## **2.18 Conclusion**

The chapter provided an overview of the concept of leadership, challenges within municipalities as well as leadership styles and characteristics. A distinction between leadership and management was provided followed by a review of literature on the urgency of leadership in local government. This chapter also reviewed literature on good governance, the state of service delivery and concluded by suggesting a leadership framework that can be implemented within the municipal context. The next chapter outlines the research methodology followed in this study.

## CHAPTER 3

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the methodology that was followed in the study. The research paradigm that was adopted in the study is interpretivist with a descriptive research design. A discussion on sampling technique and procedures was also undertaken, including the procedures for data analysis and how ethical considerations were adhered to.

#### 3.1 Research paradigm

Rehman and Alharthi (2016), note a research paradigm as a way of understanding the reality of the world and studying it. It can also be defined as a basic belief system and theoretical framework with assumptions about ontology, epistemology, methodology and methods (Rehman and Alharthi 2016). In this study, the researcher adopted the interpretivist research paradigm with the intention of gaining an understanding of the leadership challenges within Thulamela Local Municipality for the purpose of proposing a better solution to its existing problems. “Interpretivism rejects the notion that a single, verifiable reality exists independent of our senses. The goal of interpretive research is not to discover universal, contextual as well as value-free knowledge and truth but to try to understand the interpretations of individuals about the social phenomena they interact with” (Rehman & Khalid 2016).

#### 3.2 Research approach

Two major paradigms exist in research - quantitative and qualitative. In addition, Webb and Auriacombe (2006) explicate that with studies in social sciences, a researcher can either choose between the two research paradigms, however, a combination or a mixture can also be utilized. Qualitative research has been defined by Salkind (2012) as a social science approach that focuses on exploring human behavior using data collection instruments, such as case studies, observation, focus groups and structured interviews. Silverman (2013), hence, notes that qualitative research’s focus is to explore, explain, understand, discover and clarify situations, feelings, perceptions, attitudes, values, beliefs and experiences of a group of people. It is often grounded on deductive rather than inductive logic. In contrast, quantitative research uses numbers or statistics as data and

analyzes the data using statistical techniques (Merriam and Tisdell 2016). Quantitative research, usually, provides enough details regarding the study design for it to be replicated for verification and reassurance. In contrast, less attention is given to study designs or the other structural aspects of a study in qualitative research and this contributes to the replication of a study design almost impossible; this leads to the inability of the approach to produce findings that can be replicated (Kumar 2011). This study, therefore, adopted a mixed method (combination of qualitative and quantitative) as this approach provides extensive details that can be easily verified and interpreted to provide a clear picture of a phenomena being studied. A mixed method is more appropriate in a study such as this one because the main point is to describe real-life experiences and challenges of people in leadership positions within the Thulamela Local Municipality.

### **3.3 Research design**

According to Kumar (2011), a research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation so conceived as to obtain answers to research questions or problems. In addition, Merriam and Tisdell (2016), acknowledge a research design as a logical plan that is used for getting from here to there, where “here” can be presumed as the initial set of questions to be answered and “there” as a conclusion for the questions. This study adopted a survey design, which, according to Thomas (2011), is a method that involves gathering information about status of a target variable within a particular group, followed by providing a summary of the findings.

### **3.4 Sampling, sampling technique and sampling size**

Sampling, as defined by Bryman (2012), is picking a segment of a population as the basis for participation in research. Van Thiel (2014) notes sampling as a selection from the total of possible units. The author further posits that only those units being studied direct the researcher in drawing conclusions on the population, therefore, in this study, sampling was done to identify a small segment of the entire unit of study to provide conclusions on the topic. There are two types of sampling techniques - probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, the unit of study is chosen based on theoretical criteria but selected by chance or probability. Probability sampling has an advantage as it enables a selection of a larger sample which makes it easy to draw conclusions applicable to the entire population (Van Thiel, 2014).

On the other hand, non-probability sampling makes a purposive selection of the units of a study (Van Thiel 2014). Adams and Lawrence (2019), states that non-probability sampling is a technique that do not rely on random sampling. Sampling bias is a very serious concern in this sampling technique, unlike in probability sampling (Adams and Lawrence 2019). This study adopted non-probability sampling technique and the subtype of the technique selected is purposive sampling. This kind of sampling is used, for instance, on very small samples to avoid chances of fluctuations that might excessively distance the sample from the characteristics of the population (Le Roy and Cobert, 2006). The primary consideration in this sampling technique is the researcher's judgment as to who can provide the best information to achieve the objectives of the study (Kumar, 2011). For this study, the researcher only selected a few individuals who possess the characteristics or who have a leadership role to play in Thulamela Local Municipality.

In this study, the researcher selected the following individuals - the Mayor, the Municipal Manager, the Intergrated Development Plan Manager, Human Resource Manager, Traffic and Safety Manager, ward councilors, civic associates, the Director for Planning and local chiefs. These individuals are selected because they are in leadership roles within the Municipality. Their position and roles within the municipality make them suitable respondents to provide reliable information as far as leadership is concerned. According to Kumar (2011), determining an adequate sample size is one of the most controversial aspects of sampling. How large a sample should be so as to be representative of the population has no simple answer. It may depend upon the nature and the population of interest or the data to be gathered and analyzed. The Table below shows the sampling size of the study.



**Table 3.1 Study Sample size**

No	Respondent	Quantity
1	Mayor	X 1
2	Municipal Manager	X 1
3	Integrated development plan manager	X1
4	Human resource manager	X1
5	Traffic and Safety Manager	X1
6	Ward councilors	X 25
7	Civic associates	X 14
8	Local Chiefs	X 5
9	Director for planning and local chiefs	X 1
Total		50 participants

### 3.5 Data collection procedures

The data collection steps and procedures include, sampling and recruitment, collecting information through unstructured or semi-structured observations and interviews, documents, and visual materials, as well as establishing the protocol for recording information (Creswell and Creswell 2018). It is essential to explore all the possibilities of primary and secondary data sources before proceeding with the remaining steps of the research process. For this study, the researcher collected data through a semi-structured interview, using a telephone. In response to the COVID-19

pandemic, telephone interviews were conducted according to the regulations. The literature on leadership and various leadership styles and characteristics was drawn upon. The research instrument consisted of questions that were to be answered by both municipal officials and political office bearers. A pilot study was conducted to test the research instrument on whether it can collect the data required for the study. The test yielded successful results, and this motivated the researcher to begin interviews with the rest of the selected participants; fortunately, they actively participated throughout the interviews.

### **3.6 Data analysis**

Data analysis is detailed by Creswell (2014) as the processing of the data that was gathered to make sense out of participants' behavior patterns. Terre Blanche, Durrheim and Painter (2006), explain that the analysis of data in a quantitative research is the preparatory stage for processing the data. This stage includes the coding, entering, and cleaning of the data collected. The researcher has the responsibility of coding the responses by assigning numerical values. The quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science Software V2.0. Charts and graphs were used to present the data findings, while the qualitative data was analyzed using thematic analysis. Thematic analysis is a method for systematically identifying, organizing, and offering insight into, patterns of meaning (themes) across a dataset. Through focusing on meaning across a dataset, thematic analysis allows the researcher to see and make sense of collective or shared meanings and experiences (Braun and Clarke 2012).

### **3.7 Ethical consideration**

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that is aimed at addressing questions about morality (Wiles, 2013). Morality has to do with actions or intention which are good or the right things that must be done compared to those that should not be done (Wiles, 2013). In addition, Hammersley and Traianou (2012), see ethics as a set of principles that embody what is good or bad and as the realm of considerations that are relevant in determining what is good or bad and also what is right or wrong.

In this study, ethical considerations are those standards that were used rather than violated when conducting the study. The researcher applied the following ethical considerations:

### **3.7.1 Informed consent**

Informed consent is an ethical standard applied when conducting research where respondents are informed prior to the commencement of the study. Respondents are informed either in writing or verbally regarding the procedures, topics, risks and the benefits, if any, before they give consent to participate (Adams and Lawrence, 2019). It is, therefore, considered unethical for a researcher to gather data without the knowledge of participants and their expressed cooperation and informed consent (Kumar, 2011). Informed consent implies that the participants have been made aware of the type of information being required from them, what purpose the information will serve, how they are expected to take part in the study and how indirectly and directly it will affect them (Kumar 2011). It is crucial for a researcher to get consent without pressure, hence, a researcher will first seek consent from the participants before conducting a study. In this study, the researcher read the consent form to the respondents and they consented to participate in the study.

### **3.7.2 Voluntary participation**

Babbie and Mouton (2012), refer to voluntary participation as a procedure whereby participants take part in a study being conducted without being forced, no matter what the circumstances may be. For Silverman (2013), participation must be voluntary, thus, free from any coercion; researchers should inform participants that they have a right to refuse or to withdraw from the research whenever, and for any reason. During this study, the respondents were not coerced to participate; participation was on voluntary basis meanings that they were at liberty to agree or not to agree to participate. Participants gave consent and agreed to take part in the study voluntarily without being paid or forced into participating; they had free will to take part or not to.

### **3.7.3 Privacy, confidentiality, and no harm**

According to Lune & Berg (2017) an ethical research requires doing no harm to participants; this entails avoiding emotional and physical harm to research participants or objects being studied. The authors add that the notion of offering privacy and confidentiality as the removal from the research record any identifying information or elements that may reveal the identities of the respondents. In this study, similarly, privacy and confidentiality entail not revealing the participants identities and the information they shared. The study involved key political office bearers who are well known, since they are public figures. Individuals, such as the municipal manager are public figures, however, the researcher ensured that the information disclosed by the participants including the municipal manager and the major will be kept private and confidential and that pseudonyms will be used in compiling the research report - privacy and confidentiality were maintained in this manner. The researcher also explained to the participants the question they were going to be asked during the interview to ensure no harm or surprise. The researcher also clearly explained the intention of the research before engaging participants in the interview.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

This chapter has highlighted the research methodology that was used in this study. A mixed method research approach was adopted in this study. This chapter also discussed sampling procedure, data collection method, analysis and ethical considerations that were adopted throughout the study. The chapter also highlighted how the participants were interviewed and what transpired during the pilot study. In addition, the chapter also highlighted the sample size and the research paradigm adopted.

## CHAPTER 4

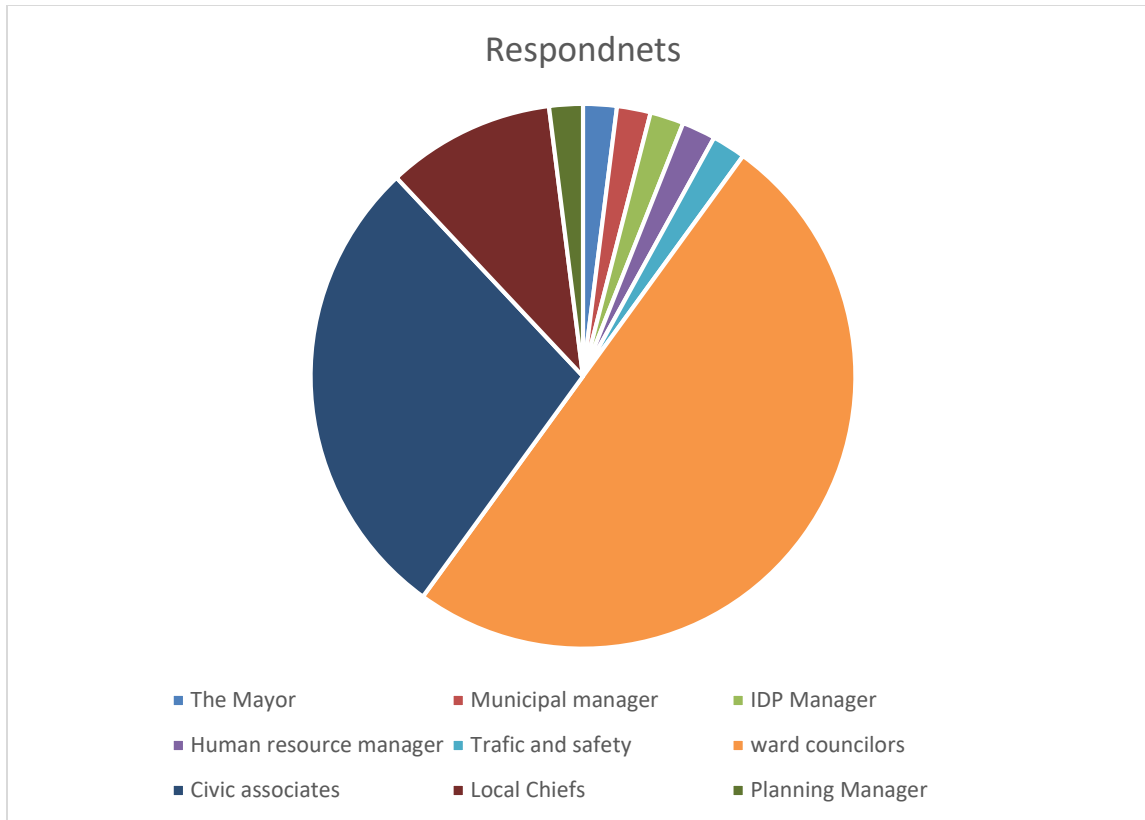
### DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND INTERPRETATION

#### 4.1 Introduction

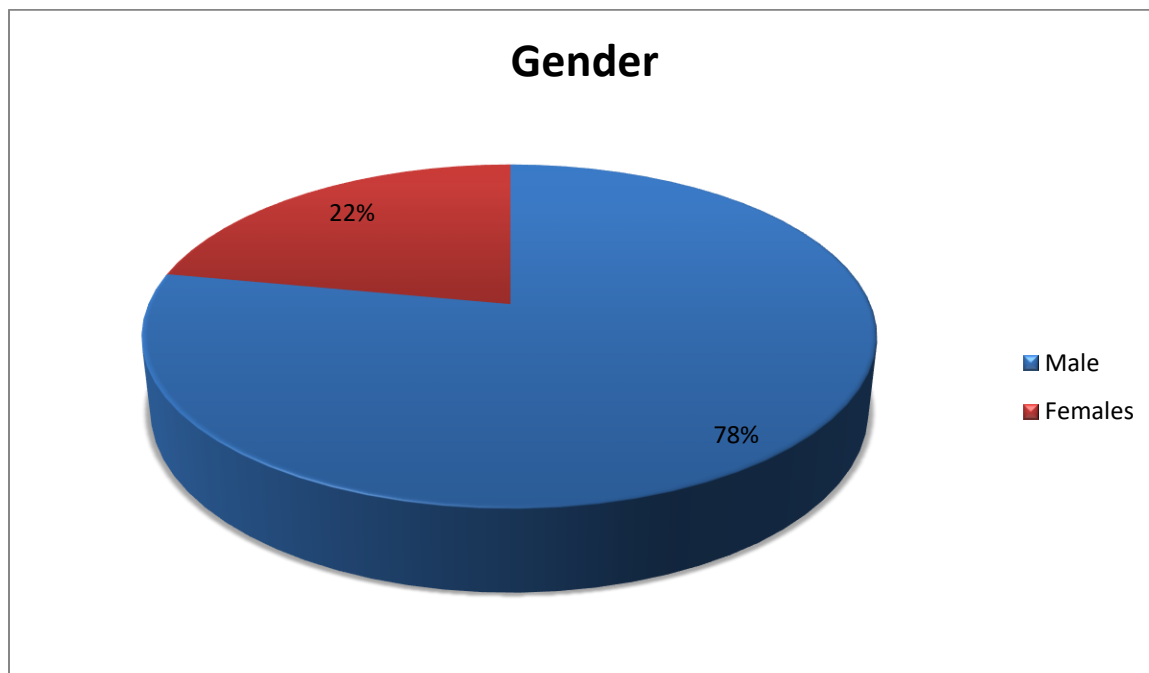
This chapter presents the collected data, both quantitative and qualitative, from the Thulamela Local Municipality. The quantitative data is presented in the form of graphs and figures and qualitative data is presented in themes. Some graphs presented a high qualitative data in line with the questions which were asked and some of the results obtained from the interviews were presented thematically. The researcher conducted telephonic interviews with municipal officials and political office bearers of Thulamela Local Municipality. The following are representations of the collected data.

#### 4.2 Biographical information of respondents

In this study, the researcher selected the Mayor, Municipal Manager, Intergraded Development Plan Manager, Human Resource Manager, traffic and safety manager, ward councilors, civic associates, the Director for Planning and local chiefs. These individuals were selected because they are in leadership positions. Their position and roles within the municipality made them suitable respondents to better provide reliable information as far as leadership is concerned. The following pie chart present the respondents who participated in the study.



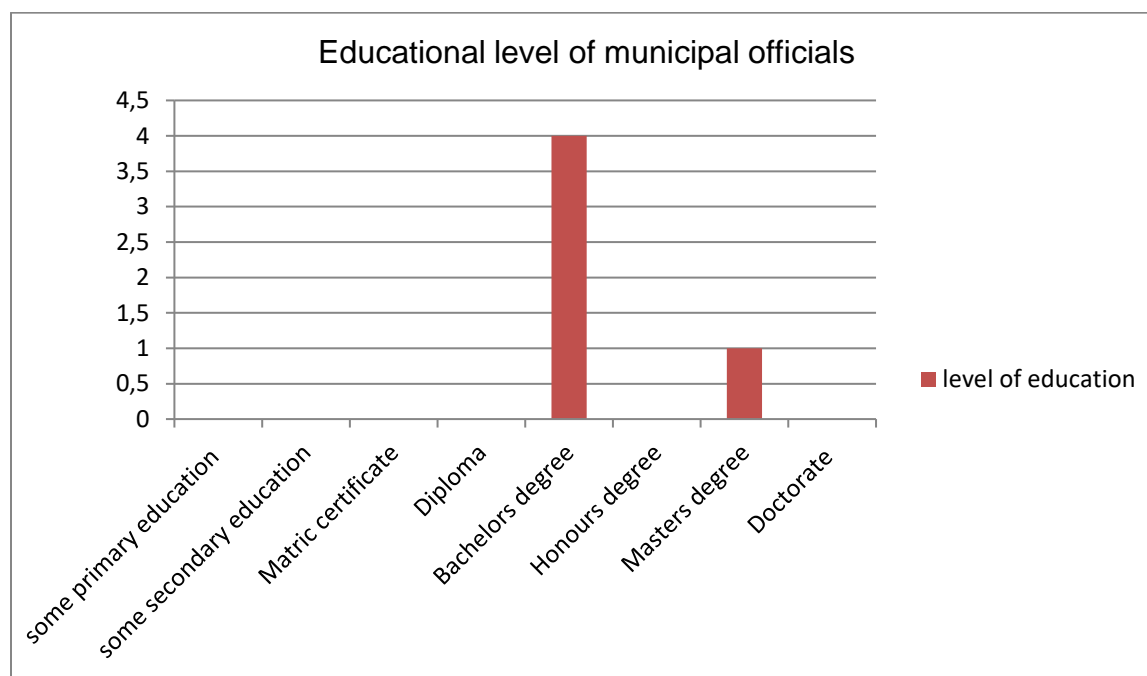
*Pie chart 4.1 Number of respondents who participated in the study.*



*Pie chart 4.2 Gender variation*

### 4.3 Leadership qualities affecting the provision of effective service delivery

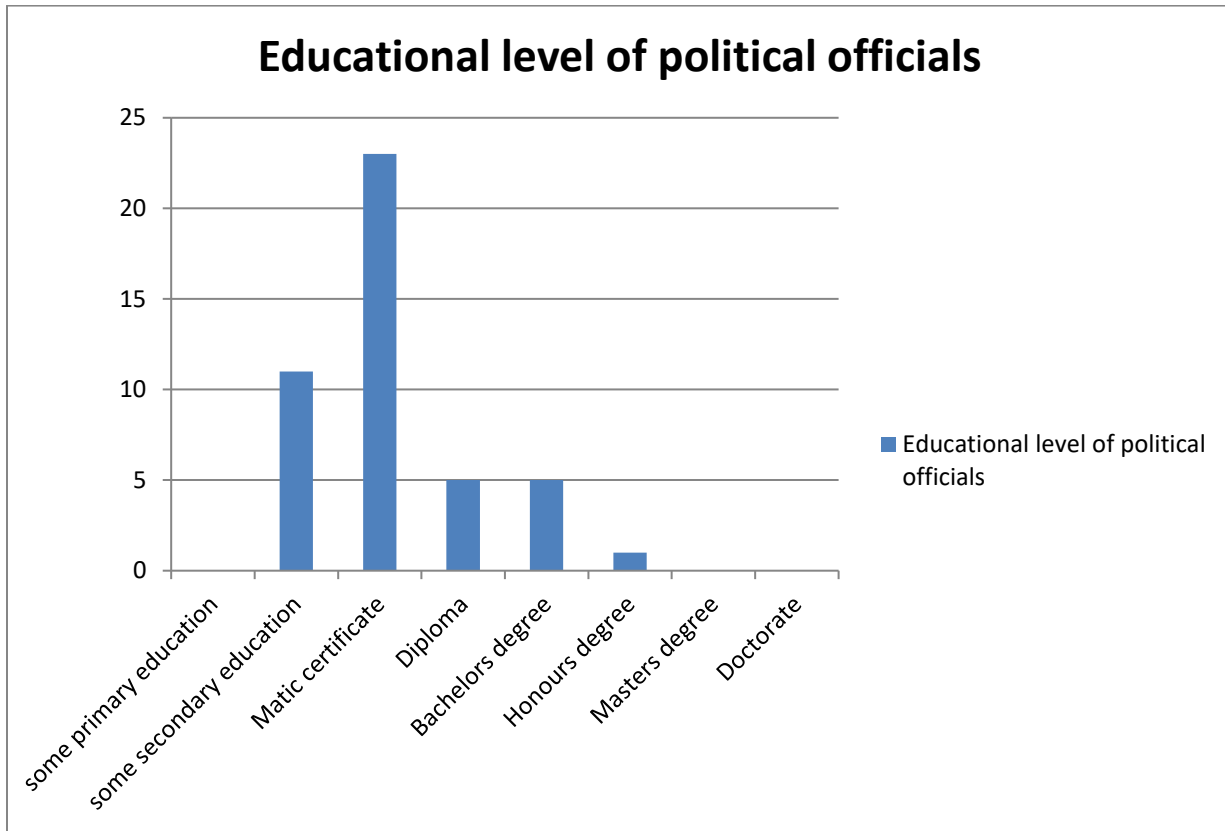
The pie chart above indicates the gender differences amongst the participants who were interviewed in the study. Of the 50 participants who participated in this study, 78% were males and 22% were females. Gender plays a major role in leadership matters. It is obvious that in Thulamela Local Municipality, the most dominant gender in leadership positions is male. It is noteworthy to state that literature also suggests that women are just as competent in leadership roles. History shows that there are a number of competent women who had proved to be well suited in leadership positions and were performing well (DeRue, Nahrgang, Wellman & Humphrey 2011). This has also been confirmed by Cochran, Kaplan & Nesse (2014) who attest that women are as capable as men to be in positions of power, as they are also able to provide efficient leadership to followers.



*Figure 4.1.: Education level of municipal officials*

The figure above indicates the level of education of municipal officials who were participants in the study. The graph indicates the following -1 participant has a matric certificate; 1 participant has a diploma and another one has a Bachelor's degree. In addition, there were two participants

who have honors degrees, lastly, one participant has a Master’s degree. Among the participants interviewed, none holds a PhD qualification.



**Figure 4.2: Level of education of political officials**

Figure 4.2 indicates that among political officials’ bearers, 8 participants possess some primary education, 12 of the participants sampled for this study are in possession of a secondary education; 14 of them have matric certificates; 2 have diplomas, 4 have Bachelor’s degrees and one is in possession of a Master’s degree. No one among the participants had a PhD. It is obvious from the graphs above that majority of people in leadership positions in Thulamela Local Municipality have minimum educational background. Education is one of the vital qualities that a leader should possess. A leader should have knowledge, intelligence and the cognitive ability to lead followers successfully. Literature has shown that without proper education and knowledge, service delivery becomes affected, negatively. The failure to provide services is often linked with leadership challenges that are present within municipalities where the elected officials, including

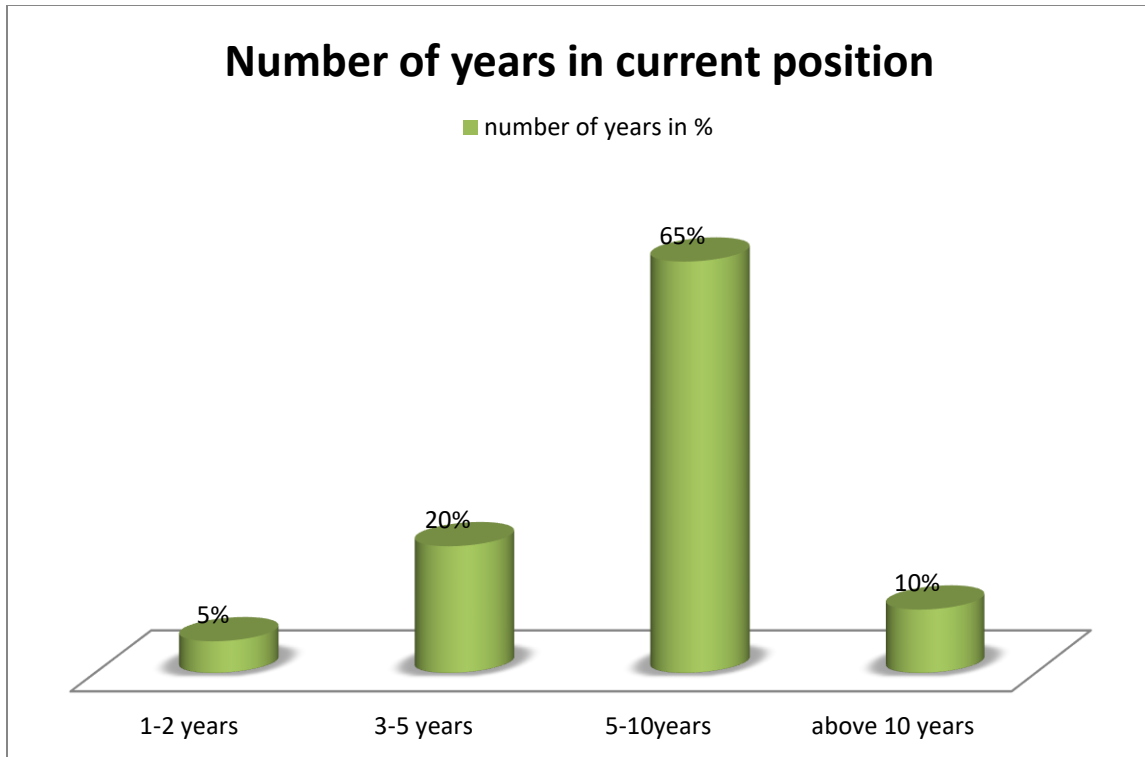


administration personnel, lack the necessary education and skills required to perform as expected (Naidoo 2010).

*Table 4.1 Previous jobs of political office bearers before getting elected*

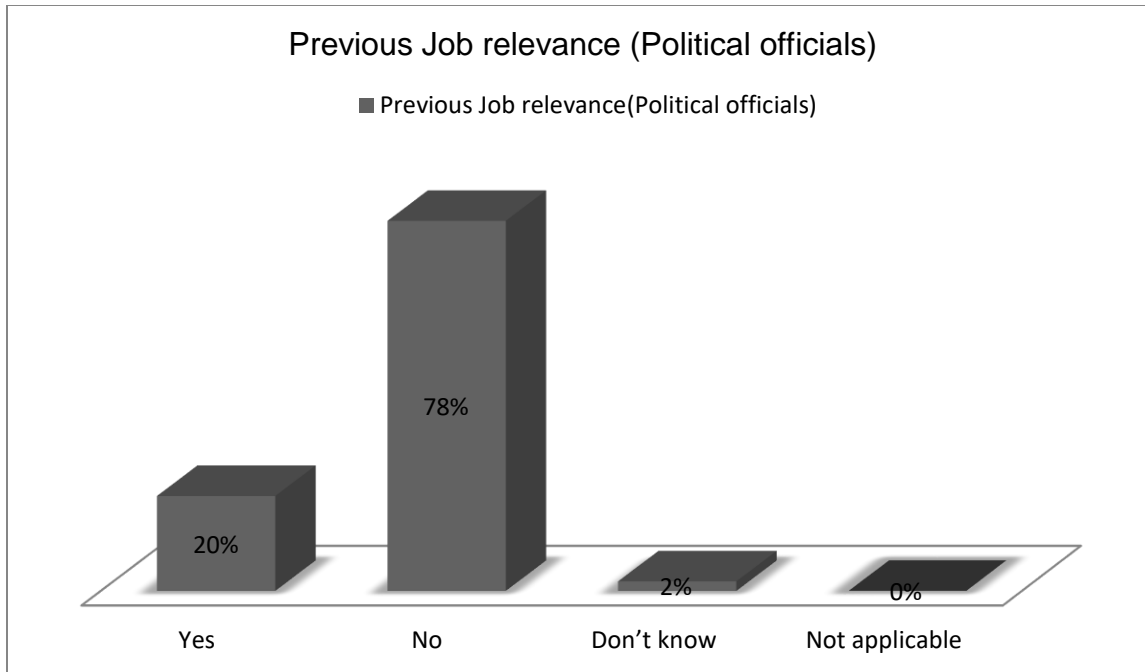
Job type	Percentage
Unemployed	41%
Teacher	4%
Self employed	30%
Teaching early childhood development	5%
Admin personnel	18%
Other	2%
Total	100%

Table 4.1 presents the previous jobs that political office bearers were doing before serving in leadership positions within Thulamela Local Municipality. The Table indicate that 41% of participants interviewed in the study were previously unemployed. The data also show that 4% of them were teachers, 30% were self-employed and 5% were teaching children at early childhood level. The data also presents that 18% were doing admin work and only 2% of the participants reported that they were doing other activities that could not be classified. It is clear from the data that the political officials were involved in the employment sectors that were completely different to their present roles; this suggests that cadre deployment was exercised. From the literature, Tshishonga (2014) points out that deploying people who are incompetent and who lack capacity exacerbate service delivery challenges and also cement the common notion that there are no experienced personnel to occupy leadership positions within the public sector.



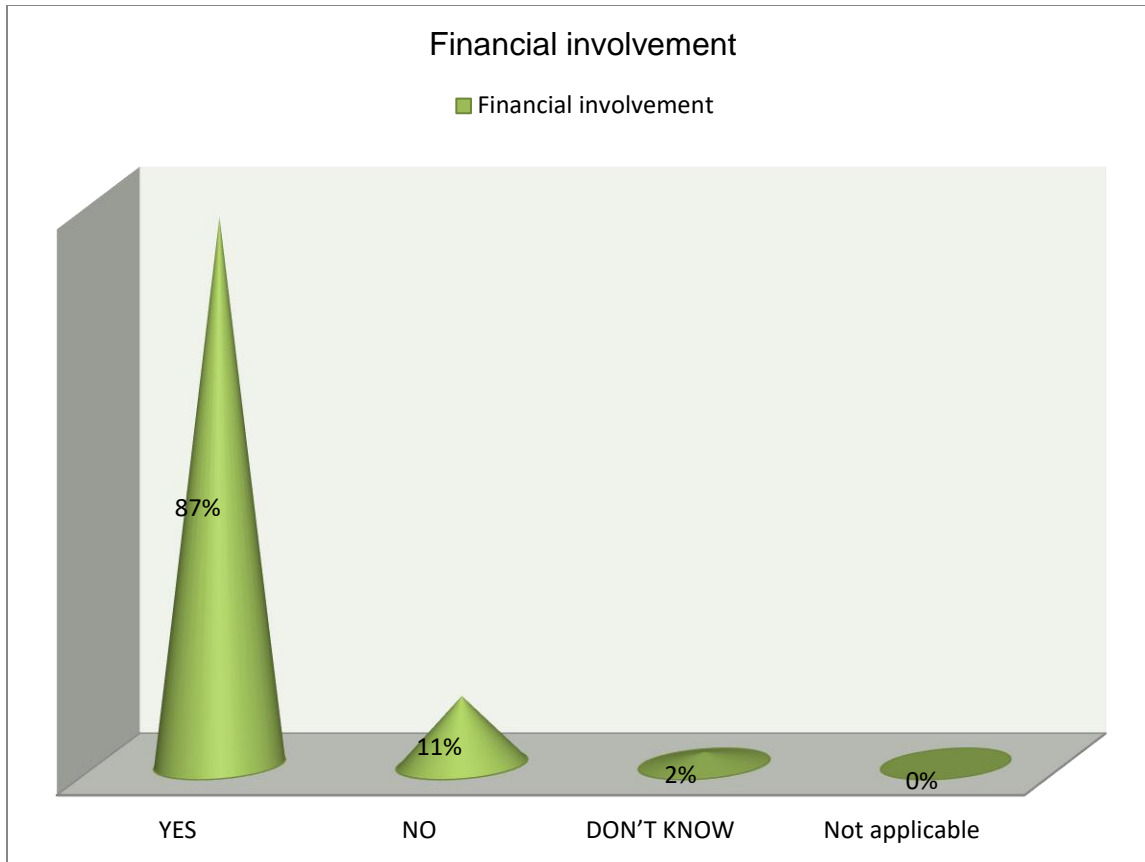
***Figure 4.3: Years in present position***

Figure 4.3 presents findings that 65% of municipal officials have been in their present position for a period of five to ten years; 20% of municipal officials have been within their positions for a period of 3-5 years; 5 percent of officials have been in service for 1-2 years and only 10 percent have been in service for 10 years and above. Having municipal officials who have many years of experience serves as an advantage. The number of years they have been in their current position speaks directly to the knowledge, training and their understanding of what is expected from them. Thulamela Local Municipality with 65% of officials who have been with the Municipality for five to ten years; ten percent of officials who have been with the municipality for more than ten years would mean that they have vast experience and knowledge to do the work. Without proper academic training and proper capabilities, the number of experience could serve minimum purpose, but rather, contribute to service delivery challenges caused by lack of knowledge and skills necessary to do the work. This has also been argued by Kok (2017) who concludes that one of the challenges the local sphere of government face is when people positioned in leadership roles for years, lack the essential skills; this compromises the delivery of services.



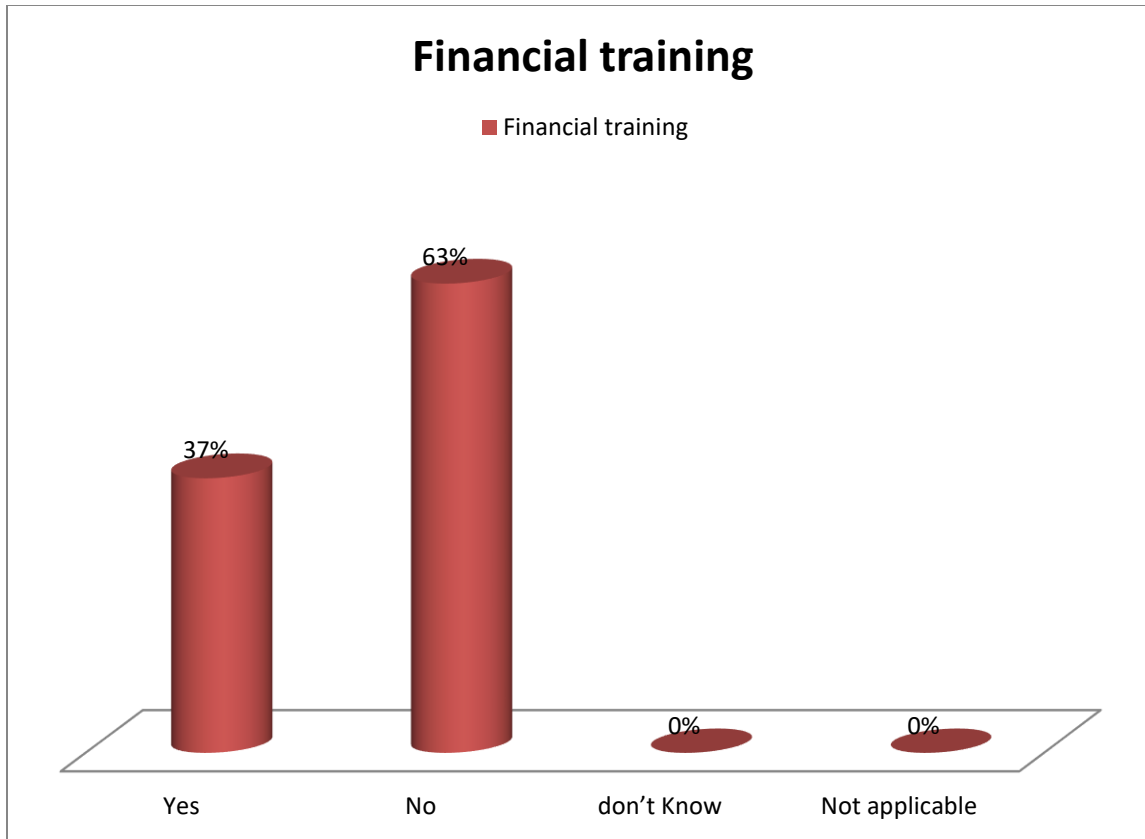
***Figure 4.4: Previous job relevance***

The participants were asked if their previous employment or activity equipped them for the current role they are performing; 20% of them responded by saying “yes” while majority of them reported that what they were doing previously had no relevance in their current job. Respondents who responded by saying “yes” supported their response by saying they were, previously, playing management and leadership roles. Majority of respondents indicated that their previous roles had little to do with what they are currently doing; they added that their political affiliation was the one that assisted them to be elected. Other respondents stated that they do not know the relevance of the previous jobs to their current ones.



***Figure 4.5: Official's involvement in financial management***

Figure 4.5 presents results of political official's involvement in the management of finances in Thulamela Local Municipality; 87% of officials indicated that they are involved in the financial management within the Municipality. Their reasons for responding that they were involved in financial management were that some have the responsibility of overseeing the finances of the whole Municipality. Others indicated that they deal with financial compliance within their respective directorates and other participants stated that they also make contributions regarding how the finances of the Municipality are budgeted which makes them involved in the financial management. 11% of officials indicated that they are not financially involved and only 2% indicated that they do not know their status when it comes to finances of the Municipality.



***Figure 4.6: Management financial training***

Figure 4.6 presents a picture of political office bearers in management and whether they had had any training in financial management; 37% of the participants indicated that they received training on the management of finances beforehand; 63% had never received any financial training prior to their current roles and then there were those respondents who do not know about any financial training. Financial training is pivotal in leadership role. The absence of knowledge on finances disadvantages a leader and compromises the quality of service delivery. Majority of the respondents in this study are people who occupy strategic leadership positions, therefore, without skills and knowledge in finances, this may lead to mismanagement of funds and corruption.



*Pie chart 4.3: Importance of financial training*

Political office bearers were asked about the importance of financial training in their current positions. The pie chart 4.3 displays that 93% of participants agreed that it is of vital importance for them to be trained in financial management in their current roles; 7% of the respondents, on the other hand, indicated that financial training was not necessary. Participants who indicated that financial training was important motivated their response by saying the following:

- *Financial skills assist me to provide oversight of the Municipality's finances.*
- *Without information on how the Municipality manages its finances, I will not be able to perform my work.*
- *I am part of the Municipality's portfolio committee and I should be with the proper skills regarding finances to determine the accuracy of the financial reports being presented.*

Participants who stated financial training not to be important provided the following explanations:

- *My work does not have any relevance with finances.*

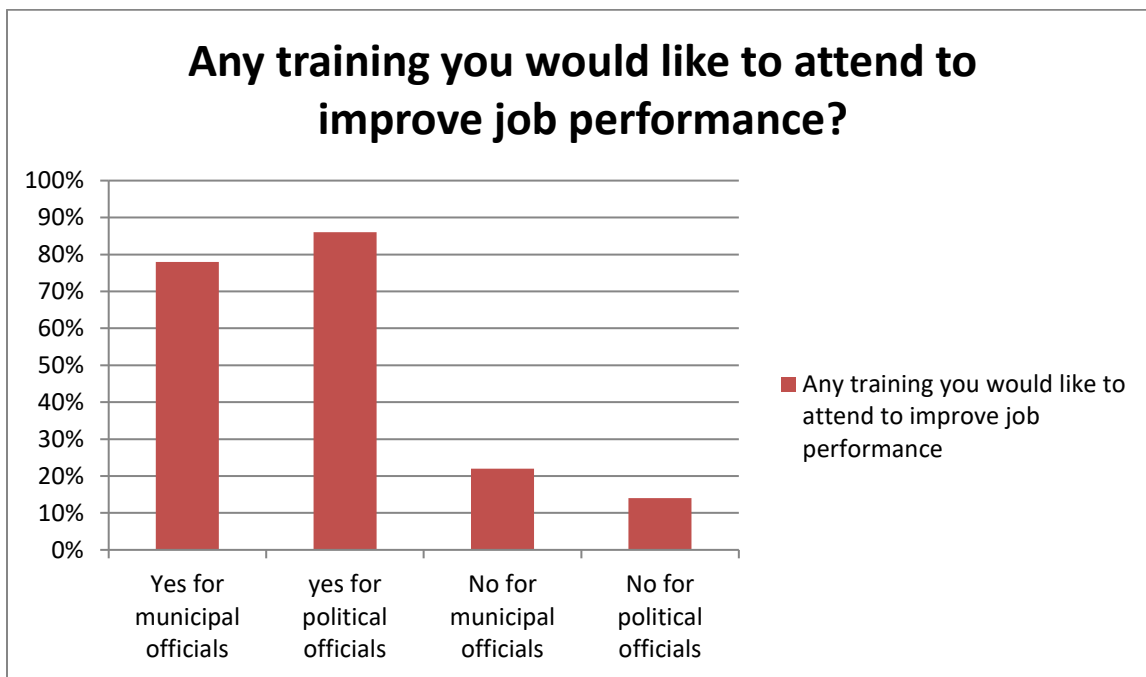
- *My role does not require financial management.*



***Figure 4.7: Financial training attended in the last 12 month***

Participants were asked whether they had attended any financial training intended for developing their financial capacity, in the last 12 months. Figure 4.7 above indicates that 77% of municipal office bearers have not attended any financial training. It was reported that their inability to attend any financial training was due to Covid-19. Municipal officials who were able to attend training were 23% and they reported that the Municipality paid for them to be trained. Officials were asked when last they received financial training, to which they responded that their last training was in the year 2019. Financial knowledge in an institution like a municipality is vital. With 77% of municipal officials without any financial training for the past 12 months, this may cause problems as far as financial management is concerned. It also causes difficulties overseeing finances and

taking decisions in line with legislations, such as the Municipal Finance Management Act (MFMA).



