

THE ROLE OF WARD COMMITTEE IN ENHANCING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: A
CASE OF THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this study is to find out whether Ward Committees in Thulamela are succeeding in enhancing community participation. Ward committees play an important role in creating a democratic culture of local participation and accountability. They are the main mechanisms available to municipalities and communities to enhance public participation in the local sphere of government. Their major obstacle is that their powers are limited to advising the communities and the relevant council. The White Paper on Local Government provides for three approaches which can assist municipalities to be more developmental, namely integrated development planning and budgeting, performance management and working together with local citizens. Ward committees provide a link between the council and these processes.

The study used both quantitative and qualitative techniques for data collection and analysis. Quantitative techniques were mostly used in that they provided the researcher with an the role of Ward Committees in enhancing public participation: A case study of Thulamela Municipality. Purposive sampling was used for selecting of sample for the study. Both primary and secondary data were used for analysis in this study. Secondary data were obtained from government publication, research publication, and report. Primary data were obtained through questionnaires and interview.

Findings of the study led to the following conclusions:

- The study also discovered that (43%) of the respondents value less public participation in municipality
- The majority of the respondents are not aware that ward committee members are part of local government and it is mentioned in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa