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CHALLENGES FACING SHIKUNDU COMMUNITY WITH REGARD TO PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

by

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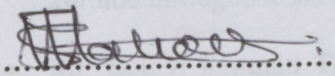
DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, **Ephraim Mahole** declare that "Challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province" is my own work and that all sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.



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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my lovely late sister, Mavis Mahole, who passed away on 27th of April, 2008. I will always remember you "**makwenu**". May God Almighty let her soul rest in peace.

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ABSTRACT

The study describes the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. In this study the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in development projects were investigated. The study is placed in a quantitative research paradigm. The population involved in this study are civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members.

The study was conducted in the rural communities of Shikundu villages, located in Malamulele North East of Thulamela Municipality in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province, South Africa. Shikundu consists of ten (10) villages which are Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani. The villages are characterised by poor living conditions to which development processes are going on in the various villages. A non-probability sampling technique was applied to purposefully select a total of 120 respondents from civic members, ward committee members, councillors and other community members who are directly involved in the development activities in the villages. The data was collected using survey questionnaires. Collected data was captured on a computer Microsoft Excel and transformed into a computer aided with Statistical Package for Social Science, for analysis. In the process, all forms of ethical considerations were taken into account to ensure that respondents are free to provide their utmost understanding of the situation regarding development and participation by community members.

The study findings has shown that the majority of citizens in Shikundu do participate in community development projects, but there are few community members who do not take part in community activities. The findings also showed that there are few community members who have adequate information to participate efficiently towards community development. There are few resources to capacitate rural citizens to be actively involved towards developing their community. There are few community members who contribute resources such as money, material and labour towards community development. A number of interventions need to be made by the community leaders and community structures with regard to public participation and more resources need to be committed towards those processes. For people to effectively participate in their development projects, they should be involved by being given responsibilities which may motivate them to participate in finding solutions.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ACPPDT	African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation
AISA	Africa Institute of South Africa
ANC	African National Congress
CPC	Centre for Positive Care
CCFHBC	Child Care Forum and Home-Based Care
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSOPP	Civil Society Organizations and Partnership Programme
CBO	Community-Based Organisation
CDW	Community Development Worker
CSSP	Comprehensive Social Security Programme
CONSTITUTION	Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996)
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DWAF	Department of Water Affairs and Forestry
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
ISRDS	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PMS	Performance Management Systems
PR	Proportional Representation
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RDSGNU	Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity
SANCO	South African National Civic Organisation
SALGA	South African Local Government
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UN	United Nations
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development

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CHAPTER 1

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Public participation is a means of empowering people by creating the space for them to engage in developing their skills and abilities to negotiate their needs in the face of the forces that often appear to obstruct and discourage them. Public participation does not take place in a vacuum, but is subject to the political, social and economic influence within which it occurs (Tshabalala & Lombard, 2009:397). This is an empirical study which investigates the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. This chapter presents the problem statement, aim of the study, specific objectives of the study, hypotheses, critical research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, definitions of operational concepts, preliminary literature review, research methodology and design, ethical considerations, and organisation of chapters.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The significance of public participation is derived from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Section 152(1)(e) which mandates the municipalities to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government matters (Nzimakwe & Reddy, 2008:668). Reddy and Maharaj (2008:201) point out that public participation is an integral part of, and critical to, the process of local democracy. Davids, Theron, & Maphunye (2009:19) alludes that since African governments have a critical role to play in the promotion of popular public participation, they have to yield space to the people, without which popular public participation will be difficult to achieve.

Kotze (1997:53) indicates that public participation can be considered as both an end in itself and a means to sustainable development, furthermore public participation is an end in itself, it rests on the fundamental ethical principle that people should be allowed control over the actions which affects them. As a means of promoting sustainable socio-economic development, aspects of empowerment, communication and gender are imperative. Public participation which results in development of rural communities is determined by the extent to which community members and

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beneficiaries of the process take part in decision-making, to ensure meaningful public participation. The procedures for democratic decision-making should be created at rural communities. This would enable the communities to be engage in and contribute to decisions affecting them (Tshabalala & Lombard, 2009:397).

Nowadays, public participation cannot be separated from the dominant people-centred development approach, and this approach see public participation as a basic need and a democratic right (Swanepoel & De Beer, 1997:25). Furthermore Swanepoel and De Beer (1997:25) go on to argue that public participation in development must be people-centred but only if it entails the active and voluntary participation of its intended beneficiaries.

The process of public participation in rural communities is seen as a major challenge, time-consuming, and costly job. Community members are often more concerned with daily tasks than thinking about coming up with a vision of their community's future. They want their children to go to school, get decent jobs, and live a safe and clean environment (Green & Haines, 2002:34). Reid (2000:3) contends that community participation is one of the key ingredients of an empowered rural community, and can be regarded as the heart that pumps the community's life-blood. Public participation is far more than a requirement, because if people are engaged in the work of rural community development they will raise more resources, achieve more results, and develop in a holistic and ultimately more beneficial way, to the community's success (Reid, 2000:3).

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Local Government: Municipal Structure Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) are pieces of legislations which provide a broader framework for a participatory local democracy. Shikundu is a poor rural community, where there is still a need for public community participation towards development and alleviation of poverty, and it was imperative that a scientific study of this nature be conducted to provide rural development practitioners with the solutions to the existing problem. According to Reid (2000:3) community participation is one of the key ingredients to empower a community, for development. In many disadvantaged rural communities, public community participation is a requirement, a pre-condition for the community success.

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Reid (2000:3) further indicates that many studies have been documented to show that communities that engage their citizens and partners deeply in the work of community development raise more resources, achieve more results and develop in a more holistic and ultimately more beneficial way. Community participation, then, is critical to community success.

This study focused on the levels of community participation as well as probing ways that can be adopted to overcome the hurdle of poor participation in community development projects in Shikundu Villages. Tshishonga & Mbambo (2008:773) highlight some of the reasons that can be attributed to ineffective public participation in poor rural communities, such as the community or citizen participation being attributed to the participation by the elite in the community, inaccessibility of information to the rest of community members and poor democracy to benefit the poor South African majority. Against this statement of the problem, the study will focus on the realisation of the following objectives:

1.4. AIM OF THE STUDY

The main aim of this study was:

- To investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province.

1.5. SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives benchmarked the realisation of the main aim of the study:

- To assess the level of public participation in rural community development;
- To identify the challenges that impedes public participation in rural communities towards development.
- To explore the possible ways to encourage public participation in rural communities towards development.

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1.6 HYPOTHESES

This study was conducted to test whether:

- Low level of public participation in rural communities results in people not making inputs in their development.
- Challenges that rural community leaders encountered impede community members to engage in community development.
- Availability of measures to address the challenges that impede participation will help to overcome poor participation.
- Lack of public participation in rural communities undermines development in those communities.

1.7 CRITICAL RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To address the objectives of this study, the following research questions will serve as a guide in the process:

- What is the level of public participation in rural communities towards development?
- What are the challenges that hinder public participation of people in rural communities towards development?
- What are the measures that can be undertaken to improve rural communities in public participation?

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study will provide rural poverty alleviation practitioners with an awareness regarding the extent to which public participation in rural community result in development, especially to, ward councillors and municipalities. In this study, a target was set to find ways in which all community members participate in community development projects, for a better South Africa. This study was undertaken in order to add more knowledge to other researchers in a similar research domain.

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1.9 DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

Wehmeier (2005:868) provides that location is the place where something happens or exists; this is the place or position of something. The respondents where this research was conducted reside in the rural communities in Shikundu which consists of ten villages, and are Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani. The ten villages are characterised by poor living conditions to which development processes are going on in the various villages.

Researchers are encouraged to select sites and develop rationales for their choices of the research sites (Denzin and Lincoln, 2009:172). Following this idea, the researcher has selected Shikundu area based on the knowledge that the researcher has of the villages since he lives in the area. Shikundu is situated in the Limpopo Province of South Africa, in the Vhembe District of Thulamela local municipality. It has four of its villages being grouped under Ward 7, and six under Ward 10 for local governance purposes. Since Shikundu villages are grouped into two distinct Wards that have resulted in two Ward councillors being responsible for the development activities that go on within Shikundu. Physically, Shikundu is located in the far North Eastern corner of South Africa and is bordered on the Eastern side by Ntlhaveni villages, Northern side by Mhinga villages, Western side across the Luvhuvhu river by Tshaulu villages and Shigalo villages on the Southern end. For this study, findings from the selected rural communities were generalised to be applicable in all other rural communities with similar characteristics in the rest of Limpopo Province, or South African rural communities.

1.10 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Some of the limitations in this study could be that some respondents might not give their true opinion while filling in the questionnaires. Some respondents might have supplied wrong information to impress the researcher instead of reporting what was exactly happening. Some respondents might probably not cooperated however; all ethical considerations were followed to win the hearts of the respondents to participate freely in the study. Some respondents might not read the questionnaire. Lack of generalisability may also have been a limitation. However, these limitations would not affect the results significantly. This study earmarked to ensure that there is

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correspondence between the content of the self gathered primary data collected and the actual facts that exists in the Shikundu communities in terms of challenges of public participation in the development projects.

In order to secure trustworthiness, reliability and validity of the data, to ensure balanced, objectivity and unbiasness of the results, the researcher will appoint an assistant (the civic structure chairperson) at each of the ten communities to facilitate the completion and collection process. The researcher will make it sure that the respondents must feel free to participate during the filling of questionnaires and not at any stage did they feel intimidated or being forced to respond in a particular direction. For this reason, there is certainty in what Neuman (2006:131) refers to as dependability or consistency, meaning that the same findings can recur under the identical or very similar conditions. For this study, accuracy will be double checked purposefully in about ten to fifteen percent of the entered data, to ensure that no coding errors appear.

1.11 DEFINITIONS OF OPERATIONAL CONCEPTS

Punch (2005:53) asserts that the definitions of operational concepts of research studies addresses the researcher understands of the topic explicitly. Therefore, the definition of operational concepts for this study presents the clarifications of the concepts as provided in the subject of the study. With the clarification of terms being considered to be more appropriate in chapter 1, theories and other perceptions of different scholars as well as the regulatory framework on public participation are discussed in chapters two and three of this study. In this study, the concepts which the researcher would like to define in this introductory chapter are in alphabetical order,

1.11.1 Citizen participation

Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002:15) view citizen participation as a community based process, where citizens organize themselves and their goals at the grassroots level and work together through non-governmental community organizations to influence the decision-making process. Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002:05) go on to indicate that citizens get most involved in this process when the issue at stake relates directly to them, and citizen participation occur when all the stakeholders cooperate to implement change.

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1.11.2 Community

Coetzee (1989:259) refer to community as the social action system of a broader society, the social action of a local population as an expression of their culturally determined patterns of behaviour to survive the physical exigencies of their spatial environment, furthermore community refers to the place where the individual experiences has to deal with the constraints of society and physical environment. The term community is commonly used to refer to people grouped on the basis of geography or common interest, identity or interaction (Breuer, 2002:9). Breuer (2002:9) defined community as a group of people who share an interest, a neighbourhood, or a common set of circumstances, and they may, or may not, acknowledge membership of a particular community. Swanepoel and De Beer (2006:46) contend that communities can also be defined by common cultural heritage, language, and beliefs or shared interests and these are sometimes called communities of interest.

1.11.3 Community development

Netshandama (2010:345) points out that the definitions of community development have evolved over the years and the most prominent perspectives seem to be those that view development as having two constituents' parts, namely economic and social development. Furthermore, Netshandama (2010:345) contends that in order to understand community development it is important to understand that it means different things to different people in different places and that our understanding about what constitutes effective or appropriate community development has expanded considerably in the past few years and some recent definitions focus more on expanding human potential or adding to the quality of life. Similarly, Shucksmith (2004:14) agrees with Netshandama (2010:345) that community development can often mean different things to people in the same place. Green and Haines (2002:vii) define community development as "a planned effort to produce assets that increase the capacity of residents to improve their quality of life".

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1.11.4 Community participation

Putu (2006:8) contends that for the last twenty years, the concept of public participation has been widely used in the discourse of development, and for much of this period the concept has referred to participation in the social arena, in the community or development projects. Furthermore, Putu (2006:8) point out that it has an array or diversity of meanings; for example, public participation is often viewed as ownership of development process, bottom up planning, grassroots planning, public involvement, participatory planning, democratic planning, and collaborative planning. Community participation is often used interchangeably with or alongside a number of other terms, and the term community and public is used in the study interchangeably (Putu, 2006:8).

Kotze (2006:75) defines community participation as the involvement of members of a community in development activities in the community in order to try to influence the outcomes of those activities, and to obtain as many benefits as possible from the results of those activities. Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002:15) point out that public participation is a key ingredient in the recipe for democracy, and it increase transparency in the decision-making process. Furthermore, Holdar and Zakharchenko (2002:15) suggests that if citizens are involved in the policy development, they will be able to make government officials more accountable for their decisions, therefore, individuals must be involved in the decision-making process because their inputs can help to create useful solutions to problems, which are an integral part of their lives.

1.11.5 Development

Development is described by Todaro and Smith (2003:792) as a process of improving the quality of all human live. Three equally important aspects of development are; firstly, raising people's living levels-their incomes and consumption levels of food, medical services and education, through relevant economic growth processes, secondly, creating conditions conductive to the growth of people's self-esteem through the establishment of social, political, and economic systems and institutions that promote human dignity and respect, and lastly, increasing people's freedom by enlarging the range of their choice variables, as by increasing varieties of consumer goods and services (Todaro and Smith, 2003:792).

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1.11.6 Limpopo Province

Limpopo Province is the northernmost province of South Africa. The capital is Polokwane, formerly named Pietersburg. The province was formed from the northern region of Transvaal Province in 1994, and initially named Northern Transvaal. The following year, it was renamed Northern Province, which remained the name until 11 July 2003, when the name of the province was formally changed to the name of its most important river-on the border with Zimbabwe and Botswana-after deliberation by the provincial government and amendment of the Constitution (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/limpopo).

1.11.7 Participation

Participation is described by Nzimakwe & Reddy (2008:672) as referring to an active involvement where all stakeholders, citizens and communities are involved, the promise to the public is that the community must be part of formulating solutions. Dorsner (2004:366) contends that participation is a highly fashionable term in current development practice and it is known practically as a *sine qua non*, i.e. a precondition for project funding, and the rationale behind participation is multifold: increased participation is supposed to promote greater efficiency, more accountability and transparency, enhance ownership and empowerment. Furthermore, Dorsner (2004:367) point out that participation has proven to be a most difficult and elusive goal to attain.

1.11.8 Public participation

Public participation is described by Davids, Theron, & Maphunye (2009:115) as a collective effort by the people concerned in an organised framework to pool their efforts and whatever other resources they decide to pool together, to attain objectives they set for themselves. According Kotze (1997:37) contends that the concept of people's or public participation is the main emphasis of the people-centred development approach and may refer to the following aspects, i.e. involvement, communication, a new attitude from government and reciprocal influence.

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Davy (2006:1) point out that public participation as an essential part of human growth that is the development of self-confidence, pride, initiative, responsibility, cooperation and without such development within the people themselves all efforts to alleviate their poverty will be immensely more difficult if not impossible. Burkey (1993:56) stresses that this process, whereby people learn to take charge of their own lives and solve their own problems, is the essence of development. Meyer and Theron (2000:2) defines public participation as an active process by which beneficiaries or client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhance their well-being in terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values they cherish.

1.11.9 Rural community

Kgaffe (2001:14) describe rural communities as disadvantaged or poor communities (not urban/ semi-urban), farming or small village communities limited to the area of inhabitation by their socio-economic status. In this study, "rural community areas" depicts the poverty stricken areas which is characterised by inadequate provision or resources with high rate of unemployment. Rural is a complex concept to define, and there is no definition of rural worldwide.

In terms of the Department of Health (2006:6) stipulates that there is also no agreed upon official definition of rural in South Africa, however, South Africa used the categorization of municipalities to define the term rural and a rural area is defined as a small locality where less than 50% of people live more that 5 km from a tarred road, less than 25% of people use water from streams, rivers, dams or rainwater tanks and people have very limited choice of services within the municipality. In this study, a rural community is a community where the majority of people are living below the poverty line, have low literacy level, do not have access to electricity, clean and safe water and sanitation.

1.12 PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW

In this paragraph, a preliminary literature review is presented whereas detailed literature study related to participation in community development will be documented in Chapter 2.

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1.12.1 Public participation and rural communities

In a participating community, there is no distinction drawn among various groups and types of personalities who offer themselves to community involvement, all persons are actively welcomed into useful roles, regardless of their colour, age, race, prior community involvement, level of education, occupation, personal reputation, handicap, language, appearance, religion, or any other factor (Reid, 2000:2). Lombard (1992:397) noted that community participation is an essential aspect of democracy and thus forms an important element of South African policies, and however, there is no universal agreement on what community participation entails, because a community can be defined in terms of geographical, functional or geographical-functional elements. Reid (2000:5) went on to indicate that participating rural communities do not sit by passively, waiting group of citizens to present themselves for involvement, they realise that past discrimination, inexperience, and individual reluctance can hinder full community involvement, and they actively reach out to all citizens to invite active contributions to the rural community business.

1.12.2 Community participation levels

Nzimakwe & Reddy (2008:675) indicates that communities can participate at different levels that are appropriate for that given issue. To Nzimakwe & Reddy (2008:675), communities become active citizens by sharing the authority on the basis of which administrative agencies carry out their legislative mandates. Communities can ensure maximum democratic accountability by the elected political leaders for the policies they are empowered to promote (eThekwini Municipality, 2006:18).

To Ababio (2007:616) ward committees are civil organisations that functions well in the role of participatory democracy in that they are an innovative legislative vehicles in communities, ward committees further cater for or facilitate mass representation that deal with matters that affect their localities in relation to policy making by a municipality. Ababio (2007:616) go on to indicate that being innovative, ward committees as leaders of communities, particularly poor rural communities, need to assist in identifying important issues, to carry out solutions, and to judge whether results have been achieved or not in community developmental processes.

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1.12.3 The relationship between participation and community development

It should be understood that communities are made up of different structures. These structures are aimed at improving the people's quality of life, such improvement is regarded as development (Norris & Haring, 1980:196). To Norris & Haring (1980:196), the concepts participation and empowerment must work hand in hand, because development comes when the members of the community are involved in building up projects. Furthermore, getting involved is then called participation, and this kind of participation goes hand in hand with consultation, it is the task of the members of the community to consult community leaders on what is needed in the, benefits of community participation is that development is seen to address the people's needs, despite this, the consultative process is a challenge to integrated decision-making.

The relationship between empowerment and participation becomes clearer when community leaders give attention to the members of the community, this becomes more important because community leaders might not know what is needed within the community (Swanepoel & De Beer, 1989:25). To Swanepoel & De Beer, (1989:25) community leaders must give immediate attention to the community members, by delivering what is needed within the community. Furthermore, satisfaction of basic needs, for example, health services, provision of clean water, better shelter, and other common services will mean that there is an improvement in people's quality of life, which is development, and this is brought about through public participation in communities. Swanepoel & De Beer, (1989:25) further indicates that community leaders, which are referred by Nzimakwe & Reddy (2008:672) as being innovative leaders of communities, must be accessible to members of the community, particularly poor rural communities, because without them, it would be meaningless to pursue developmental objectives independently of community members.

Kotze (1997:53) concurs with Swanepoel & De Beer, (1989:25) and Nzimakwe & Reddy (2008:672) that community members should participate in the suggested projects to achieve their needs. Kotze (1997:58) further indicates that unilateral communities where there is no link between community leaders and members of the community never completely eliminate poverty or satisfy the provision of basic needs.

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1.13 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DESIGN

This is a quantitative study; whereby the selection of population was to be done through non-probability sampling and its subtype purposive sampling. For the purpose of this study data was collected using a structured questionnaire and the population included civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members from each of the ten villages of Shikundu community who served in development structures of those villages. Details of research methodology and design shall be provided in Chapter 3 of this study.

1.14 ORGANISATION OF CHAPTERS

Chapter1 - Introduction and Background of the study : This chapter focuses on the introduction and background of this study, followed by the problem statement, aim of the study, specific objectives of the study, hypotheses, critical research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitations of the study, definitions of operational concepts, preliminary literature review, research methodology and design, ethical considerations, organisation of chapters, the remainder of the research report was structured as follows:

Chapter 2 – Literature review: Relevant literature that is related to the challenges facing public participation in rural community development projects in the Limpopo Province was provided in this chapter. It was a theoretical study which focused on the filling the gaps left by previous researchers on the research domain. The chapter was concerned with the general background of the conceptual and theoretical framework that informed the phenomenon under study, public participation in rural development. This chapter dealt with the prevailing theories and studies on public participation in rural community development in various countries of the world. Views by different experts in the field of public participation in rural community development were provided.

Chapter 3 - Research Design and Methodology: The chapter provides details with regard to the methodology that was used to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The reasons of the choice and use of quantitative paradigm was provided in this chapter. Data collection strategies, description of the

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research plans instruments, ethical consideration, recording and transcribing of the data are provided in this section.

Chapter 4 - Data presentation, analysis and interpretation: This chapter is about analysis and interpretation of the collected data by discussing the sampled population's responses as a way of providing an understanding of the nature of the research findings to the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects.

Chapter 5 - Synthesis, findings, recommendations and conclusion: In this chapter, synthesised discussions of findings, recommendations for an improved community engagement activity towards rural development, as well as recommendations for future research study on a related subject, are well documented. This chapter also presented the end product of what the researcher have studied. It summarises the main findings as reflected in the integrated analysed data in chapter 4 of the study.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reviews literature on the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in development projects. The literature reviewed here is meant to establish a framework within which the problem can be investigated. It is of great significance and beneficial to the researcher to review the existing literature on the research topic, because the knowledge that will be gained from the literature review will be used to analyse the research findings and to recommend effective participation of rural communities in Shikundu community which is under investigation in the research. Oakley (1991:vi) point out that the role of public participation in South Africa cannot be undermined or override economic, personal or technological aspirations in the public sector as its past compels the government to correct injustices.

The South African Government has committed itself to institute wide ranging participatory process in the different spheres and institutions of government in the country (Putu, 2006:4). Furthermore Putu (2006:4) suggests that the attempt to introduce participatory and direct democracy is evident, in addition to institutions and processes at National and Provincial levels, in the planning processes and policy formulation of local government structures; for example, municipal authorities are legally committed to involving community organisations in the formulations of budgets, planning and developmental priorities. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 mandates the local government to provide a democratic and accountable local government and encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local development, and the measures were introduced to entrench community participation and also introduced to transforms the local functions emphasizing on development rather than regulations as was under the previous dispensation. As a result developmental local government is defined as "Local Government committed to working with citizen and group within the community to find sustainable ways to meet social, economic, and material needs and improve the quality of their lives" (RSA. 1998, Section B).

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2.2 POLICY FRAMEWORK OF PARTICIPATION IN MUNICIPALITIES

Putu (2006:15) mentions that when the new government came into power in 1994, it dedicated its efforts on transforming, developing and decentralising institutions, such as local government with a separate autonomy and a legal status distinct from other spheres of government, to create an enabling environment for community consultation. In addition, Putu (2006:15) indicates that the principle of community or citizen participation in South Africa is not taking place in a vacuum, and all relevant policies and associated legislation place participation and accountability at the very heart of the system of local government. On the other hand, Mogaladi (2007:17) states that the South African development policies that governs integrated development planning include the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, of 1996; Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP); the White Paper on Local Government, 1998; Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998); Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000); Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000); and Municipal Planning Performance Management Regulations, 2001.

Craythorne (2003:263) points out that, when developing a culture of community participation, a municipality needs to develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with a system of participatory governance. Therefore in order to fulfil this purpose, a municipality has to encourage, and create conditions for, the local community to participate in the affairs of the municipality, including the following: preparing, implementing and reviewing its Integrated Development Plan (IDP); establishing, implanting and reviewing its performance management system; monitoring and reviewing its performance, including the outcomes and impact of such performance; preparing its budget; and implementing strategic decisions relating to the provision of municipal services (Craythorne: 2003:263).

Section 16(1) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act no. 32 of 2000) is quite clear about the need for community participation. Section 152(1)(e) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, mandates the municipalities to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government matters. Reddy and Maharaj (2008:201) point out that public participation is an

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integral part of, and critical to the process of local democracy. The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, of 1996, and the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) requires municipalities to develop a culture of municipal governance that complements formal representative government with participatory governance and further stipulates that the municipality, ward councillors and ward committees should encourage and create conditions for the local communities to participate in the affairs of the municipality. The empirical evidence from Shikundu community has revealed that local municipality and ward councillors capacitate and encourages community members to participate in the activities of local municipality.

Bearing in mind the previous points, it can be asserted that any country which has social development high on its national agenda, would in many respects attempt to incorporate popular participation in the implementation of its development programmes. In this regard, South Africa is not an exception. The South African context offers a unique opportunity to put the intentions of the above declarations into practice. For one, the country's Constitution in its preamble, echoes the idea of popular participation when it states that the people of South Africa commit themselves to "laying the foundations for a democratic and open society in which government is based on the will of the people.

2.2.1 Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 provides for the establishment of three separate, yet interdependent and interrelated spheres of government, namely, a National government, Provincial government, and 284 Local municipalities. The creation of these spheres sought not only to transfer powers and resources to local authorities, but also to create more opportunities for citizens to actively participate in matters that affect their lives. It was envisaged that reaching out to civil society would strengthen participation in political, economic, and social activities that could harness the process of democratization.

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The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996 is the supreme law of the land and as such lays foundation of the democratic political system of the country, which envisage a complete transformation of local government system in which local government is given a distinct status and role in building democracy and promote socio-economic development, and as such the process is notably meant to bring government closer to the people and thus reinforce two of the fundamental mechanism of sustainable democracy, which is participation of the people and accountability of the local government.

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996, Chapter Seven (7), Section 152(1)(e) stipulates that local government should encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local government. In South Africa the principle of community or citizen participation is promoted through a constitutional and legislative framework that place participation at the centre of a developmental model of local government. Developmental local government is local government committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic and material needs and improve their quality of lives. The role of the local spheres of government is to build local democracy. It is the duty of municipalities to ensure effective participation of the citizens and communities in the matters of local government.

The institutionalization of public participation can only be investigated by first consulting the South African legislation, especially the Constitution, 1996. The constitutional requirements for public participation can be found in its mandate for local government, but more specifically in Chapter 10, Section 195(1) of the Constitution, which stipulates that public administration must be development-oriented, people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making and good human resource management and career development practices must be cultivated to maximum human potential. Community members at Shikundu indicated that they do take part in the policy-making such as Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and also receive feedback in activities of local government.

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2.2.2 Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP)

The RDP as defined by the African National Congress (ANC (1994)) and the White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme is "an integral, coherent socio-economic policy framework that seeks to mobilise all people and the country's resources towards the final eradication of apartheid and the building of a democratic, non-racial and non-sexist future". RDP is a framework that aimed to empower people so that they can become self-reliant in the long run; build local capacity through development support; initiate development programmes and projects on a participatory basis; and address the injustice of the past caused by both colonialism and apartheid.

The RDP gained prominence soon after the first democratic elections in South Africa (1994), and it has informed and continues to inform several attempts to combat poverty by various line departments. The underlying principle of the RDP is that it is a people-driven process as well as an integrated and sustainable programme. By embracing an integrated and sustainable approach to combating poverty in rural communities such as Shikundu, the RDP is essentially a people-driven process focused on meeting the needs of the citizenry through the active involvement and empowerment of all. Community participation is therefore an important part of development at local government level. Implicit in the RDP is a concern for the establishment of an appropriate service delivery system. Section 6.3.6, of the RDP document (ANC), states that: The RDP structures must ensure that historically oppressed communities get the resources they need to participate meaningfully in planning and decision-making process (ANC, 1994:139).

Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005:205) points out that the implicit in its macro-policy framework for development, the RDP holds a people-centred view of development which is acutely aware of the need for popular participation in identification, planning, implementation and monitoring of community level development programmes, and in this respect, the RDP embraces the 1989 Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development, and the principles of this declaration are as follows: sovereignty resides with people, the real social actors of positive change; to exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for the development of themselves and their communities, the people

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must control their own resources, have access to relevant information, and have the means to hold officials of government accountable; and those that would assist the people with their development must recognize that it is they who are participating in support of the people's agenda, not the reverse. Stakeholders for community development at Shikundu showed that community members are informed in every activity of community development.

2.2.3 The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997

Davy (2006:16) point out that the South African government has introduced what is commonly known as the Batho Pele Principles, which are found in the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997b) and epitomizes the evolution of public participation in South Africa. Batho Pele means "people first". According to the White paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997b), with these principles the government established the importance of the South African public and their valued input through participatory means, and called for a shift away from inward looking, bureaucratic systems, processes and attitudes, and a search for new ways of looking which put the needs of the public first, is better, faster and more responsive to the citizen's needs.

Oakley (1991:4) point out that the "people first", bottom-up approach is driven from the recognition that the total dependence on professionals to implement development initiatives is grossly inadequate and contributes to greater underdevelopment. Davy (2006:16) contends that Batho Pele is an approach to get public servants committed to serving people and find ways to improve service delivery, and this approach also requires the involvement of the public in holding the Public Service accountable for the quality of service provided. Colloquium (2011:28) eludes that the Batho Pele belief set has been summarised by this slogan: "we belong, we care, and we serve". In addition, Colloquium (2011:28) states that Batho Pele is about changing the culture of service delivery in public services from that of prescribing services provided to citizens to that of putting people at the centre of service delivery. Furthermore, Colloquium (2011:28) concurs that Batho Pele aims to ensure that all public servants put people first, and adhere to the following overarching framework:

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- We belong: we are part of the Public Service and should work together and respect fellow colleagues;
- We care: caring for the public we serve – our customers; and
- We serve: all citizens will get good service from public servants.

The Batho Pele is based on eight interrelated principles, namely:

Consultation

All national and provincial departments must, regularly and systematically, consult not only about the services currently provided but also the provision of new basic services to those who lack them. Consultation will give citizens the opportunity of influencing decisions about public services, by providing objectives evidence which will determine service delivery priorities. Consultations can also help to foster a more participative and co-operative relationship between the providers and users of public services. Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of the public services they receive and, wherever possible, should be given a choice about the services that are offered.

Service standards

National and provincial departments must publish standards for the level and quality of services they will provide, including the introduction of new services to those who have previously been denied access to them. In case of certain services, such as health, or education, national departments, in consultation with provincial departments, may set standards which will serve as national baseline standards. Service standards must be relevant and meaningful to the individual user. This means that they must, cover aspect of service which matter most to users, as revealed by the consultation process, and they must be expressed in terms which are relevant and easily understood. Standards must also be precise and measurable, so that users can judge for themselves whether or not they are receiving what was expected. Citizens should be told what level and quality of public services they will receive so that they are aware of what to expect.