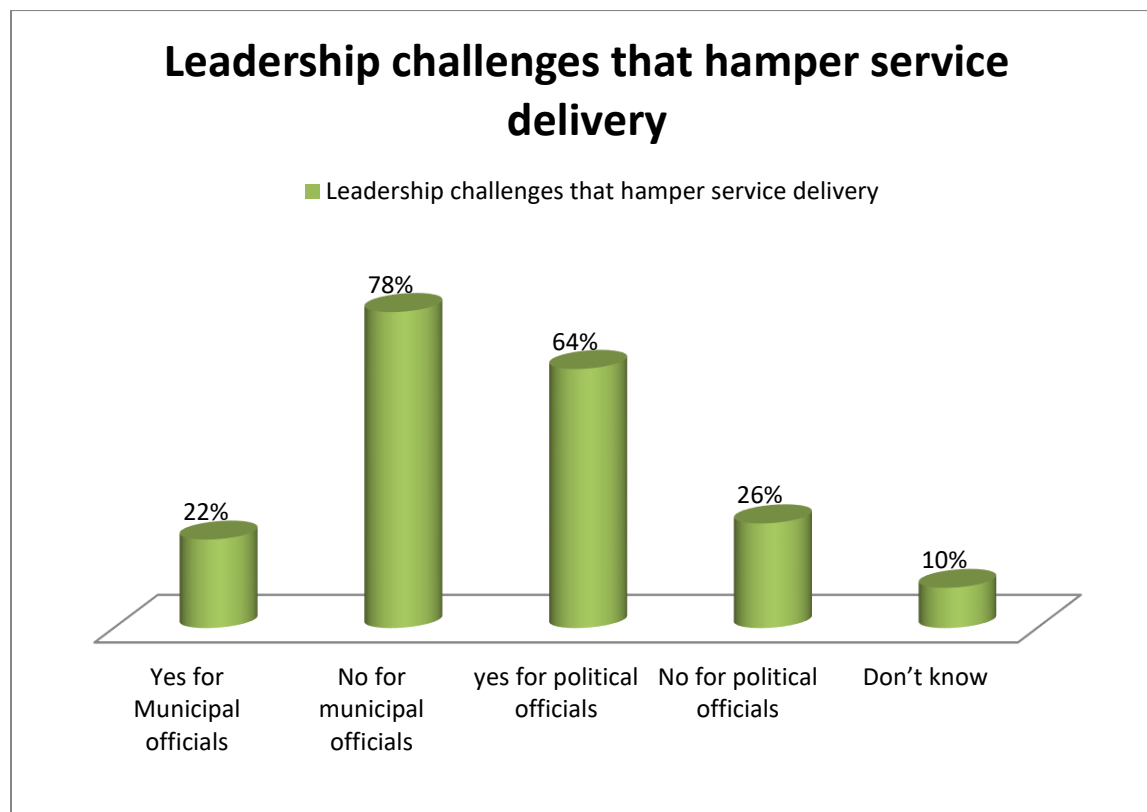
**Figure 4.8: Any training you would like to attend to improve job performance.**

Participants were asked if there are any other training programmes they would like to attend that would help them do their jobs better. Figure 4.8 indicates that 78% of municipal officials and 86% of political officials reported that there were training programmes they would like to attend while 22% of municipal officials and 14% of political officials stated that training was not necessary for them. Familiarization with Legislation, leadership and management, computer skills, record management, project management, governance, business management, and conflict management were among the training needs recognized by both municipal and political officials as pivotal to their jobs' success.



#### 4.4 leadership challenges in the municipality

This section will be presenting the findings on leadership challenges experienced in Thulamela Municipality.



**Figure 4.9: Leadership challenges that hamper service delivery.**

Participants were asked if in their views there are any leadership challenges that hamper service delivery within the municipality. Figure 4.9 shows that 22% of municipal official and 64% of political officials responded that there are some leadership challenges that affect service delivery. 78% of municipal officials and 26% of political officials indicated that the Municipality was doing well in the delivery of services to the public, however, some also reported that the situation within the Municipality was not entirely perfect but has minor challenges that can be addressed in time. The respondents who responded that the municipality has experienced leadership challenges stated the following reasons:

- *The municipality only delivers services to certain parts; this is a concern.*
- *There is poor monitoring and follow up on projects that are conducted through the process of tenders.*
- *The municipality received unqualified audit options for the 2019/20 financial year which indicated that there are challenges.*
- *The municipality failed to reach targets on basic service delivery and community service.*
- *Technical services were only at 62%*
- *The municipality could not reach their expected targets on Local Economic Development.*
- *Municipal financial viability and management is a problem.*
- *There is a decrease in performance of the Municipality from 66% of achieved targets in the 2018/18 financial year to 56% for the 2019/20 financial year.*
- *There is poor planning in the Municipality that is why there is poor delivery of services.*
- *Service delivery is expedited during election season to gain votes.*
- *The community needs that are submitted in the IDP are not prioritized and not delivered.*
- *Political interference*
- *Lack of skilled officials within the municipality*
- *Revenue collection is poor.*

These comments clearly indicate that there are leadership challenges that are affecting the provision of services within the municipality. The municipality has poorly performed on major items that are centered on service delivery to the public. The Municipality received an unqualified audit in the 2019/20 financial year, and this is an indication that the Municipality performed poorly, and they were irregularities in the management of finances and poor planning.

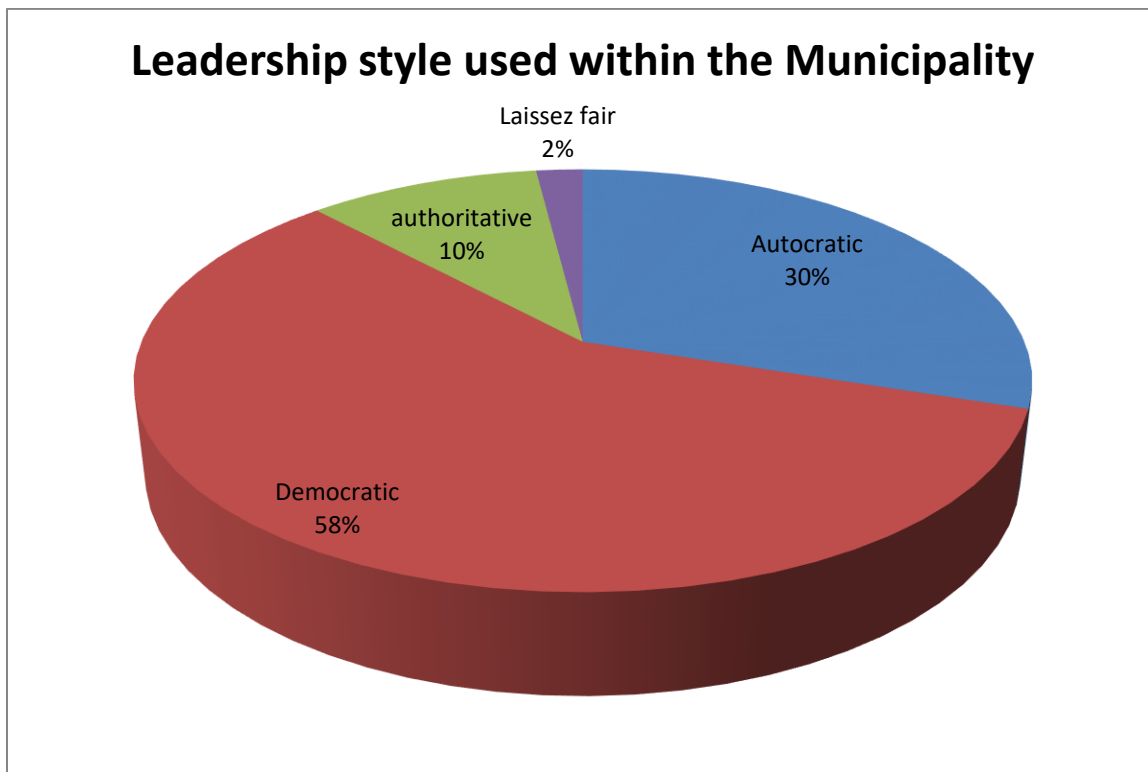


**Figure 4.10 Municipality addressing service delivery challenges**

The participants were asked whether the Thulamela Local Municipality is doing something to address service delivery challenges within the Municipality. Figure 4.10 above indicates that 85% of the municipal officials agree that the Municipality is doing well in addressing the challenges of service delivery; 15% of municipal officials however, indicated that the municipality is not doing well in addressing the challenges of service delivery. The Figure above also indicates that 64% of political officials believe that the municipality is doing well in addressing service delivery challenges, while 36% of political officials indicate that the municipality is not doing well in addressing service delivery challenges. Participants who responded by saying the municipality is not doing well in service delivery cited the following reasons:

- Many villages serviced by Thulamela Local Municipality do not have access to roads.
- Needs of communities are submitted in the IDP but remain unimplemented.

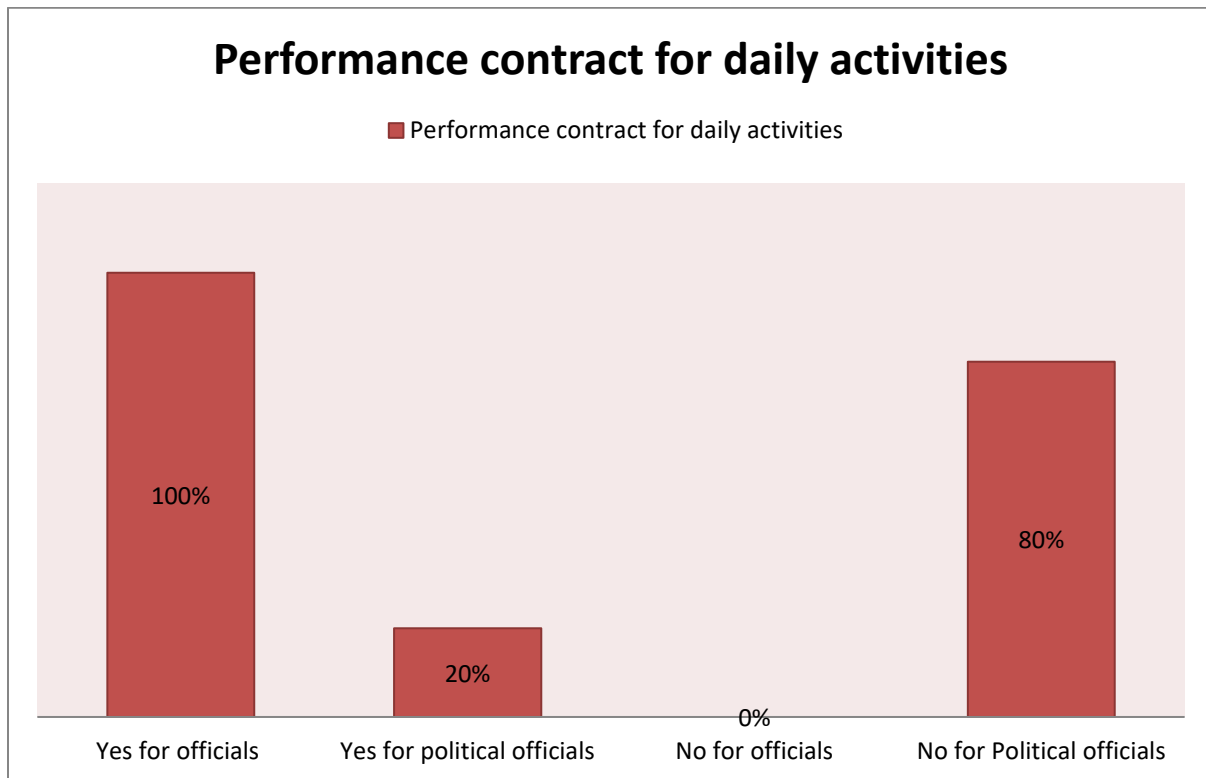
- *Thulamela Local Municipality is selective when delivering services. Certain parts receive more services as compared to other parts of the Municipality.*
- *The Municipality fails to monitor and make follow-ups on project implementation.*
- *Planning is poor in the municipality.*



***Pie chart 4.4: Leadership style used within the Municipality***

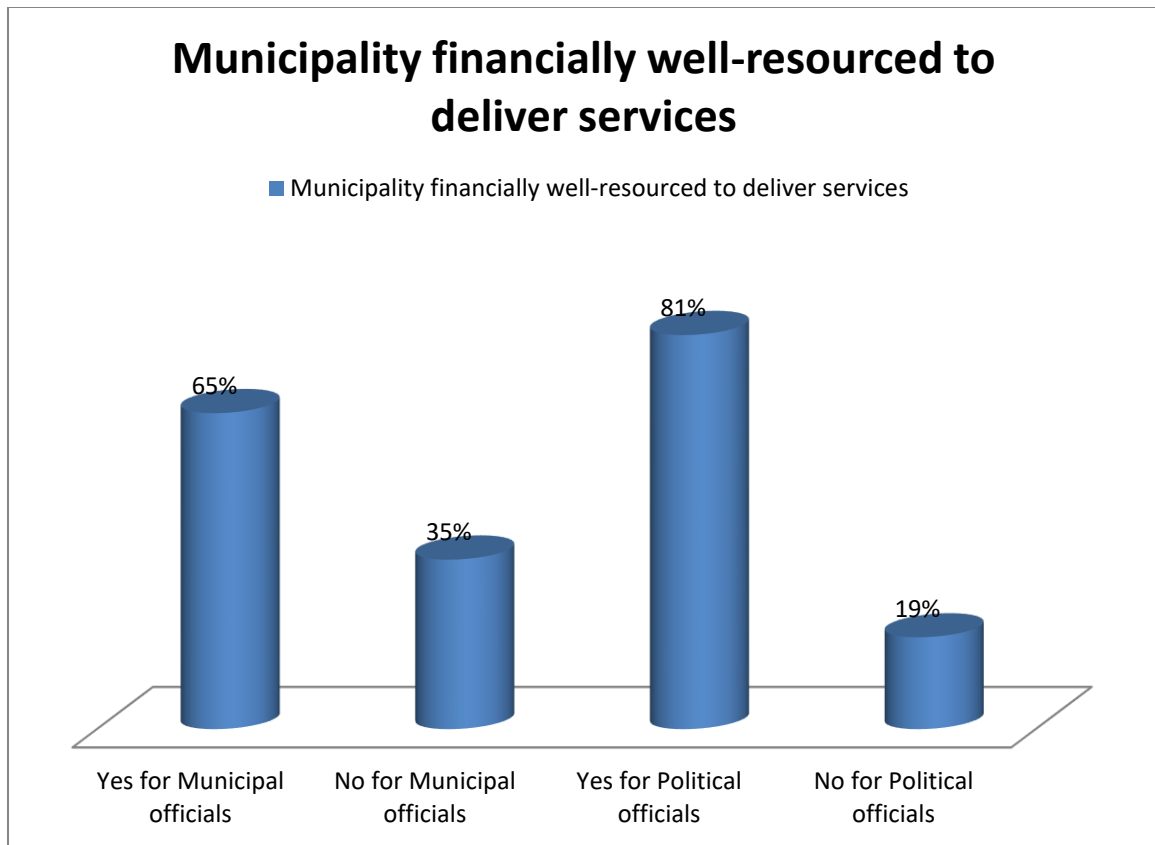
The pie chart above represents the leadership style used in Thulamela Local Municipality. Respondents were asked about the leadership style that is used within the Municipality. Pie chart 4.4 shows that democratic leadership style is the leadership style that is dominant within the municipality, however, one respondent stated, “*it is it important for people in leadership to do things by the book and to execute the power they have in order for things to be done*”. Majority of the respondents indicated that the Municipality as an organization that primarily focuses on providing services to the public, uses a democratic style of leadership. Respondents further affirmed that this is demonstrated through the involvement of various stakeholders, such as Municipal councilors, Civic members, community members and ward committee members, in decision making. 30% of the participants indicated that the Municipality uses autocratic style; 10%

indicated that authoritative leadership is also used in the municipality and the remaining 2% indicated that the laissez-faire style is used in the Municipality.



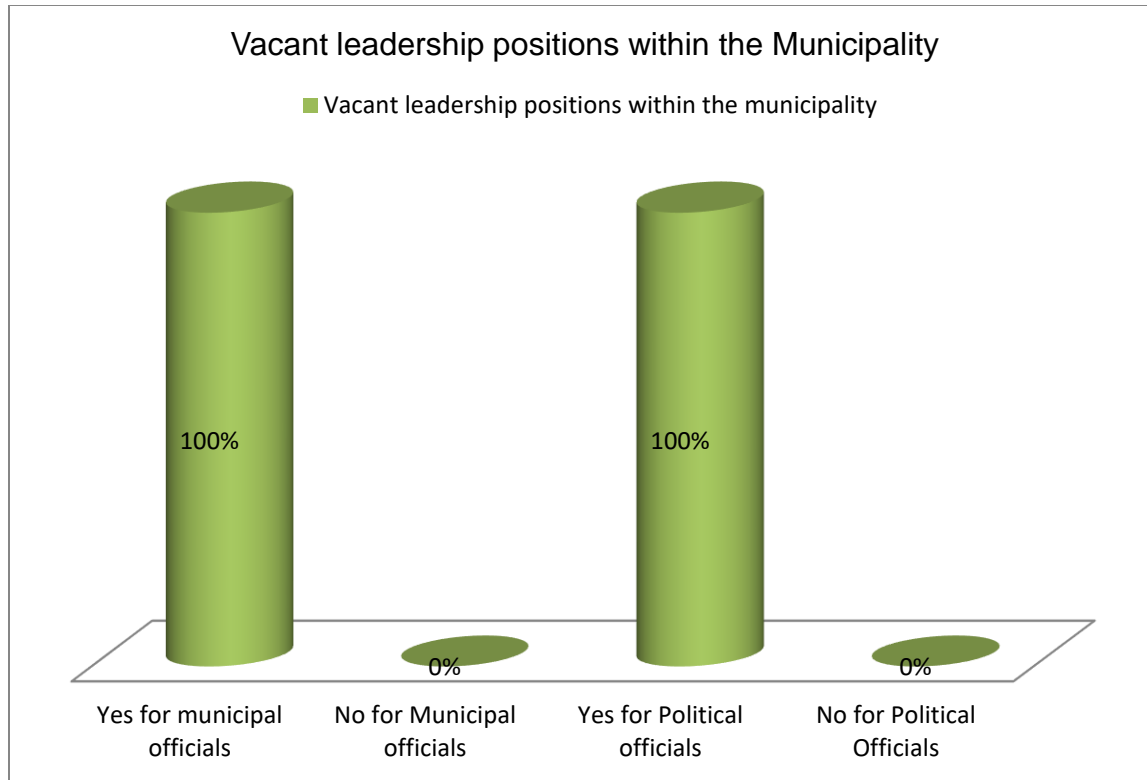
*Figure 4.11: Performance contract for daily activities*

The participants were asked whether they are expected to sign performance contract in their current position. Figure 4.11 presents that 100% of municipal officials interviewed in this study were expected to sign a performance contract in their jobs; these are officials who occupy director positions and the Municipal Manager. 20% of political officials reported that they are expected to sign a performance contracts which are renewed on an annual basis; 80% of political officials reported that they were not supported to sign a performance contract. Signing of a contract ensures and tracks individuals' performance of their duties.



***Figure 4.12: Municipality financially well-resourced to deliver services***

Participants in this study were asked whether Thulamela Municipality was financially well-resourced to provide services to the public. Figure 4.12 above presents that 65% of municipal officials and 81% of political officials agree that the municipality is financially well-resourced; 35% of municipal officials and 19% of political officials indicate that the Municipality is not financially well-resourced to carry out its mandate of delivering services to the public. Challenges reported included – under-collection of revenue because of a culture of non-payment of services by the public. The local sphere of government, such as municipalities requires finances to deliver services to the public. If they are not well financed, it causes a huge negative impact on service delivery. In the case of Thulamela Local Municipality, 19% indicated that the Municipality is not well financed, which would mean that service delivery might be compromised. Of the municipal officials (65%) and political officials (81%), however, indicated that the municipality is financially well resourced; implying it is able to provide basic services to its citizen.

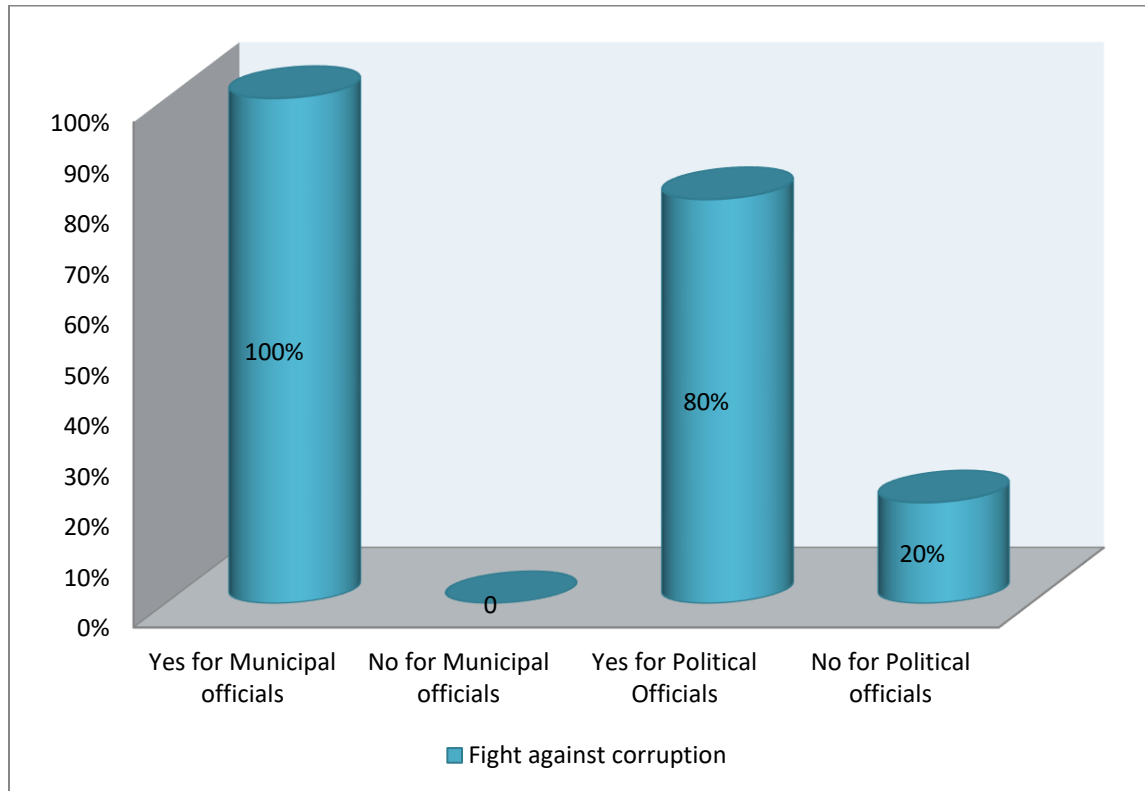


***Figure 4.13 Vacant leadership positions within the municipality***

The respondents were asked whether there were any vacant leadership positions that are of importance in the process of service delivery. Figure 4.13 above presents that 100% of municipal officials and 100% of political officials reported that there were vacant positions that should be filled. Planning, development and technical services' leadership positions were reported as vacant; other vacant positions included the following:

- Governance - 06 vacant positions
- Office of the municipal manager - 07 vacant positions
- Co-operative- 14 vacant positions
- Finance department- 09 vacant positions
- Planning and development -17 vacant positions
- Community services - 124 vacant positions
- Technical services-124 vacant positions.

#### 4.5 Strategies to improving leadership traits for effective service delivery

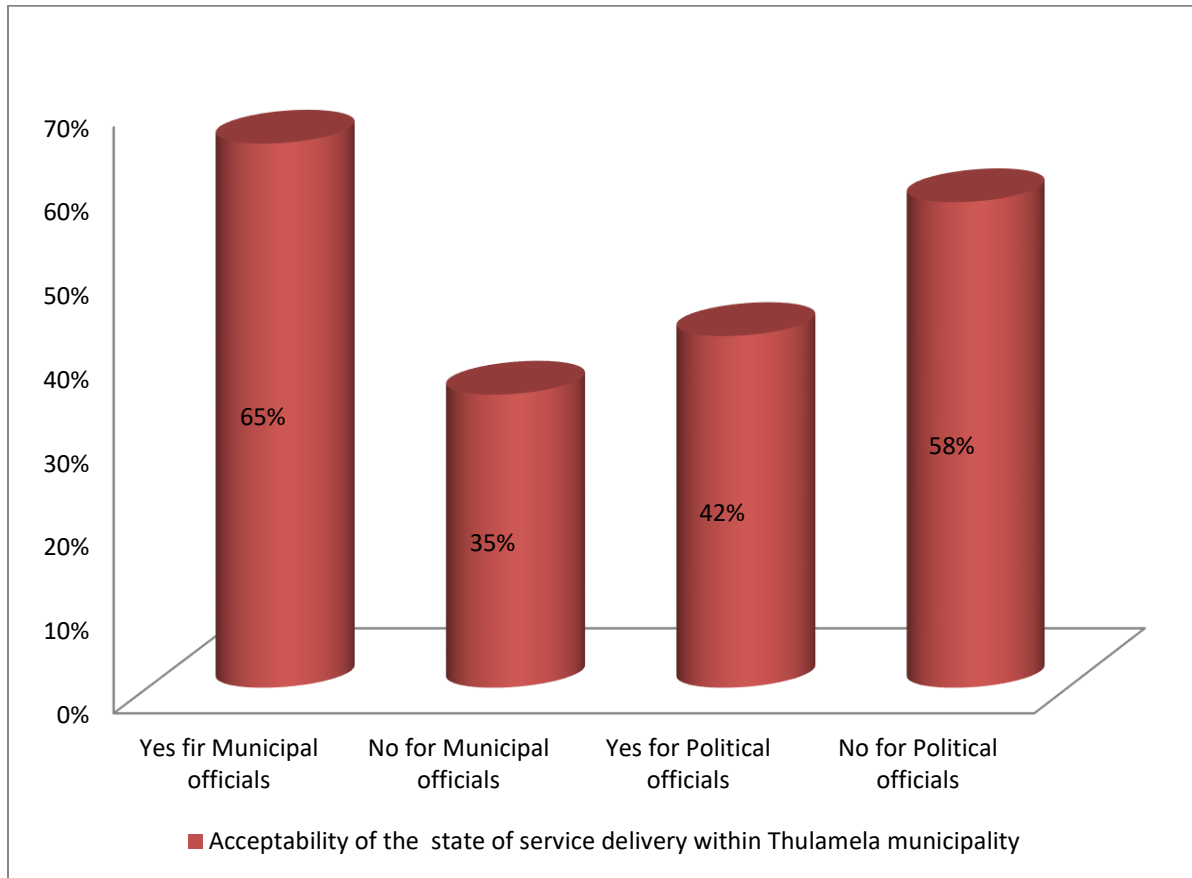


**Figure 4.14: Fight against corruption**

The participants were asked whether Thulamela Local municipality is doing enough to prevent and to fight against corruption. Figure 4.14 above presents that municipal officials in the municipality are doing their best to fight against corrupt activities as part of their management strategies. The Municipality was reported to have an anti-corruption strategy - a hotline that was launched by the District Municipality. The Municipality also has a risk strategy that has been developed and approved by Council; the unit was located in the office of the Municipal Manager to assist in fighting against corruption. 80% of political officials reported that the Municipality is doing enough to fight corruption, however, 20% reported that the Municipality needs to be more transparent in the process of awarding tenders and monitoring of projects. The respondents showed some concern about corruption. Leaders that are placed in high positions because of cadre deployment also contribute to corruption and respondents believe that if the ruling party continues deploying personnel, the fight against corruption will be continuous.



#### 4.6 The state of service delivery within Thulamela Municipality

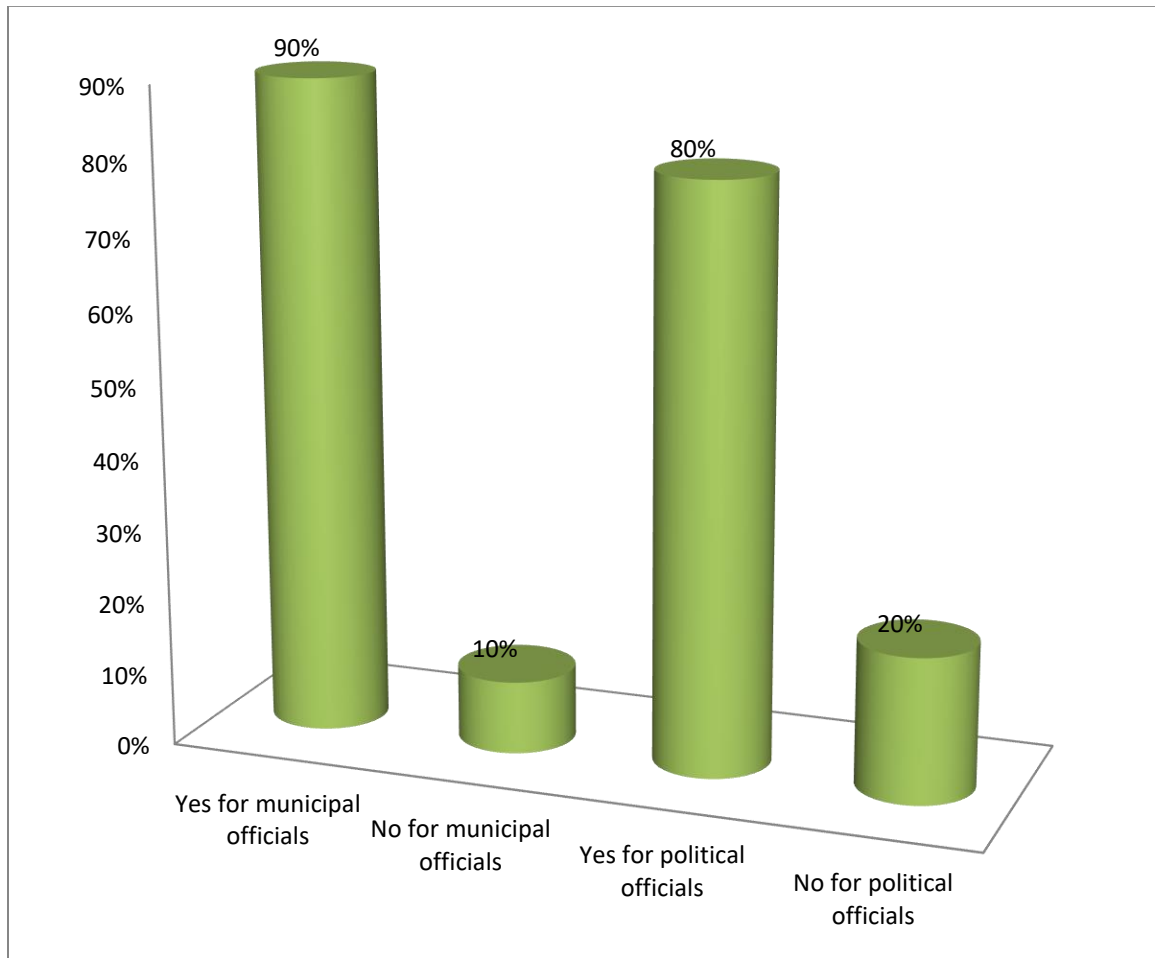


**Figure 4.15: The state of service delivery within Thulamela Local Municipality**

Participants were asked whether the state of service delivery in Thulamela Local municipality is acceptable. Figure 4.15 above shows that 65% of municipal officials and 42% of political officials believe that the level of service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality is acceptable; 35% of municipal officials and 58% political officials, however, believe that service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality still needs improvement. The participants added that the state of service delivery within Thulamela Local Municipality was not acceptable due to the following reasons:

- Poor roads and infrastructure
- Poor monitoring and evaluation of project implementation
- Many villages do not have adequate roads.