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Access to services

While some South Africans enjoy public services of first world quality, many others live in third world conditions. One of the prime aim of Batho Pele is to provide a framework for making decisions about delivering public services to the many South Africans who were and still are denied access to them, within the parameters of the government's Growth, Employment and Redistribution Programe (GEAR) strategy. Batho Pele also aim to rectify the inequalities of distribution in existing services. All national and provincial departments are required to specify and set targets for progressively increasing access to their services for those who have not previously received them. In setting these targets, institutions which promote the interests of previously disadvantaged groups, such as the Gender Commission, and groups representing the disabled should be consulted. All citizens should have equal access to the services to which they are entitled.

Courtesy

The concept courtesy goes much wider that asking public servants to give a polite smile and to say 'please' and 'thank you', though these are certainly required. The Code of Conduct for Public Servants issued by the Public Service Commission, make it clear that courtesy and regard for the public is one of the fundamental duties of public servants, by specifying that public servants treat members of the public "as customers who are entitled to receive the highest standards of service". Many public servants do this instinctively; they joined the public service precisely because they have a genuine desire to serve the public. The Principles of Batho Pele require that the behaviour of all public servants is raised to the level of the best. National and provincial departments must specify the standards for the way in which customers should be treated. Citizens should be treated with courtesy and consideration.

Information

Information is one of the most powerful tools at the customer's disposal in exercising his or her right to good service. The national and provincial departments must provide full, accurate and up-to-date information about the services they provide, and who is entitled to them. This must be done actively, in order to ensure that information is received by all those who need it, especially those who have previously been excluded

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from the provision of public services. The consultation process should also be used to find out what customers and potential customers need to know, and then to work out how, where and when the information can best be provided. Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to receive.

Openness and transparency

Openness and transparency are the hallmarks of a democratic government and are fundamentals to the public service transformation process. In terms of public service delivery, their importance lies in the need to build confidence and trust between the public sector and the public they serve. A key aspect of this is that the public should know more about the way national and provincial departments are run, how much they cost, and who is in charge.

Redress

The capacity and willingness to take action when things go wrong is the necessary counterpart of the standard setting process. It is also an important constitutional principle. There are a number of institutions, such as the Public Protector, the Human Right Commission and the Auditor-General, which serve to protect the public from maladministration and impropriety by government departments. However, such institutions should be seen as a last resort by citizens after exhausting departmental remedies, and are not a substitute for swift, effective action by service deliverers when services are falling below the promised standard. If the promised standard of service is not delivered, citizens should be offered an apology, a full explanation and a speedy and effective remedy; and when complaints are made, citizens should receive a sympathetic, positive response.

Value for money

Public services should be improving service delivery, and extending access to public services to all South Africans and this must be achieved alongside the Government's GEAR strategy for reducing public expenditure and creating a more cost-effective public service. The Batho Pele initiative must be delivered within departmental resource allocations, and the rate at which services are improved will therefore be significantly affected by the speed with which national and provincial departments

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achieved efficiency savings which can be ploughed back into improved services. Many improvements that the public would like to see often required no additional resources and can sometimes even reduce costs. A courteous and respectful greeting requires no financial investment. Failure to give a member of the public a simple, satisfactory explanation to an enquiry may result in an incorrect completed application form which will cost time and money to put right. Public services should be provided economically and efficiently in order to give citizens the best possible value for money.

Batho Pele principles commit all municipal officials to quality service delivery, to setting of and striving for international recognised service standards and to honest and transparent communication with the country's citizens. Community members are viewed as customers and customers are now being viewed as clients with a promise of professional service, for example, at customer care centres. These principles obliged the municipalities to continuously seek suggestions from clients with a view to improve services rendered. It is also clear that, even though there is universal agreement to Batho Pele principles by public officials, these principles are unfortunately not adhered to when public meetings are held. The empirical study has revealed that local municipality consult with relevant stakeholders whenever a development initiative is to be put in place. At Shikundu villages, participation shows that community members are aware of the place where they should lodge complaints when they are unhappy with the projects, and by this statement it shows that the local government has built a close relationship with the community.

2.2.4 The White Paper on Local Government, 1998

The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 gives effect to the new vision of the local government entrenched in the Constitution, and the second section of the White Paper, "Developmental Local Government" puts forward the vision of a developmental local government which centres on working with local communities to find sustainable ways to meet their needs and improve the quality of their lives. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 which is often referred to as "mini-constitution" for the local spheres of government defines Developmental Local Government as local government committed to working with citizens and groups

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within the community to find long-term or sustainable ways to meet social, economic and material needs and improve the quality of the lives of the community.

Furthermore, the White Paper on Local Government, 1998 advocates that in order to realise this vision, municipalities are encouraged to build local democracy by developing strategies and mechanisms to continually engage with citizens, business and community-based organisations. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 further provides some municipalities with the possibility to develop structures that would ensure meaningful participation and interaction with the councillors which include voters, participants in the policy process, consumers and service-users and partners in resource mobilisation. The White Paper further states that municipalities must represent the interests of the people in the community and work with sections of the community to build a shared vision and to set goals for development. The situation at Shikundu regarding the participation shows that the local government with the community members establish community-based organisation in other to alleviate poverty.

In addition, the White Paper on Local Government, 1998 identifies four levels of citizen participation by the public. The first is as voters in order to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leaders for the policies they are empowered to promote. The second is through citizens who express their views during and after the policy development process to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible. The third is as consumers and end-users who expect value for money, affordable services and courteous and responsive services. This are in line with the Batho Pele principles since both documents emphasises value for money and the need for public to be furnished with information and to be treated courteously. The last level of citizen participation is through organised partners involved in the mobilisation of resources for development for-profit businesses, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations. Empirical evidence from Shikundu has revealed that community members are committed to participate in community development projects. Community members at Shikundu contribute resources towards community development.

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2.2.5 Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998)

Craythorne (2003:264) provides that community participation has to be focused if it is to succeed. In this regard participation by the local community in the affairs of a municipality must take place through political structures set up for this purpose, in terms of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 such as ward committees. Chapter 2, Section 19 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998), stipulates that all Municipalities are required to develop systems that enhance effective community participation in local government. Chapter 4 (part 4), Section 72(3) of the Act stipulates that ward committees should be established to strengthen public participation at local government. Chapter 4 (Part 4), Section 73(2)(a) also provides that the ward councillor shall be the chairperson of the ward committee. Mogaladi (2007:18) stresses that representation of ward committees should be inclusive of civic, business, women and youth, religions, cultural and other interests groups.

The purpose of a ward committee is to promote participatory democracy by assisting communities and community organisations in the municipal processes such as municipal budget, integrated development planning, and review process, municipal performance management system, by-law and provision of municipal services (DPLG, 2004). The Municipal Structures Act, 1998 makes a provision for the establishment of ward committees as a possible way of encouraging community participation in matters of the municipality. Stakeholders who are directly involved with community development projects at Shikundu do strengthen public participation. With regard to the statement above, community member at Shikundu participate towards community development due to accessibility of information.

2.2.6 Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000)

Municipal Structures Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) makes provisions for the core principles, mechanisms and processes, which are necessary to enable municipalities to socially and economically uplift local communities (MacKay, 2004:51). According to the Act, participatory measures should include notifying members of local communities in good time about meetings, through appropriate communication measures, and further, the Act stipulates that provision must be made for comments, consultation sessions and report back sessions and public hearings must be held to enhance participation processes. The empirical evidence at Shikundu has revealed that

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community members are informed about the meetings and also given feedback related to the affairs of the local municipality.

The mechanisms and system for involving the public is given emphasis in section 16 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) which requires that municipalities develop a culture of community participation and create appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures. These mechanisms would involve communities in planning, performance management, budgeting, and service delivery. In terms of Section 17(2) of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), community members with special needs such as people who cannot read or write, people with disabilities, women, and other disadvantaged groups, must be taken into account to allow them to participate meaningfully in the Integrated Development Planning (IDP).

In terms of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, (Act 323 of 2000) Chapter 4 a municipality must adopt or promote community participation and must also provide for the following:

- Receipt, processing and consideration of petitions and complaints lodged by members of the community;
- Notification and public comment procedures;
- Public meetings and hearings by the council;
- Consultative sessions with community organisations; and
- Report-back sessions.

Section 5 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 places more emphasis on the rights and duties of the citizens in relation to municipal functions, which include the contributing to the decision-making processes of the municipality, being informed on all decisions of the council affecting the rights, property and reasonable expectations. Section 32 of the Act stipulates that municipalities must determine methods to consult communities and residents on their needs and priorities, and also to determine the methods to provide for their participation in the drafting process and the review of the IDP. The empirical study revealed that that there is openness to participate in decision-making processes.

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2.2.7 Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000)

The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) foster and promote a culture of transparency, accountability, freedom of information to the people and propriety, and the Act also recognizes the right of all people to have access to information and requires that if government institutions want to withhold the information it should be justified (MacKay, 2004:54). In supporting MacKay's (2004:54) argument and based on this legislation, Mogaladi (2007:19) advocates that it is evident that the new system of local government offers opportunities for all people to become actively involved in local government issues and makes it compulsory for each municipality to create an enabling environment and to set up systems that makes people participation in local governance possible and effective.

Mogaladi (2007:19) states that through the Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) people will be able to be involved in public debate on issues that affect them. The issues should be tabled on the agenda for rural development related discussions. The Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act 2 of 2000) gives peoples the right to obtain access to all kinds of government information that was previously hidden from the public. The Act is important because it provides a weapon by allowing people to ask for reasons for any decision that is taken, and the decision must be lawful, fair and reasonable. The situation at Shikundu regarding the access of information shows that the local municipality ensures that communities are made aware about the activities in the ward.

2.2.8 Municipal Planning Performance Management Regulations, 2001

There is a close connection between the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001 and the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000). The Municipal Systems Act, 2000, requires that a municipality through appropriate mechanisms, procedures and process established in terms of Chapter 4, must involve the local community in the development, implementation and review of the municipalities' Performance Management Systems (PMS), and also in particular, allow the community to participate in the setting of appropriate key performance indicators and performance targets. Section 15 of the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations further stipulates that if there are no other municipal wide structures for community participation, a municipality must establish

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a forum, and this forum must be representative and enhance community participation in the Integrated Development Plan.

In addition, the Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001 states that the forum must enhance public participation in monitoring, measuring and reviewing performance and the function of the forum includes consultation and monitoring of the IDP and its implementation and review; discussion of the PMS and its implementation and review and monitoring municipal performance according to the key Performance Indicator and targets set by the municipality.

2.2.9 Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003)

The Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003), does not mention ward committees explicitly. However, it does call for community participation in a number of processes related to how municipal resources are used and reported on, such as the drawing up of the annual municipal budget, the establishment of municipal entities and public-private partnership and the publication of the annual report of the municipality (Smith, 2008:8).

2.3 THE NOTION OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

According to Civil Society Organizations and Partnership Programme (CSOPP (1998:1)) the notion of people's participation is now widely recognized as a basic operational principle of development programme and projects. Nyalunga (2006:1) stipulates that public participation is one of the buzz words of the day in South Africa, and it is a term often and widely used by the government, politicians, civil society organizations, analysts and advocates of democracy. The new government regards public participation as a cornerstone of democracy.

Sick (2001:64) stipulates that participation is intrinsic to the core meaning of democracy. Nyalunga (2006:1) asserts that, "the question of public participation is central in any democratic order, and it is something we dare not take for granted but must ensure that we constantly work on it all the time". In addition, Nyalunga (2006:1) stipulates that to many, public participation is seen as a vehicle to promote and instill a culture of good governance at the local government. Ackerman (2004:448) argues with the statement of Nyalunga (2006:1), by providing that the

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core activities of the state to societal participation is one of the most effective way to improve accountability and governance.

By definition, the term public participation is not confined to issues pertaining to delivery as it concerns development, policy formulation and it is also about maintaining good order at the local government level, (Nyalunga, 2006:2) goes on providing that public participation is an important ingredient for good governance and quality service delivery. Moreover, public participation is a constitutional matter, going beyond granting the right to vote, and also a political right afforded to all citizens of South Africa. According to Williams (1996:79) public participation is often driven by specific socio-economic goals that seek to ensure a better life for all, especially for those who have been historically marginalized during the successive colonial-cum-apartheid regimes in South Africa. Williams (1996:79) further aggravates that the direct involvement or engagement of ordinary people in design, implementation and evaluation of planning, governance and overall development programmes at local or grassroots level, has become an integral part of democratic practice in recent years. In this study, it became evident that Shikundu community members participate in community development projects, although their sole motive for participation is remunerations for income.

2.4 GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Nyalunga (2006:1) point out that there was only minimal space for meaningful public participation in decision-making processes, and the local government systems was structures to advance the agenda of racial segregation and exclusion. Nyalunga (2004:1) further reiterate that in terms of community participation, South African history reflects very little opportunity for community participation primarily because local government in South Africa had until the early 1990's no constitutional safeguard, as it was perceived as a structural extension of the State and a function of Provincial government.

Atkinson (1992:43) point out that there is a notion of popular sovereignty, a notion that indicates that governance is not a separate entity from its citizenry, but that the two are intertwined, and the implicitly in this form of governance, is the notion that the government is accountable to the community in an ongoing manner. Further Atkinson (1992:43) stresses that this form of democratic and good governance instills

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an impression that the governance is owned by the community. Kooiman (1993:37) suggest that the contextual analysis is in line with the shift from the concept of government to governance.

Swanepoel (1992:42) stated from the broad understanding of governance in the South African perspective when he contend that the role of political leadership in governance is that of managing the relationship between the government and civil society. Putu (2006:10) stipulates that if good democratic governance refers to working with and listen to citizenry as individual, interest groups and society as a whole, then it involves active co-operation and ongoing engagement in the process of policy formulation and implementation between politicians, public officials and members of the communities. Putu (2006:10) further alludes that the government has to ensure that all its structures enable the public to exercise a meaningful say. Governance as a process of facilitation and ensuring the delivery of goods and services through the management of social power and power relations thus includes a means of social stability and well being through deepening democracy (Swanepoel, 1992:42). The stakeholders who are directly involved with development projects ensure that community members should have a say in any activity which need to be put in place in the community.

Arends (2011:7) asserts that local governments would be more successful if they commit themselves to teamwork with local communities from the onset of the policy-making process. All stakeholders in a municipality, including councillors, traditional leaders, community development workers, officials, communities, the private sector and all structures of government, must work together as partners in the transformation process geared towards the empowerment and development of communities as envisaged in the African National Congress (ANC) documents around participatory governance.

Arends (2011:7), Kakumba and Nsingo (n.d.) identifies the following functions as the objectives of citizen participation:

- Provide information to citizens;
- Get information from the citizens;
- Improve public decisions, programmes, projects and services;
- Enhance the acceptance of public decisions, programmes, projects and services;

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- Alter political power patterns and resource allocation;
- Protect individual and minority groups rights and interests; and
- Delay or avoid complicating difficult public decisions.

Gaventa and Valderrama (1999:4) point out that governance has been described as both a broad reform strategy and a particular set of initiatives to strengthen the institutions of civil society with the objective of making government more accountable, more open and transparent, and more democratic. Putu (2006:10) alludes that, it represent a change in meaning of government, referring to a process of governing a change condition of order rule, or the new method by society is governed.

2.5 PARTICIPATION, EXCLUSION AND GOVERNANCE

Shucksmith (2004:13) point out that people living in rural areas are not merely passive recipients of broader forces affecting their lives, and indeed one important dimension of social inclusion relates to the individual's ability to have a say, and to shape the history as it affects them, and to exert some control over voluntary and reciprocal systems. Yet a number of recent studies have questioned how well the current practice works in achieving the goal on enabling and empowering rural people to take greater control over their own destines through bottom-up development approaches and to what extent this approach tends to exacerbate rather than address social exclusion. A related issue is the changing governance of rural areas (Murdoch and Abrams, 1998:18; Goodwin, 2000:34; Mackinnon, 2002:14), which itself may hinder civic integration. Shucksmith (2004:13) stresses out that local authorities no longer coordinate and lead in the way that they once did, and instead we find a whole host of agencies involved in rural governance, drawn from the public and voluntary sectors in a nobody-changed-world.

Goodwin (2000:34) contends that full empowerment would require the development of a policy programme designed specifically to enhance both community and individual capacity. Shucksmith (2004:14) alludes that an emphasis on partnership alone assume a level of capacity (for example, local knowledge, skills, resources and influence) and an availability of support, which may well be lacking in isolated and small communities, and amongst the most marginalised groups. Shucksmith (2000b:10) stipulates that building capacity for civic integration means developing

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programmes which improve the skills and confidence of individuals, especially the marginalised, and strengthening the capacity of local groups to develop and manage their own rural regeneration strategies.

Recent work by Ellis (2002:14), exploring power and exclusion in rural community development, has added much to the understanding of how social exclusion almost as a matter of course occurs in the practice of rural development. Furthermore, Ellis (2002:14) point out that exclusion occurred at a number of levels, found in the definition of communities by the development agencies, in the displacement of existing organizations and community groups, in the mobilisation and enrolment of individuals, and in the mechanisms for participation and involvement. Shucksmith (2004:14) suggests that policy making has been naïve in assuming that bottom-up rural development will necessarily lead to more extensive and more equal local participation that will empower and build the capacities of all those living in rural communities. Shucksmith (2004:14) further shows that even bottom-up development will still be controlled, shaped, and will also serve the needs and interests of the powerful sections of the rural population, unless practice becomes more sensitive to processes of exclusion and power relations in rural society.

2.6 SOCIAL EXCLUSION AS A MULTIFACETED PROCESS OF PARTICIPATION

Room (1995:1) defines social exclusion as a multi-dimensional, dynamic process which refers to the breakdown or malfunctioning of the major systems in society that should guarantee the social integration of the individual or household. Room (1995:1) further provides that social exclusion implies a focus less on victims but more upon the processes which cause exclusion and it also acknowledge the importance of the local context in such processes. Social exclusion refers to the led state of multi deprivation or lack of participation in key aspects of society (Dorsner, 2004:369), but also to the processes leading to it.

The concept encompasses the multidimensional aspects of poverty, from cash income to a wide range of indicators of deprivation or inability to participate in contemporary society, and the focus suggested by social exclusion is on the processes that generate exclusion or inclusion and on the social factors that combine and interact to produce social exclusion (Dorsner, 2004:369). Furthermore, Dorsner (2004:370) alludes that

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participation, reciprocally, and non-participation operate through the multiple identities borne by community members as economic but also political, cultural or social agents with varying capital and capabilities, and social exclusion variables give shape and ensure a more comprehensive analysis of participation.

Cooke and Kothari (2001:368) contends that participation depends on many variables at the community level and that its practice is intimately linked with exclusion and power confirms the need for an analysis on whether and how the structures of participatory projects protects the interests of poor people. Dorsner (2004:369) point out that if participation is understood as an inclusion at different stages in the development process, then exclusion relates to the mechanisms through which participation is hampered. Over time, livelihood strategies also determine the costs and benefits of non-participation, and whether people will be able or willing to participate, and hence, non-participation can only be analysed through a flexible tool that integrates these multiple dimension, and the emphases is on the different variables that may hamper participation and on the dynamic processes that lead to exclusion from participation (Dorsner, 2004:369).

2.7 CORE ELEMENTS OF PARTICIPATION

Schurink (2010:490) identify four core elements of participation and which are community of interest, empowerment, social network, and social support and community mobilisation and are also discussed below.

2.7.1 Community of interest

Most of the definitions of community emphasise it as a locality and community of interest, a community as locality is a small area or neighbourhood in which families live together, and such communities may or may not have mutual interest or values (Schurink, 2010:490). Furthermore, Schurink (2010:491) reiterates that evaluators involved in participatory action research are primarily interested in creating communities of interest because they provide a ready-made frame work for development and coordination of a network of formal and informal support that could be used to the benefit of the target group. Reid (2000:3) suggests that the ideal community is that a group of people who share physical and social space, making them aware of individual, family and community strength and needs, and helping

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them to create informal social support networks in cooperation with professional helpers, manage resources in such a manner that social problems are prevented on a primary, secondary, and tertiary level.

Reid (2000:3) further point out that community participation is one of the key characteristics of an empowered community, and community participation is the heart that pumps the community's life blood of its citizens into the communities business. Schurink (2010:491) stresses that community participation can be defined as creation of a democratic system and procedures to enable community members to become actively involved and to take responsibility for their own development, to share equally in the fruits community development and to improve their decision making power. Schurink (2010:491) further alludes that community participation provides a sense of belonging or identity, commitment to common norms, a willingness to take responsibility for oneself and others, and a readiness to share and interact with one another. The empirical evidence from Shikundu community has revealed that community members are committed to participate in community development projects.