- Municipality only delivers services to selected areas.

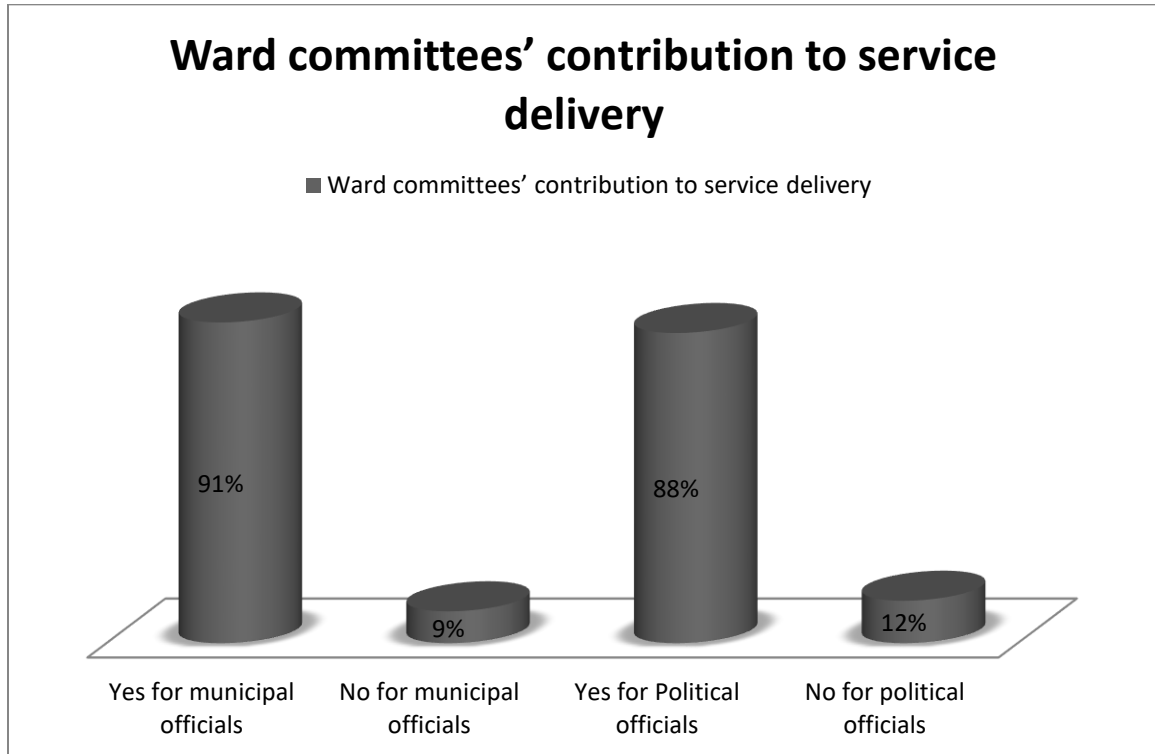


**Figure 4.16: Factors negatively affecting service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality**

Respondents were questioned about any issues within the municipality that affect the delivery of services to the people. Figure 4.16 indicates that 90% of municipal officials and 80% of political officials reported that there are several factors that hinder or that negatively affect service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality. 10% of municipal officials and 20% of political officials, however, stated that there were no factors that negatively affect delivery of service. Negative factors that were reported to be affecting service delivery were the following:

- Municipal land is used illegally,
- Late submission of required documents by communities,

- Communities do not comply with approved building plans.
- Traditional authorities and local structures invade land which has been proclaimed by the Municipality.
- Disputes regarding property and land ownership in proclaimed areas.
- Political interference in administrative matters.



***Figure 4.17: Ward committee's contribution to service delivery***

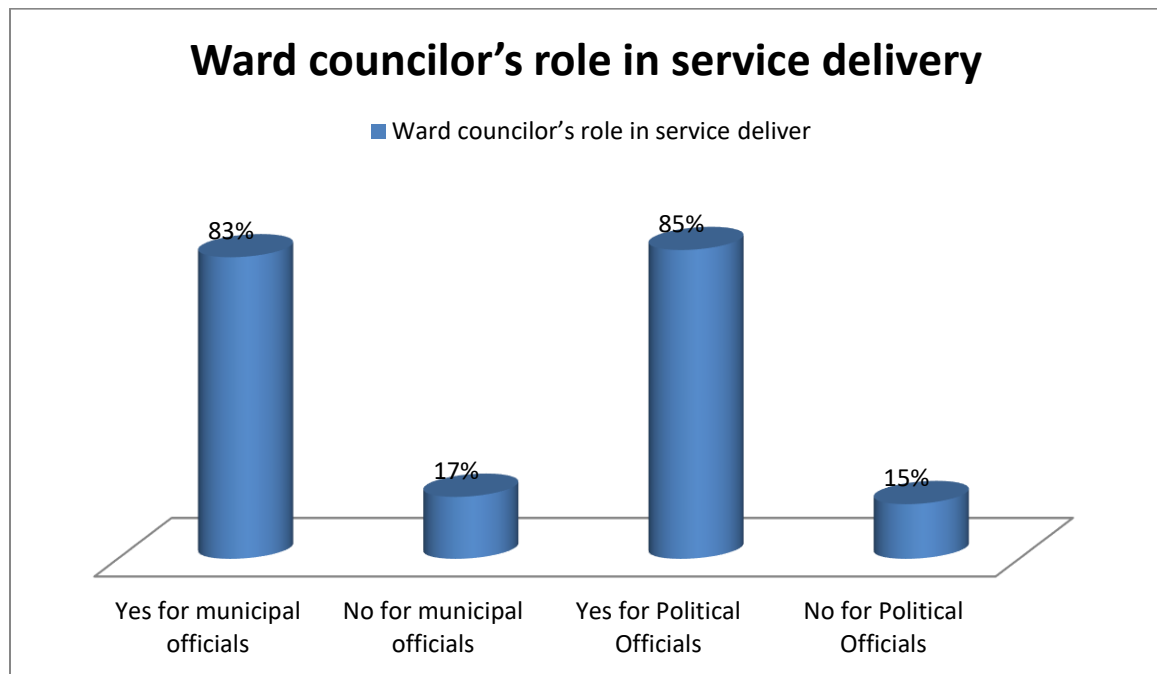
The researcher asked the participants whether the ward committee system makes any contribution to service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality. 91% of municipal officials and 88% of political officials reported that ward committees play a pivotal role in service delivery; 9% of municipal officials and 12% of political officials indicated that they contribute to service delivery but not all the time. The following reasons were provided in support of the point that ward committee's contribution in service delivery:

- Ward committees represent communities, and are responsible for enhancing communication amongst them.
- Ward committers assist the councilors to do their work.

- They are delegated to fulfil some duties of the councilors.
- They identify needs of the communities and compile reports that are vital in promoting the work of the Municipality.

There were also participants who stated that the ward committee system is unimportant based on the following reasons:

- They are only present for political reasons and awaiting to be councilors.
- Ward committees are just being manipulated for political gains.
- Municipalities cannot afford to pay them.



**Figure 4.18: Ward councilors' role in service delivery**

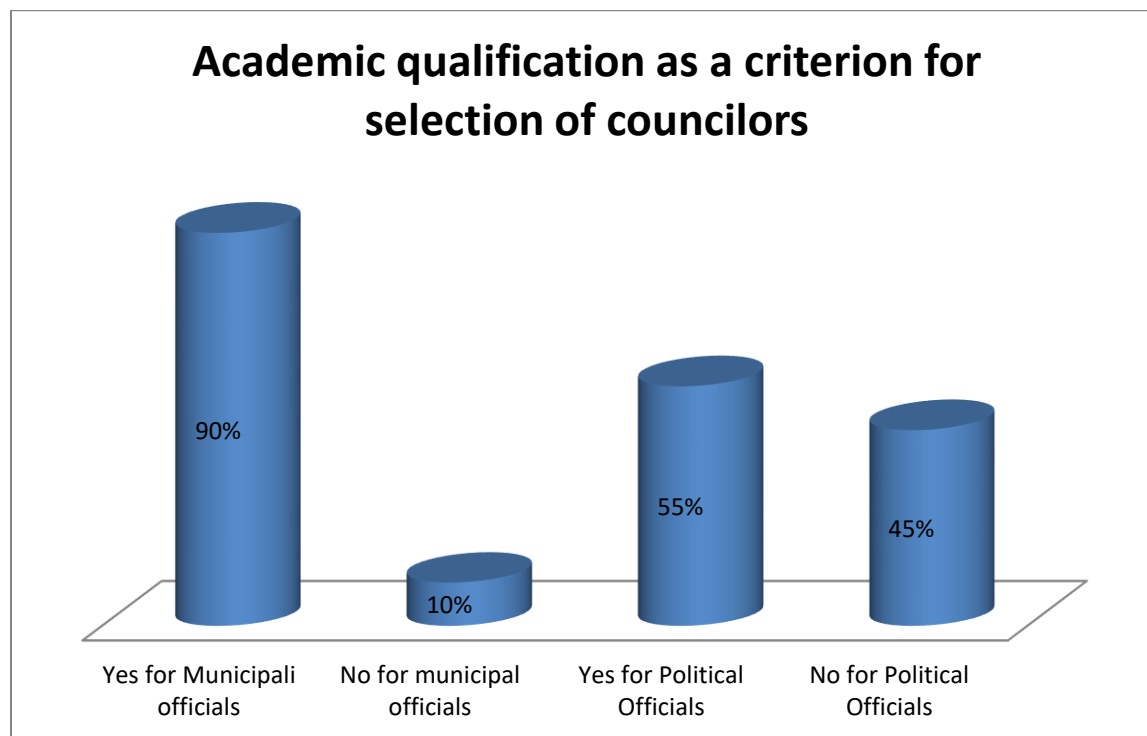
The researcher asked participants about their thoughts on councilors' importance in delivery of services to the public. Figure 4.18 indicates that 83% of municipal officials and 85% of political officials believe that ward councilors play a pivotal role in service delivery, while 17% of municipal officials and 15% of political officials contend that they do not play any important part

in Thulamela Local Municipality. Those who reported that councilors play an important part in service delivery stated the following reasons:

- Councilors work at the grass roots level for the municipality.
- They are considered as first contact to government services.

Participants who reported that councilors do not play an important role in the delivery of services stated the following reasons:

- Some councilors do not fully understand their jobs.
- Some councilors influence non-compliance in their wards.
- Councilors do not report back to their communities from fear of losing their political positions.
- They do not have power to influence delivery of service.
- The ruling party's branches influence the councilors on how they should conduct themselves.



*Figure 4.19: Academic qualifications as a selection criterion for councilors*

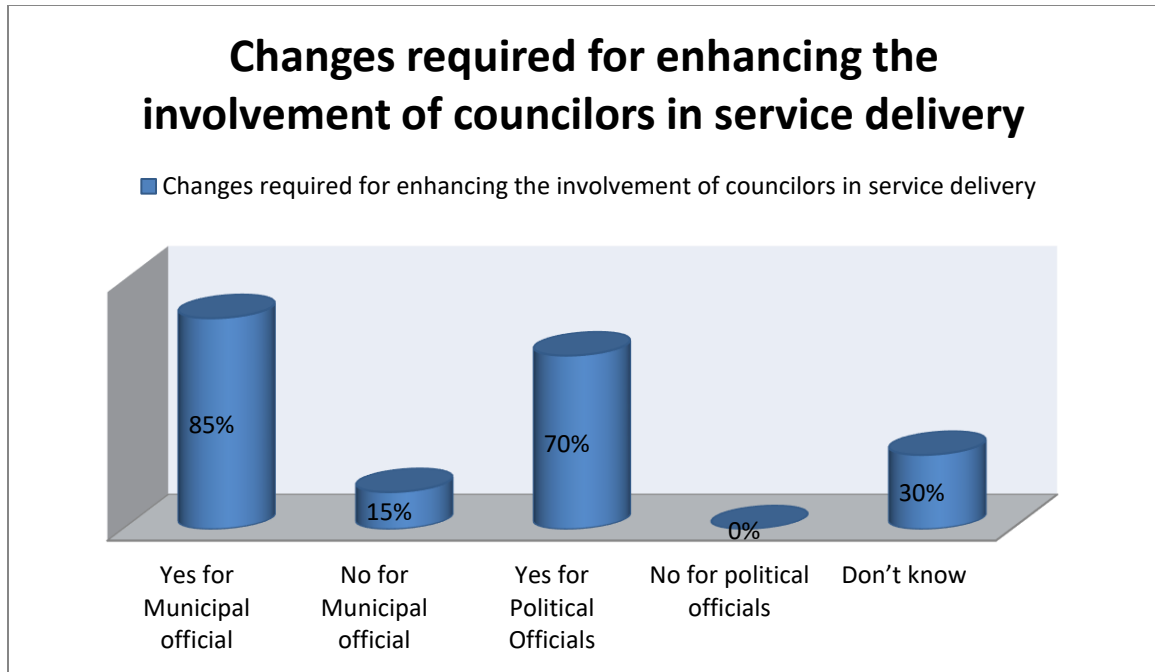
Participants were questioned about the need for formal academic qualifications as a prerequisite for selection of councilors. Figure 4.19 shows that 90% of municipal officials and 55% percent of political officials reported that academic qualification should be included as a prerequisite for selection of councilors, while 10% of municipal officials and 45% of political officials, however reported that academic qualification should not be taken into consideration when appointing councilors.

Participants who responded that academic qualifications should be considered gave the following reasons.

- Councilors needs to be educated to able to perform and execute their duties effectively.
- They need to be able to operate accordingly and to understand how the government works; these require knowledge and an academic background.
- Academic qualifications play a significant part in aiding political maturity of councilors.
- To understand policies, budgets and strategies for implementing service delivery requires knowledge gathered from academic institutions.

Participants who opposed the need for councilors to have academic qualifications provided the following reasons:

- For a councilor to be able to function in communities, they only need confidence and general knowledge.
- Academic qualification has nothing to do with service delivery.
- Majority of government officials have always been performing to the expected standards without any formal education.
- Councilors only need to be well-known and well-respected in their communities to execute their duties.

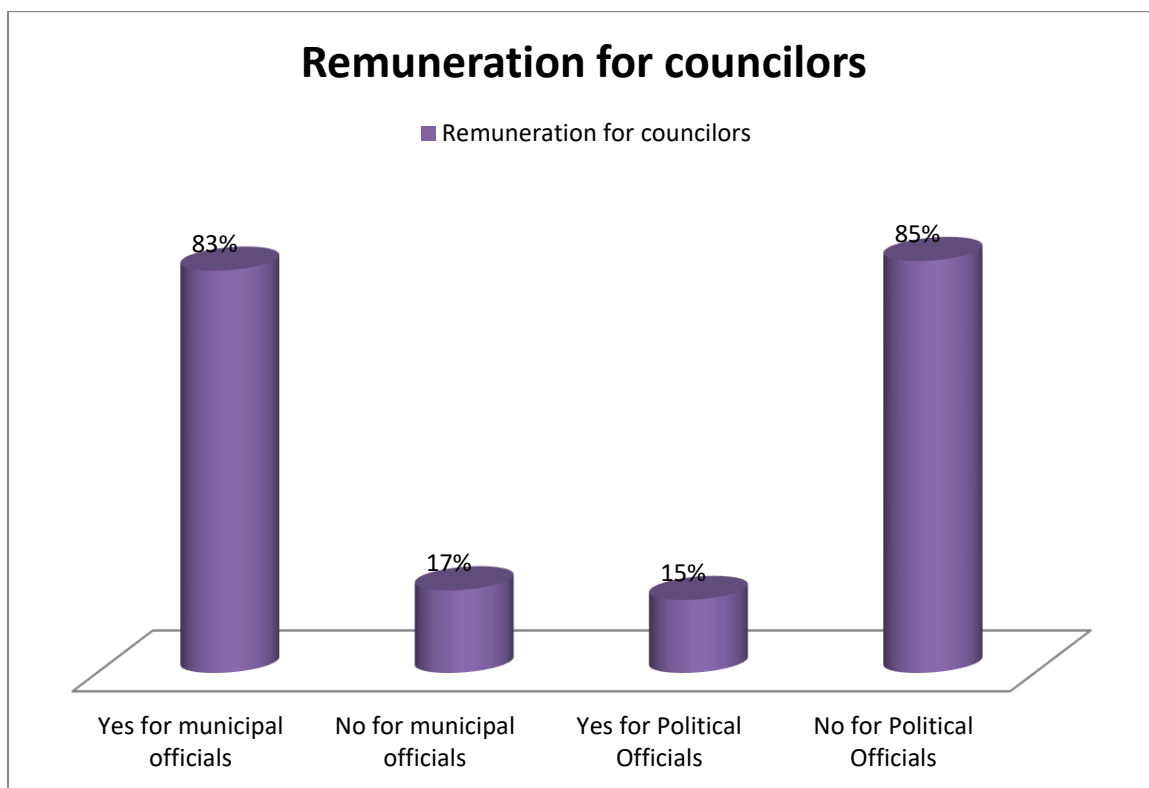


***Figure 4.20 Changes required for enhancing the involvement of councilors in service delivery***

The researcher asked the respondents if they thought there should be some changes to enhance the involvement of councilors in service delivery. Figure 4.20 above presents that 85% of municipal officials and 70% of political officials believe that changes are required for the purpose of enhancing councilors' role in service delivery. Respondents proposed the following changes:

- They should have academic qualifications, or they should receive relevant training.
- Councilors should be given support through providing them with a secretary.

Respondents were adamant that there should be cooperation between political office bearers and councilors and that communities should be given the power and authority to recall councilors who do not represent their interests well. These proposed changes seem valid because people appointed to be councilors are supposed to fulfil certain duties and tasks within the municipality, hence, they need to have qualifications that informs them on how they are supposed to conduct themselves. Another point that is valuable is that political officials, although they are elected to be in service, should work as a team and in collaboration with communities for the purpose of effective service delivery.



**Figure 4.21: Remuneration for councilors**

The researcher asked the respondents whether they thought councilors are remunerated adequately for their role in service delivery. Figure 4.21 above presents that 83% of municipal officials and 85% of political officials are of the view that councilors are remunerated well. On the other hand, 17% of municipal officials and 15% of political officials stated that they are not remunerated adequately and they should get an increase. Participants who agree that councilor are well remunerated gave the following reasons:

*Participant A: “councilors receive sufficient salary and they are also given allowances to further support their financial needs”*

*Participant B: “Councilors are fairly paid looking at their contribution”*

Participants who reported that councilors are not fairly paid gave the following reasons:

*Participant C: Councilors end up getting involved in scandals with money because they are not fairly paid.*



Participant D: *Councilors do work too much, and their work-load does not match the remuneration.*

Participant E: *The formula that is applied in determining the salary for councilors is unfair; councilors in rural communities are not remunerated well.*

It is clear that councilors are of importance in service delivery and, although some respondents stated that councilors are fairly remunerated, majority of the respondents are of the view that they are not fairly paid. Councilors are appointed into positions of leadership by the organizations which they represent and are expected to serve for a particular term. During their term, they develop their own plans and strategies and when they leave, someone new gets elected. The new person, however, does not continue where they last one ended, hence, there is hardly a smooth transition. Another challenge manifests itself in the form of councilor's being involved in corruption through receiving kickback because they are poor remunerated. This is evident in what the respondents presented. Respondents reported that councilors end up getting involved in scandals for money. Respondents believe councilors work very hard and their work-load does not match the remuneration; this is because the formula that is applied in determining the salary for councilors is unfair.

Data was also collected from political officials on questions that were mostly applicable to them; this was transcribed and grouped into themes. The results showed that poor leadership and management play a role in poor service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality. The themes were developed from what the respondents presented. The respondents reported that the ANC deploys cadres without knowledge and skills to join the Municipality; this negatively affects municipal operations. Other participants pointed out that there is political interference also in the administrative functions of the municipality.

#### **4.7 Political interference**

Political interference has a negative impact on government organizations and is equivalent to abuse of power. The abuse of power by politicians has consequence on municipalities, particularly, on the process of service delivery. This is a challenge that also impacts Thulamela Municipality and hampers service delivery as unqualified candidates, with no knowledge and skills are deployed in executive positions. A respondents said *“the ANC deploys cadres to join the municipality without knowledge and skills and this negatively affects municipal operations”*; another respondent stated *“politics influence how people think. People are out in power to fill positions because they are popular and have majority of supported.”*

#### **4.8 Service delivery**

Service delivery in Thulamela Local municipality is faced with various obstacles that contribute to poor delivery. Participants were asked about their thought on service delivery. Figure 4.15 shows that majority of respondents thought that the municipality was not doing well in service delivery; this shows that the Municipality has challenges in delivering services to its citizen. One of the major service delivery challenges identified, is the high number of vacancies in strategic positions within the municipality. The municipality cannot function effectively with these positions remaining vacant.

#### **4.9 Leadership style**

To achieve organizational success, there should be effective leadership and management. The fundamental role of effective leadership and management is to drive the transformation of municipalities so that they will represent the public’s interest. It is, therefore, essential for effective leadership to be developed. Participants were asked about the style of leadership mainly used in Thulamela Local Municipality. One councilor stated, *“South Africa is a democratic state governed by democracy, therefore, it is important that municipalities demonstrate a democratic leadership style that takes into consideration the views of everybody”*. Another participant stated, *“It is important for municipal managers, councilors, mayors and directors to exercise their power as it shows good leadership with authority.”* The leadership style used within the municipalities plays a vital role in both officials’ people management and also their performance. Effective leadership

is the most critical and most influential element that contributes to effective service delivery. Thulamela Local Municipality uses a democratic leadership style which involves people in decision-making. This leadership style has several benefits, however, it also delays progress; usually, this style is beneficial, if good decisions are being made. This style of leadership also favors the political party in power who are in the majority, however, and in some cases, decisions are taken as ways of protecting the ruling party, rather than placing the interest of the public at the forefront.

#### **4.10 Conclusion**

This chapter dealt with the presentation and analysis of the data obtained from the participants. It is evident from the data presented that Thulamela Local Municipality has several challenges that affect the provision of effective service delivery. One of the major objectives that the study aimed to achieve was to examine leadership qualities within Thulamela Local Municipality. It is evident from the data obtained that, there is gender inequality in terms of leadership roles as 78% of individuals in leadership positions are males and only 22% are females. Another factor that the study discovered was that the level of education of both the municipal officials and political officials is very low. Individuals within the Municipality, therefore, occupy high leadership positions with minimum levels of qualifications; this causes challenges in service delivery.

The study also aimed at investigating leadership challenges within Thulamela Local Municipality. Cadre development was an identified factor creating challenges within Thulamela Local Municipality. It is evident that local governments across the Republic of South Africa are in dire need of competent personnel with the relevant knowledge and skills, hence, appointment of capable employees remains a challenge. This is reinforced by Bwowe (2019) who remarked that hiring of incompetent and unskilled personnel to fill leadership positions within the municipality leads to poor results. Another challenge that was identified was that within Thulamela Local Municipality, there is a high number of essential positions that remain vacant; this compromises effective service delivery.

Van der Westhuizen (2016) reiterates that the lack of efficient human personnel responsible for prominent positions within public administration harms the effectiveness of services delivered by the local government. The study also aimed at determining the leadership style used or adopted within Thulamela Local Municipality. From the data obtained, it was clear that the leadership style adopted within the municipality is the democratic leadership style. Responses suggest that Thulamela Local Municipality functions within the objectives set out in the constitution - that local government is to provide a democratic and accountable government for local communities. Northouse (2013) also stipulates that the main advantage of a democratic leadership style is that it encourages participation. Thulamela Local Municipality also abides by chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 which emphasizes the importance of public participation. Democratic leadership also allows for more viewpoints which leads to efficient problem-solving (Northouse (2013). Lastly, democratic leadership increases job satisfaction, increases morale and provides an opportunity for anyone to participate (Khajeh 2018).

The last objective of this study was to recommend a leadership framework which would improve leadership and service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality. The respondents reported that the municipality adopts a democratic leadership framework, however, there are other frameworks that can be implemented in municipalities that can yield positive results. The Strategic leadership framework was identified as a suitable framework that can be applied within the Thulamela Local Municipality context. This is a framework that is multidimensional and characterized by unique features (Northouse 2013). This framework takes into consideration factors, such as gender equality, which in this study was not visible amongst the officials in leadership positions. This framework is also sensitivity to culture, political, socio-economic and ethnic difference (Northouse 2013). The strategic leadership framework utilizes both transformational and managerial leadership styles, hence, suggesting that transformational leadership and managerial leadership can co-exist within municipalities and produce positive results (Naidoo, 2010).

This chapter also presented the collected data's analysis and interpretation. The information revealed that there are management and leadership challenges that are affecting the delivery of service by the Thulamela Local Municipality and attempted to justify Thulamela Local Municipality's service delivery concerns. These challenges are controllable, however, there are some challenges that are out of the Municipality's control. Challenges that can be managed include effective planning and also budgeting, however, those beyond the municipalities control include cadre deployment of unqualified personnel into strategic possessions and also political interference in administrative tasks. The respondents highlighted their understanding and views on leadership styles, the importance of training for their specific tasks, service delivery challenges and also the factors that negatively affect service delivery within the municipality. The next chapter focuses on the discussion of the study findings; recommendations and conclusions from the study will also be made.

## CHAPTER 5

### FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

#### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings, and recommendations, both for stakeholders and for future researchers with an interest in leadership, in municipalities. The chapter ends with the overall conclusion of the study.

#### 5.2 Suitable skills and knowledge for municipal and political officials

This study examined the ability of people in leadership positions to perform their work to the best of their abilities and within the parameters of the relevant legislation. To effectively perform their jobs, employees in the municipalities need to possess the necessary skills and knowledge with regard to planning, implementing, and evaluating services. It is essential for cities to have competent employees who are capable of planning, organizing, leading, controlling, and managing staff. The researcher is of the view that there is a need to focus on suitable skills and capabilities in the municipalities for the purpose of uncovering whether cadre deployment was useful in municipalities for the performance of their primary mandate. The researcher questions the education background of the people who took part in the study. The study revealed that some municipal officials possess formal qualification such as degrees and diplomas, unfortunately, majority of political officials do not have the required formal education, but they still occupy leadership positions.

#### 5.3 Major findings of the study

The study discovered through the literature that poor leadership leads to poor governance and poor service delivery in municipalities and that appropriate skills and knowledge are leadership qualities that an effective leader should possess. The literature offered that lack of necessary skills to execute certain tasks leads to failure of service delivery. The literature also outlined the leadership theories

and the characteristics of a successful leader. From the data presented in chapter four, it was highlighted that gender, education level, previous employment history, financial knowledge and training are significant components in leadership. These findings were gathered from the sample of participants who were interviewed in this study. The deployment of personnel into key strategic positions with limited knowledge and skills has a negative impact on municipalities' mandate to deliver service to the public. Majority of councilors and other officials had little formal education yet are still in positions of power. Other revelations of the study included lack of skilled personnel in technical fields. The study also revealed that there are various challenges that are negatively affecting service delivery - municipal land being used illegally, non-compliance by communities on building plans and also political interference. From the interviews that were conducted with municipal officials and political officials, findings revealed the importance of financial training as 93% of participants agreed that they should be trained on issues pertaining to finances as it contributes to them conducting their work professionally.

The study also discovered that there is lack of skilled and competent qualified personnel in other positions of power. The leadership capacity of both municipal and political officials needs strengthening through training in leadership and financial skills. Respondents complained that the Municipality delivers services to only certain parts of the communities and this is a cause of concern. Poor monitoring and following up on projects that are implemented by tenders and the decrease in performance of the Municipality as compared to the 2018/19 financial year were among the discoveries of the study. The Municipality primarily operates through a democratic leadership style, although, sometimes an autocratic leadership is practiced; this has a positive impact on the Municipal's operations.