2.7.2 Empowerment

One of the most important outcomes of participatory action research is empowerment. Empowerment can be described as the process of increasing personal, interpersonal skills and political power, enabling individuals or collective to improve their life situations (Schurink, 2010:491). Empowerment increases the energy, motivation, coping and problem solving skills, decision making power, self-esteem, self-sufficiency and self-determination of community members. Stakeholders at Shikundu community shows that both skills and opportunities for community development are needed to empower people.

2.7.3 Social network

It is important to gain an understanding of social networking and informal social support because these are important elements of a community of interest, Sarason, Sarason, and Pierce (1990:164), state that a social network is a vehicle through which informal social support is provided. Social networks are typically defined as a collection of individuals who know and interact with each other. Schurink (2010:491) argues that social networks could be analysed according to characteristics such as

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structure, composition, content and interaction patterns; for example, frequency of contact, durability, reciprocity and interests of the relationships. The main function of social networking is to provide social support. Furthermore, Schurink (2010:491) reiterates that the other functions include regulating and controlling the behaviour of individual members, developing identity or self-concept and shaping the individuals world view, so that the professionals can utilise support networks or mobilise new support networks to enhance the social functioning and well-being of community members.

2.7.4 Social support and community mobilisation

Rahman (1993:17) points out that mobilisation refer to simultaneous engagement of large masses of people in activities that have a predominantly social or collective objective. Schurink (2010:492) stresses that South Africa has over the past few years been plagued by negative community mobilisation of citizens who began to act as clients or customers of services with no incentives to become producers. They see themselves as incapable of taking of their lives and community and have been conditioned to wait for outside expert to fix their problems. It is not surprising that community members no longer act like citizens instead they begin to act like clients or customers of service with incentives to be producers (Mathie and Cunningham, 2002:4).

Schurink (2010:492) point out that in order to counteract negative community mobilisation a researcher acting as a change agent should utilize community mobilisation as a strategy for community development. Schurink (2010:492) further advocates that when both formal and informal social support is in sufficient (for example, because of invisibility or the burn-out of natural social support network) change agent could reorganize available social support by altering the structural features and interaction patterns of the social networks, redefining the problem to the people and the support networks. Mathie and Cunningham (2002:4) contends that in this way communities can begin to assemble their strengths into new combinations, build new structures of opportunity, utilize new source of income and control, and possibilities for development.

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2.8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNANCE

This section presents the theoretical concepts on public participation; rationale for community participation in community development activities; ways of participating in local government; forms of public participation; participation in community development; the context of rural community participation strategies; the place of community participation in local development; techniques of participation; challenges of public participation; limits of public participation; the benefits of public participation in community development; ways that municipalities use to promote and foster a conducive atmosphere for public participation. Mogaladi (2007:20) contends that the integrated development plan underpins the foundation and effective planning government level. Mogaladi (2007:20) further stipulates that for the municipalities to achieve sustainable development in rural communities and to address the challenge of community participation, the IDP should be developed with the people.

2.8.1 Theoretical concepts on public participation

Oakley (1991:vi) contends that the role of public participation in South Africa cannot be undermined or override economic, personal or technological aspirations in the public sector as its past compels the government to correct injustices. Mogaladi (2007:21) advocates that while the importance of community participation is widely recognized among development practitioners, and when the different methods of public participation are analysed they vary considerably in meaning, degree and intent. There are several definitions of public participation. In terms of MacKay (2004:13), there is little agreement about the concept of public participation in public policy-making and in development planning. There is no single universal accepted definition of public participation. MacKay (2004:13) alludes that this argument is based upon the elusiveness of the concepts, public, citizen, people or community which have become umbrella term for the idea of development intercession.

Owens (1990:14) contents that many types of participation are not necessarily suited to sustainable development, but all types of participation share some common principles that should include the respect and attention given to the opinions, ideas and perspectives of locals. There is the degree of control locals have in setting goals, making decisions, planning, implementation, evaluation and reviewing programmes and policies, Mogaladi (2007:21), and the extension to the community not only of

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information, but also the capacity to solve problems on their own through appropriate means of assessment, analysis, and experimentation.

The local government is a third sphere of government that interacts most closely with the people and it is a sphere of government where service delivery takes place, Cameron and Stone (1995:53). The municipal council is accountable to communities in their locality. Furthermore, Cameron and Stone (1995:53) reiterates that it is a sphere of government which if well capacitated can speed up socio-economic development and respond effectively to local problems. In support of this view, Mogaladi (2007:22) advocates that local government is a sphere of government that can drive the process of addressing socio-economic development issues of the 2nd economy in South Africa since it is closer to the people. Community members at Shikundu indicated that there is a close relationship with the local government.

Mackay (2004:43) argues that people's participation must not be a once off activity to fulfil legislative requirements, but should rather be seen as a continuum. Mogaladi (2007:22) contends that participation should be a continuous capacity building exercise to ensure that the people are more knowledgeable on local government issues and that they have an in-depth understanding of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process and what is required of them for sustainable development of their communities. Davy (2006:8) point out that in order to bring about development efforts that reflects the real needs of the people a paradigm shift is needed, and this includes a move away from a so-called blueprint approach to development towards a more process and people-centred development that should produce public participation.

Davy (2006:8) point out that in order to bring about development efforts that reflect the real needs of the people, a paradigm shift is needed, and this includes a move away from a so-called blueprint approach to development toward a more process and people-centred development that should produce public participation. Meyer and Theron (2000:5) assert that the building blocks of development will be used critically to assess public participation's role in development. The building blocks include public participation; social learning; empowerment; sustainable development; capacity-building; and self-reliance. To Meyer and Theron (2000:5) the indicated building blocks should all be present for development to be considered a success.

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2.8.2 Rationale for community participation in community development activities

Nzimakwe and Reddy (2008:667) point out that, the rationale for direct participation usually advocates participation in formulating development plans at the formative stage, rather than after officials have become committed to particular choices. Mogaladi (2007:22) stresses that, public participation in rural development is assumed a good if not a vital thing. International experience has also shown that people participation is an essential part of effective and accountable governance at local government level. International experience has shown that one way of achieving successful and lasting models to ensure citizen participation takes place through establishing structured and institutionalized frameworks for participatory local governance (DPLG:2004). Participation of the communities builds trust between the local authorities and the people (African National Congress, 1994:120).

Local people are the world's leading authorities on matters concerning their area, and should be afforded the opportunity to give input on the social and political environment, as well as their traditions, values, psychological outlooks, lifestyle, and the daily hardship they face (Swanepoel, 1989:39). Further defend the need to use local expertise, since without it planning is flawed. Mogaladi (2007:22) points out that, the "voice of the people" has always been seen as important in the political decision-making process in democratic states. The freedom of speech is one of the basic elements of democracy. Public participation is not specifically bound by law, regulations, or forms of expression, and the possibilities of voicing out one's opinion is unlimited, provided that the opinion of others is respected (Mogaladi: 2007:22). The empirical evidence from Shikundu community revealed that community's inputs are taken into consideration by stakeholders who are directly involved in the development projects of the community.

Bekker (2004:44) points out that there are specific objectives for community participation which can be outlined thereby encouraging participants to: provide information; obtain information from and about the community; improve public decisions, programmes, projects and services; enhance acceptance of public decisions, programmes, projects and services; supplement public agency work; alter political power patterns and resources allocation; protect individual and minority group rights and interests; and to delay or avoid complicating difficult public decisions. Mogaladi (2007:23) argues that grass-roots participation in rural development and planning is

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important as a means of obtaining information about local conditions, needs, and attitudes, and people are more likely to support projects in which they were involved in their planning and implementation. Kellerman (1997:52) stresses that there are variety of forms of participation, where people may participate in development activities by providing information about the community, taking part in identifying needs, problems and priorities, taking part in deciding about development goals, policies and strategies, or assuming responsibility and accountability for development actions.

Swanepoel (1989:39) states that another rationale for participation in general is that it is a prerequisite for sustained development, in that through participation, local people develop an affinity within the attachment to the products of their efforts. Brynard (1996:41), points out that public participation is a way of democratizing the planning process to the extent that public participation in public policy making and implementation is considered as a democratic right. Nzimakwe and Reddy (2008:670) stress that community participation is one of the cornerstone of effective and accountable governance, and this can take a various forms.

Bekker (2004:45) points out that consultative participation usually comprises one of the three types of opportunities which are as follows: firstly, there is structured participation, which means the formal establishment of one or more citizen bodies with defined prerogatives and responsibilities, such as advisory committees, and community forums. The members may be chosen by municipalities or some other stipulated process. Secondly, open opportunities exist, which are set by the municipality and in which any person or group may take part, though these are limited by time, place and procedures, and are usually focused on one or just a few issues, which include inquiries and hearing, and exhibitions with a chance to comment. Lastly, there are informal means that centre on the accessibility of local officials to citizen-initiated comment and advocacy. Bekker (2004:45) further argues that an accumulation of expertise is possible if these structured participatory bodies are not merely admitted to accessional participation but enjoy ongoing involvement in a wide range of municipal programmes.

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Swanepoel (1989:39) points out that another reason for participation of beneficiaries is that it is a prerequisite for equitable development, in that everyone participating has an opportunity to get a share of the outcomes of the development projects. Mogaladi (2007:23) stipulates that citizen participation in local government planning has benefits for government, the people and communities because the people contribute knowledge. It is a constitutional requirement in all democratic countries that the people should participate in development initiatives that affect their lives, and democracy requires that all people should have access to the resources, which can empower them as well as the right to exercise their power in such a way that they are able to participate in public affairs (African National Congress, 1994:120).

There are other three rationales for citizen participation which are as follows: Firstly, merely knowing that one can participate promotes dignity and self-sufficiency within the individual. Secondly, it taps the energies and resources of individual citizens within the community. Finally, citizen participation provides a source of special insight, information, knowledge, and experience, which contributes to the soundness of community solutions. The empirical study has found that some community members at Shikundu villages are willing to serve as sources of special insight and are free to provide their information, knowledge and experience.

2.8.3 The importance of community participation

Protagonists of community participation provide several key reasons for its necessity, namely; firstly, it is argued that it provides an equal opportunity to influence the decision making process, secondly, based on popular sovereignty, it ensures that the government is sensitive to the needs of the people, and lastly, it counter acts the sense of powerlessness in the poor (Monyemangene, 1997:29).

It is very crucial to consider the aim of community participation in community development, in order to determine whether or not it is reasonable to involve community members in community development to achieve these aims, and how. The main point of departure for the researcher in this study is to investigate whether community members participate in community development projects and in addition, to find possible ways in which maximum participation can be achieved in Shikundu villages of Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The aim of community participation in community development is to bring back life in its completeness, making villagers'

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self-reliant and self-respecting, acquainting with cultural traditions of their own country and competent to make effective use of modern resources for the fullest development of their physical, social, economic and intellectual conditions (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:2).

In a democratic country such as South Africa public participation in local government is considered a basic democratic right of the people. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:20) discuss three viewpoints on participation, namely participation as cheap labour, as involvement, and as empowerment. Dhimole and Tabiyo (2000:4) provide the following objectives which can be achieved by community participation; to reduce the delays and cost over-run due to non involvement of community; to develop confidence among the community and to built trust on government agencies; to identify community concerns and values; to collect information, develop consensus and resolving conflicts; to enhance the accountability of decisions of government through increased opportunity for public participation; to create awareness about the projects; and to maintain create assets with minimum costs. Community participation promotion aims at ensuring that decisions affecting the community are taken by all (not only a few) community members (not by an outside agency).

Makumbe (1996:81) points out that the aim of community participation in community development focuses on raising the standard of living of people by encouraging them to actively participate in various development-oriented activities. These aims mean that community participation is an activity meant to benefit the targeted group. Anyanwu (1981:165) stresses that the aims are to develop responsible local leadership, to inculcate among the members of rural communities a sense of citizenship, and to introduce and strengthen democracy at the grassroots level. Anyanwu (1981:165) further suggests that participation in community development aim at enabling people to establish and maintain cooperative and harmonious relationship, and that a stronger solidarity will develop between the community members themselves.

Bryson (1993:3) points out that community participation in community development is aimed at (local authorities) obtaining information about local conditions, needs, desires, and attitude. Hanekom (1987:34) stipulates that community participation is a means of involving and educating the public and further stresses out that the quality of

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live is better in a local authority area with a well-developed sense of community. De Beer and Swanepoel (1994:630) point out that the aim of community participation is to empower people to determine their needs, decide on actions, and take control and ownership of their own development. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:20) further stress that community participation aimed at building the capacity of individuals, communities, and society to manage their own efforts. Based on the statement above, the situation at Shikundu community shows that in order to improve the quality of people's lives, some community members do make contributions in the form of money, materials and labour.

2.8.4 Ways of participating in local government

Kabemba (2004:7) concurs that there are many ways that individuals can participate in local government and influence decision making. In addition, Kabemba (2004:7) catalogued three different types of citizen or government interaction, namely; citizen's action, by means of lobbying bodies like parliamentary committees, public demonstrations and protests; citizen involvement, by means of public hearing, consultation with advisory committees and attitudinal surveys; and electoral participation, by means of casting votes and electing representatives. Furthermore, Kabemba (2004:7) contends that these forms of participation are critically important and serve as a yard stick to measure the level of democratic development and political maturity in South Africa. Lobbying is mainly used by organizations to persuade politicians to support their position on a particular issue. Communities can lobby their councillors, while councillors can use lobbying to try to persuade committees, the Mayor and other parts of government and in the electoral participation as a key principle of democracy (Kabemba, 2004:7). The empirical evidence from Shikundu community has revealed that community members are consulted by relevant stakeholders who are directly involved with development projects.

Nyalunga (2006:3) points out that local government is the closest form or sphere of government to the people and as such has potential to enhance participation. The advantage of local elections is that citizens know candidates generally well and choose on an informed basis. Nyalunga (2006:3) goes on providing that a lot has to be done in terms of providing the citizens with information about election processes and why voting is important. Kabemba (2004:8) asserts that voter education should indeed

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become an integral part of large civic and government education programmes which ought to be undertaken to educate the citizens, and the government servants. The civic society organizations need to do a lot more to provide factual information for voters in a neutral way so that they can participate knowledgeably and thereby increase voter turnout both at National and Local government levels.

2.8.5 The context of rural community participation strategies

Oakley (1991:206) points out that public participation should not be regarded as an end product but more importantly as a continuous process, and hence methodology is important to the practice of participation since, as a process, it cannot be expected to emerge, like a plant, within a fixed period of time. Leatherman and Howell (2000:1) stresses that before methodology of public participation is decided upon, the objectives or goals of public participation need to be established as public participation strategy is dependent upon these. Furthermore, Leatherman and Howell (2000:3) allude that when projects fail to promote participation (or indeed when development projects fail to achieve their objectives) this failure can be traced back to the lack of sound basis for the project's practice.

Leatherman and Howell (2000:2) provide the following goals or objectives of public participation which can be classified into six categories, namely, to further democratic values by ensuring the interests of the majority of citizens are at the forefront of local government decision making; to achieve planning that is more attuned to the needs of different groups by recognizing the diversity within the local community; to educate the non-participating public by reaching out to them; to bring about social change by enacting policy that ensure equal access to services and opportunities across the spectrum of the local population; to recruit support, obtain legitimacy and avoid opposition by including citizen groups and stakeholders in some aspects of the decision-making process and to promote a particular perspective or bring about change in the political order by informing like-minded citizens of opportunities for involvement.

The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2, (1990)) provides the following core values which coincide with the above mentioned categories: the public should have a say in decisions about actions affect their lives; public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decisions; the

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public participation process communicates the interest and meets the process needs of all participants; the public participation process seeks out facilitates for the involvement of those potentially affected; the public participation process involves participants in defining how they participate; the public participation process communicates to participants how their input affected the decision and the public participation process provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.

All of the above-mentioned goals or objectives cannot be achieved simultaneously. Therefore, those participating in the development process must be clear on what is to be achieves from the start. Leatherman and Howell (2000:2) stress that the strategy must be specific about who in the community constitutes the affected public. This will help to determine the effort required for outreach.

2.8.6 The place of community participation in local development

Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003:203) contend that community participation is the secret of the success of self-help projects at grassroots levels. Furthermore Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003:203) allude that participation is both in kind and in cash and there is also enthusiasm from the community to participate in project since the adoption of projects is arrived at through consensus and these projects must meet the aspiration of all classes of the society. Bazlul (1994:14) suggests that participation in community development is the cornerstone of the development process concerned with the reduction of inequalities and the alleviation of poverty especially attention to the rural areas where the majority of the world's poor reside.

Bazlul (1994:14) further cites people's participation at the grass-root level as being pivotal in reducing both poverty and inequality. As a corollary to Bazlul (1994:14), Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003:203) consider people's participation to be critical in achieving the objectives of development as they believe that it is a pretence to think that the crises in the developing rural communities can be overcome or that the reshaping of societies and the development of its rural areas can be undertaken without the participation of the people, particularly the large numbers who are poor. Further (Fonchingong and Fonjong, 2003:204) argue among other things that participation by intended beneficiaries is an indispensable feature of all forms of development.

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Zadeh and Ahmad (2010:33) affirms that community development focuses on the individuals and it stresses on the micro levels of society, which is concerned primarily with people as stimulators of social action process. Zadeh and Ahmad (2010:13) further stress out that community development is a process in which the people of a community attempt a collaborative effort to promote what they consider to be the needs of their community. Ntini (2006:23) views community development as process by which effort of the people at grass root level is united with those of the government, and include the involvement of people in the community in an effort to attain common goals. Participation is a main indicator of community development.

Community development is the ability to mobilize people for involvement through participation, therefore the community members should actively participate in the community change (Zadeh and Ahmad, 2010:14). Breuer (1999:31) affirms that participation is a process by which people are enabled to become actively and genuinely involved in defining the issues of concern to them, in making decisions about factors that affect their lives, in formulating and implementing policies, planning, developing and delivering services and in taking action to achieve change. Community members at Shikundu indicated that local municipality encourage community members to participate for effective community development and participation enables community development.

2.8.7 Approaches to community development

Chekki (1979:15), Sanders (1958:4) and Ntini (2006:33) identify four major approaches used in the literature on community development, and these are the process, method, program and social movement approaches and are discussed below.

2.8.7.1 Community development as a process

Social scientists view community development as a process, focus upon the sequences through which communities go as they move from one stage of development to another in the course of time; community development refers to a progression of change in terms of specific criteria (Sanders, 1958:4). Ntini (2006:34) provides that the main emphasis is upon what happens to people socially and psychologically, and it is within this approach that community development could be defined.

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Sanders (1958:19) provides sound definitions of community development as a process and summarises it as a process of social action in which the people in a community organise themselves for planning and action, define common and individual needs and problems, make group and individual plans to meet their needs and solve their problems. In addition, Sanders (1958:19) contends that community members organise themselves to execute these plans with a maximum reliance upon community resources, and supplement these resources when necessary with services and materials from governmental and non-governmental agencies outside the community. Ntini (2006:34) concurs with Sanders (1958:19) by indicating that community members plan and organise efforts to assist individuals to acquire attitude, skills, and concepts required for their democratic participation in the effective solution over a wide possible range of community problems, in an order of priority determined by their increasing levels of competence. Ntini (2006:34) contends that an organised educational process deals with a comprehensive community as a whole, and with all of the various functions of community life as integrated parts of the whole. The process by which the efforts of the people themselves are combined with those of governmental authorities to improve the economic, social and cultural conditions of communities, to integrate these communities into the life of the nation, and to enable them to contribute fully to national progress (Sanders, 1958:19).

Ntini (2006:35) points out that the process approach-based definitions of community development stress that communities should change according to desired goals, and studying, training, educating, planning, organising and acting to bring about purposeful cognitive change for achieving community goals. Ntini (2006:35) further contends that the elements of the process approach-based definition of community development includes training, educating and planning, and is closely related to the skills that community leaders and community structures acquire during their training.

2.8.7.2 Community development as a method

Sanders (1958:4) views community development as a method or way of working in order to achieve some goal, and this therefore, means that suitable methods are used stage by stage, to enable the community to move through various stages. Ntini (2006:35) stresses that one can view community development as a tool for uplifting a

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community's living standards, and this enables people to determine whether or not projects are suitable for community leaders, and community structures participation.