### **5.3.1 The connection between leadership, management and service delivery**

It is critical for any organization to be led and managed by skilled professionals to accomplish organizational goals. The quality of leadership and management affects the future and the success of any institution. For many years, local government has faced challenges. In his 2018 State of the Nation address, President Cyril Ramaphosa cited political instability and weak governance as the two foremost reasons for poor service delivery (Ramaphosa, 2018). Poor leadership and

management play influential roles in political instability and inefficient governance, hence, these should be strengthened.

Identification of leadership factors in Thulamela Local Municipality that hinder service delivery was the focus of this study. The research looked at leadership capacity, leadership roles and management practices in Thulamela Local Municipality. Through building of capacity for institutions' structures, a capable leadership team can ensure those structures fulfill their roles. Municipal personnel seem to possess the necessary skills on the administrative side, but the political officials do not seem to be as strong as is required. Councilors do not have a formal administrative role, however, they have considerable influence over how officials perform as municipalities receive approval from councilors for their budgets and plans. Based on the results of this study, some councilors are lacking in formal academic education, which can affect their ability to offer reasoned decisions in Thulamela Local Municipality.

In addition to planning, leadership and management play major roles in municipal governance. Lack of effort in planning service delivery contribute to the challenges facing this municipality. If leadership and management had been good, different planning methods could have been explored. In this municipality, doing the same thing and expecting a different outcome seems to be a common practice. In addition to poor municipal leadership, it seems poor district leadership also exists in this municipality. There could be a proper strategy put in place, to turn around the situation in this Municipality with good leadership from the District and Province.

### **5.3.2 Councilors and leadership in service delivery**

Local government councils play a significant role in facilitating service delivery, therefore, having appropriate leadership skills and qualities is crucial for them to perform their duties effectively. They will be able to navigate their way through this complicated political and legislative environment if they have skills and leadership qualities. As shown in this study, education may influence how well they are able to navigate their way. In this case, it can be concluded that some councilors in this Municipality are unsuitable for this crucial role and that has a direct impact on the daily welfare of the citizens. Education will continue to be a limiting factor in service delivery as long as it is not made a requirement for appointment of candidates.



Another area examined was the change of political leadership. Approximately 65% of councilors had been in office no longer than five years. We can conclude, thus, that there is also no continuity in terms of political leadership. Changing councilors every five years may erode the institutional memory, and the political officials will always be learning how to do their jobs more efficiently. In Thulamela Local Municipality, lack of continuity at the highest levels (administrative and political) takes a toll on service delivery.

### **5.3.3 Municipal officials, leadership and management in service delivery**

For local government to be effective, it requires competent officials who possess appropriate skills and competencies to manage and lead. In this study, officials holding leadership positions in the municipality were part of the participants. These officials are directly involved in day-to-day service delivery. In the results, municipal officials with relevant academic qualifications are available to facilitate service delivery. A conclusion may be that senior management officials have the required skills to do their jobs, however, attrition at these levels may negatively impact the continuity of service. Senior managers in local government often face contract renewal after five years from changes in government leadership. Local government's officials usually have five-year contracts, making senior managers vulnerable to contract renewals. Governments need stability, so it may be beneficial for senior management officials if their contracts are for longer periods.

### **5.3.4 Ward committees and leadership in service delivery**

The purpose of ward committees is to facilitate public involvement in local government. When councilors lead ward committees, they can play an important role by connecting the community with local government. The purpose of ward committees is to serve as foot soldiers for the Municipality. The need for accurate information and an attentive municipality makes ward committees effective as they attend to this need. The majority of officials and councilors reported that the Municipality takes ward councilors seriously, however, the majority disagreed. In light of the findings of this study, the Municipality seems not to be doing enough in ensuring that ward committees fulfil their legislative mandate in the delivery of services. It is difficult for ward committees to effectively perform their duties due to poor monitoring, lack of tools, and the Municipal's lack of responsiveness to community needs; also due to them not reporting back to

their communities, ward committees are rendered redundant. In the current service delivery model, funds are not allocated directly to ward committees, rendering their roles questionable. In this context, ward committees will find it difficult to improve their leadership capacity.

#### **5.4 Recommendations from the study**

This section proposes recommendations based on the study findings on leadership qualities affecting Thulamela Local Municipality. These recommendations are made taking into consideration the objectives of the study and also the study results.

##### **5.4.1 Leadership challenges faced by Thulamela Local Municipality**

It is clear that municipalities need to adopt a leadership framework necessary to address challenges that hamper service delivery. The following recommendations are suggested by the researcher on leadership challenges that the municipality is facing. The researcher recommends a skills development programme to be conducted annually for all officials who are involved in financial matters and leadership roles. Political interference and cadre deployment were among the challenges observed in Thulamela Local Municipality. The researcher recommends that a study on the ANC's policy on cadre deployment be conducted with the purpose of uncovering whether the policy is effective or not for municipalities and other leadership positions in government.

##### **5.4.2 Leadership style and framework used in Thulamela Local Municipality**

The researcher suggests that Thulamela Local Municipality consider adopting a hybrid approach to leadership. By definition, a hybrid approach is a framework made up of many facets, dimensions, perspectives, approaches, and strategies; culture, gender, religion, ethnic origin, and socioeconomic and political differences are taken into account in this framework. Divergent perspectives, approaches, and sensitivities are incorporated and developed so that the full potential of public servants and public service institutions can be utilized to the fullest extent with this framework. Improving service delivery requires both leadership and governance input. Traditional African values, transformational leadership, and team leadership are also integrated into this model. Civic governance is a good example of an effective governance approach towards public

service delivery. In a hybrid approach, quality leadership within the municipality is developed in the main interest of the municipality; such an approach would combine charismatic leadership with democratic principles. A leader who is charismatic is creative, respected and trusted by others. Democratic leadership engages everyone in decision making and it also creates a platform where public participation can take place. If the municipality is to address their challenges, this approach is recommended.

#### **5.4.3. The state of service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality in relation to illegal land occupation**

The state of service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality is compromised by several challenges, such as land being occupied illegally, political interference, and non-compliance by community members on building plans, late submission of the required documents and traditional authorities invading land which had been proclaimed by the municipality. The researcher recommends that the Municipality should formulate a task team to respond to these challenges following proper legal channels. The Municipality should also involve the provincial sphere of government to assist in addressing these challenges; it should draft a public land policy that would address illegal land invasion and non-compliance. The policy should be enforced, and legal action should be taken against those who do not comply.

#### **5.5 Recommendations for future studies**

The researcher focused on describing leadership qualities that affect service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality. A study by future researchers can be conducted that aims to investigate, comprehensively, the contributing factors to ineffective leadership and poor governance in municipalities. Such a study needs to explore the gaps between effective governance and corruption in the public service. The researcher also recommends a comparative study to be conducted between Thulamela Local Municipality and Makhado Local Municipality, to ascertain the leadership qualities that affect service delivery in these two municipalities. In this study, the researchers will be able to compare what the other municipality is doing that works and what does not work in leadership and administration in municipalities.

## 5.6 Conclusion

This chapter focused on a discussion of the study findings, recommendations and conclusion. An outline of the suitable skills and knowledge required in leadership roles was discussed. The chapter also provided a discussion on the major findings of the study. Recommendations were suggested for leadership within Thulamela Local Municipality. The study carried out its investigations through interviewing municipal officials, political officials and other stakeholders within the Municipality; respondents, such as the civic and the local chiefs were classified under the umbrella of political officials. The chapter further outlined the importance of leadership in local government, the state of service delivery in municipalities and a leadership framework that can be applied in municipalities.

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GENERAL INFORMATION

Interview date	
Number of respondents:	
Time:	

SECTION A BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

(Please tick where applicable)		
GENDER	MALE	FEMALE
	20-35	20-35
	36	37+
HIGHEST QUALIFICATION	Below Grade 12	Grade 12 only
	Tertiary Certificate	Diploma
Position		
Number of years in position		
Previous employment		

**APPENDIX 2: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS.**

How long have you been working/serving under Thulamela Local Municipality?

.....

.....

.....



Are you happy working/serving under Thulamela Local Municipality? Please motivate your response.

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Have you been trained in financial management before you took this role?

Yes	No
-----	----

Do you think training in financial management is necessary in your current role? Please motivate your answer.

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

In the last 12 months, have you attended a training aimed at developing your capacity to do your work? If yes, who paid for the training?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

Is there any training you would like to attend which in your view will improve your job performance? If yes, please describe the course.

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

In your opinion, what is the state of leadership and service delivery in Thulamela Municipality?

.....  
.....  
.....



What are your thoughts about the leadership styles and attributes followed at Thulamela Local Municipality?

.....  
.....  
.....  
.....

Do you think they are effective for the development and growth of the leadership practiced at Thulamela Local Municipality?

.....  
.....  
.....

In your view, does the municipality have leadership challenges that hamper service delivery?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....  
.....  
.....

In your view, is the municipality doing enough to address these challenges? Please motivate your response.

Yes	No
-----	----

.....  
.....

Based on the experience, what challenges have you come across while serving under the Municipality?

.....  
.....  
.....

Would you say those challenges have been addressed or that they are in the process of being addressed?

.....  
.....  
.....

Autocratic	Democratic	Authoritative	Laissez fair
------------	------------	---------------	--------------

Do people in leadership positions sign a performance contract that informs them of their daily activities?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

In your view, is the municipality financially well-resourced to deliver services?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

Are there any vacant leadership positions within the municipality that are of significance?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

Are political and municipal office bearers doing enough to prevent or fight against corruption within the municipality?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

Is the state of service delivery within Thulamela Municipality acceptable?

Yes	No
-----	----

.....

Are there some factors that negatively affect service delivery in this Municipality?

If yes, please describe the factors.

.....

.....

In your view, does the municipality take the ward committees' contribution to service delivery seriously?

.....  
.....  
Are ward councillors in this municipality playing a significant role in service delivery?  
.....  
.....

Do you think academic qualification should be part of the selection criteria for councillors?  
.....  
.....

Do you think some changes are required to enhance the involvement of councillors in service delivery?  
.....  
.....  
.....

Based on your knowledge of the role of councillors in service delivery, do you think they are remunerated enough?  
.....  
.....  
.....

What are your comment about the professionalism, ethics, transparency, and effectiveness of the public officials in leadership positions in Thulamela Local Municipality?  
.....  
.....  
.....

What do you think needs to be improved on the state of leadership and service delivery in Thulamela Local Municipality?  
.....  
.....



.....

.....

Do you have any additional information you would like to add on the subjects of leadership and service delivery?

.....

.....

.....



## University of Venda

FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT, COMMERCE AND LAW (FMCL)

### OR TAMBO INSTITUTE OF GOVERNANCE AND POLICY STUDIES

Private Bag x5050, Thohoyandou, 0950, Tel 015 962 8440, Office 12, School of Management Sciences Building

**TO WHO IT MAY CONCERN**

**15 March 2021**

**COLLECTION OF DATA FOR MINI-DISSERTATION RESEARCH: MR NKHUMELANI DM:  
STUDENT NUMBER 11584109: MASTER OF PUBLIC MANAGEMENT (MPM)**

Mr Nkhumeleni DM is currently registered for a course work Master of Public Management (MPM) degree with the OR Tambo Institute of Governance and Policy Studies within the Faculty of Management, Commerce and Law, University of Venda. He is now at the stage to collect data to complete his mini-dissertation. The Institute is satisfied that the proposal and the area of his research meet the ethical standards for the research at the level of a mini-dissertation.

Kindly assist her where possible.

.....  
**Prof. Nghamula Nkuna (PhD)**

**OR Tambo Institute of Governance and Policy Studies**

## Annexure C

### Permission for Data collection

*SMR manager Todani NA*  
*For your att pls.*  
*[Signature]*

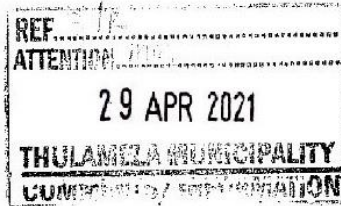
*Mr SIKHAWHILE*  
*FYA*

P.O BOX 1604

Vhufuni

*[Signature]*  
*29/04/2021*

The Municipal Manager  
Thulamela Local Municipality  
Thohoyandou  
0950



Dear Sir

Re: **Permission to conduct a research study in your organization**

I am a registered student at the University of Venda doing Masters in Public Management (MPM). I hereby request permission to conduct my study titled "Leadership qualities affecting the provision of effective service delivery" in your organization (Thulamela Local Municipality). The study seeks to describe leadership qualities that affect the provision of effective service delivery.

The questionnaires will be distributed among participants and individual interviews will be telephonically conducted with consideration to the COVID 19 regulation.

Ethical issues which include confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, and voluntary participation will be strictly adhered to and information will be used for research purposes only.

Your kind assistance in granting permission for the study will be highly appreciated.

Yours Sincerely,

*[Signature]*  
Nkhumeleni D.M

Contact No: 072 260 9184

Email Address:



Private Bag X5066  
Thohoyandou  
0950  
Limpopo Province  
Tel: 015 962 7500  
Fax: 015 962 4020



Ref : 4/3/4/1  
Enquiries : Mabasa N.H  
Tel : 015 962 7514  
Fax : 015 962 4020

To : Nkhumeleni D.M  
From : THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY  
Date : 18 MAY 2021

Subject : REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH AT THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

1. The above matter refers.
2. Kindly note that the permission to conduct research has been granted.
3. For more information please contact Human Resource Section.
4. Hoping that this will meet your favourable considerations.



MUNICIPAL MANAGER: MALULEKE H.E



THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

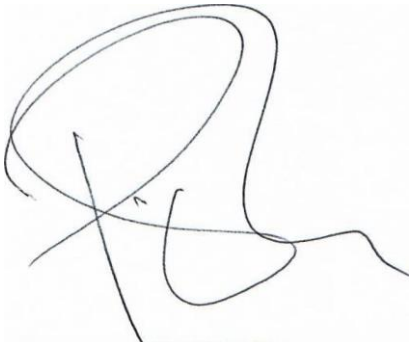
## Annexure D

Proof reading confirmation

# PROOF OF EDITING

**14 May, 2022**

This is to certify that I, Dr P Kaburise, of the English Department, University of Venda, have proofread the dissertation titled - **LEADERSHIP QUALITIES AFFECTING THE PROVISION OF EFFECTIVE SERVICE DELIVERY IN THULAMELA LOCAL MUNICIPALITY** - by Nkhumeleni Dambuwo Maanda (student number: 11584109). I have indicated some amendments which the student has undertaken to effect before the final dissertation is submitted.



Dr P Kaburise (0794927451/ 0637348805; email: [phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com](mailto:phyllis.kaburise@gmail.com))

---

Dr P Kaburise: BA (Hons) University of Ghana (Legon, Ghana); MEd University of East Anglia (Cambridge/East Anglia, United Kingdom); Cert. Teaching English as a Foreign Language (Cambridge University, United Kingdom); Cert. English Second Language Teaching, (Wellington, New Zealand); PhD University of Pretoria (South Africa)