2.8.7.3 Community development as a program

Another way of viewing community development is to call it a program that emphasises activities and the involvement of subject-matter specialists such as those in health, welfare, agriculture, industry, recreation, education and development. Sanders (1958:5), also stresses the reasons why programs take a longer period in comparison to projects. Ntini (2006:36) point out that programs extend over a period of five years or more, while a project may last for a very short period such as a month or slightly more, and the relevance of this is that people may be in a position to determine whether civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members should participate in program or projects. Sanders (2006:36) alludes that this is feasible in practice, as projects are common with NGOs and governmental development workers, and the projects yield results in a shorter period of time, thus community interest can be sustained.

2.8.7.4 Community development as a movement

Sanders (1958:5) argue that community development is a crusade, a cause to which people become committed. Ntini (2006:36) suggests that community development is dedicated to progress. This study aims to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province.

2.8.8 Basic principles of community development

The following section provides a discussion on the principles of community development which are human solidarity, social equity, respect for others and the continuing activism.

2.8.8.1 Human solidarity

Human solidarity, as a principle of community development, implied a shared feeling or spirit of unity, a common responsibility for the present and future of the community, with members bearing a social responsibility, a duty, and participating in the making and implementation of decision regarding public affairs (Ntini, 2006:39).

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Anyanwu (1988:11) contends that its common responsibility enables people to establish and maintain cooperative and harmonious relationship. This principle of community development promotes interdependency, thus making each individual responsible for his or her achievements well as the achievement of others. Anyanwu (1988:11) concludes that this may therefore bring about gradual and self-chosen changes in the life of a community, with a minimum of stress and disruption and community development uses methods that promote human solidarity as a principle of community development. Furthermore, Anyanwu (1988:11) reiterates that the impact upon people of group discussions, democratic organisations, and the involvement of large numbers of people in discussions and actions, is more effective in community development than putting infrastructures in place. It is believed that by working together in most development activities, a sense or spirit of solidarity develops as the community becomes more democratic.

2.8.8.2 Social equity

Ntini (2006:39) contends that social equity, as a principle of community development, entails that the nature of social organisation practiced in community development provide for appropriate opportunities for all individuals to participate and develop themselves essences of equity, and allows for self-actualization through increased and continuous participation. Community members are free to analyse their role and to participate in a responsible and creative way in meetings and unexpected situations. Community development, as both the philosophy and practice, should be able to offer these opportunities.

2.8.8.3 Respect for others

Ntini (2006:40) argues that respect for others involves acceptance of all other human beings as fellows, and a refusal to be blinded of their common human condition by race, nationality, social status, or other attributes. One may understand this principle to mean that every individual in a community should view himself or herself and others as ends and means to developing the community. Ntini (2006:40) further stresses that everyone's effort should be respected and even external assistance in community development must be a function of people's self-help.

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2.8.8.4 Continuing activism

Ntini (2006:340) points out that the central principle of continuing activism is that people are agents of the development of which they are the beneficiaries. It means participation in power-sharing and decision making, and having a positive attitude towards the practical realisation of the aims of a development programme. Furthermore, Ntini (2006:40) contends that continuing activism basically aims to move popular action to involve everyone, and to persuade all others for its purpose. As a social movement, it therefore follows that it will encourage people to resist anything that oppress them, and it attempts to ensure that they will overcome whatever tend to jeopardise the achievements of the aims of its ideology (Ntini, 2006:40).

2.8.9 Forms of public participation

Lowe (1998:18) point out that the recommended models of public participation are the ones that focus on territory, diversity and optimization of local resources and those that seek to enhance the particular strength of rural locality by developing the potential of local actors; for example, individuals, businesses, communities, and voluntary organizations, as well as its cultural and natural assets. Mogaladi (2007:25) contends that governance plays a major role in ensuring sustainable development through public participation in the decision making of local development planning, and the so-called consultation of stakeholders is no longer adequate; for example, stakeholders often demand genuinely cooperative decision-making, if not outright control over policy decision making.

Lowe (1998:18) argues that public participation is about power and how it is redistributed, and that local groups cannot gain control without others losing some and that in principle, the pursuit of participation, as a development objectives should involve a greater transfer of power than when it is used as a means of development planning or implementation. To transfer power from the officials to the people staying in the rural areas in the study area there is a need for educating, informing, planning and developing skills of the communities. Moseley and Cherret (no date:8) identified public meetings, adult education and training centres, village appraisals, exhibitions and fairs, media and telecommunications, and these and other tools of public participation such as explained below:

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- **Public meetings** are useful in publicizing projects and providing open debates, and they could be optimal platform for municipalities to share information about the needs of their communities and to give clarity on issues related to integrated development planning. MacKay (2004:43) contends that community members and leaders, politicians, political structures, local council members could use these meetings to promote public participation on developmental issues.

- **Adult basic education and training (ABET)**, Adult basic education and training play a determined role in the active involvement of local people, most particularly in the implementation of development projects (Moseley and Cherret, n.d.:8). In the villages such as Shikundu village in the area of study, there are Adult Basic Education and Training (ABET) centres operating in some of the primary and high schools of each village in the study and this provides a bigger opportunity for effective community participation in local government.

- **Village appraisals**, These are self administered community surveys for local people to formally identify their common problems and opportunities and the action required to tackle them (Moseley and Cherret, no date:8).

- **Exhibitions and fairs, and media and telecommunication**, can be used for bringing projects to public attention and eliciting popular responses (Moseley and Cherret, n.d.:8). Furthermore, Moseley and Cherret (no date:8), provide for widespread and regular dissemination of information and debate about development projects and programmes.

- **Public hearing**, Public hearing may be held in strategic areas closer to the communities Swell and Coppock (1997:14). Mosley and Cherret (no date:8) and Swell and Coppock (1997:14) argue that these tools of participation are appropriate at different stages of the development process and with different groups. Mogaladi (2007:28) contends that applying these forms of participation will depend on the phase of the IDP process as well as the category of the people and their role in the process. Furthermore, Mogaladi (2007:28) advocates that other forms of participation include demonstrations, protest meetings, lobbying, public hearings and public meetings, letters to the editors of newspapers and

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magazines, letters to politicians, establishment of organisations and circulating newsletters, pamphlets, and brochures. Other forms of public participation include animators, community networks or forums, cooperatives or community enterprise and rural development partnership.

2.8.10 Techniques of participation

Participation is a complex mechanism, and in effect there is no single blue print, hence each are characterised by different dynamics and demographics, and this view is held while taking cognisance of the fact that development does not occur successfully if beneficiaries are not part and parcel of the process of planning and implementation of the process, and this raises the question as to whether public participation is the solution for social and economic development (Parnell, Pieterse, Swilling, and Woodridge, 2002:27). Furthermore, Parnell *et al.* (2002:27) further argue that public participation can slow delivery as it is time consuming and expensive process. Graham (1995:55) contends that politicians could possibly hijack the process by seeing them as potential adversaries in the process of governing. In addition, Graham (1995:55) asserts that this is not a foreseeable threat in the near future due to power pressure groups within South Africa.

Putu (2006:13) points out that consultation could also be an issue of dispute, and participation between the municipality and the communities would be on the level of policy formulation, priorities and strategies and the implementation of it will be facilitated by municipality. Furthermore, Putu (2006:13) further alludes that it is a long-term benefit, as such empowerment and capacity of the communities outweigh those of a situation whereby participation does not take place, and this approach is important at all levels of planning cycle, decision-making, problem solving as this is integral to the process of empowerment and participation. To echo with the views of Heymans and Totemeyer (1989:31), at this stage a fitting description of local government would be to speculate that "local government in South Africa is in a state of flux which increased public participation in the municipality is of crucial importance if democratic and representative framework is to become a success at local level".

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Heymans and Totemeyer (1989:31) [illegible] that in the South African context; it is undoubtedly that public participation is essential for nurturing the young and emerging democracy, as it sets a good foundation for government and society relations. Heymans and Totemeyer (1989:31) further suggest that the essentials of public participation serves to deepen democracy, can increase effectiveness of policy formulation and implementation, create an enabling environment for empowerment, and capacity building in previously marginalised communities, as the process is proactive rather than being merely reactive. The empirical evidence from Shikundu community revealed that every community member has the right of say in the affairs of the local municipality.

2.8.11 Challenges of public participation

Kabemba (2004:13) contends that for the efficacy of community consultation, participatory mechanisms should involve disadvantaged groups such as women, youth, the urban or rural poor, and the disabled in decision making process Nyalunga (2006:5) stresses out that such mechanism should acknowledge that participation is not a once off process but rather an ongoing process that should engage multiplicity of stakeholders, including the poor in the preparation of the budget of local government. Furthermore, Nyalunga (2006:6) alludes that the participatory process of decision making will not strengthen public-private partnership but also translate into major beneficial consequences; for example, efficiency, equity, good governance, and sustainability in the planning and management of community affairs. The situation at Shikundu community shows that stakeholders do consult community members for any development activity. On the other hand, there are a number of respondents who revealed that stakeholders did not provide information about the service to be provided. At the same time, there is a portion of Shikundu community members who fully participate in community development projects whenever they are invited by community leadership for the purpose.

Nyalunga (2006:6) suggests that the transformation of the local government system has taken place within a framework that endeavours to spearhead public participation as a cornerstone of local democracy and development and as a new phenomenon, public participation is still faced with numerous challenges. Kabemba (2004:13) alludes that participatory structures must be de-linked from party politics, the roles,

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and responsibilities of the various stakeholders involved in the quest for development and participation must be defined. Nyalunga (2006:6) aggravates that there is a need for clear communication channels between municipalities and community based structures; to transform the relationship of mistrust that currently exists between all participatory agents; to facilitate a flow of information; encourage municipality outreach programmes. In addition, Nyalunga (2006:6) concurs that there is a need for capacitating of municipalities and stakeholders working on issues of community consultation; to make IDP representatives forums proactive and accessible to people; to educate communities and address apathy; to build networks with stakeholders and practitioners. This empirical study revealed that a certain portion of Shikundu community members regard public participation as an important mechanism for development whereas some do not.

With reference to the various legislative guidelines the government has put in place Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, 1996, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), The White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery 1997, The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998), Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000), Promotion of Access to Information Act, 2000 (Act No. 2 of 2000), Municipal Planning Performance Management Regulations, 2001, and Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003). Nyalunga (2006:7) laments that even though one finds legislative requirements and guidelines geared towards the creation of accountable and transparent government, they are ineffective, due to the following problems:

- Party politicisation of development and participatory structures;
- Lack of commitment by municipalities to prioritise public participation;
- The slow pace of basic service delivery. The lack of access to basic social services does not only hamper participation but also deter ordinary South Africans from enjoying a decent standards of living;
- General lack of capacity amongst stakeholders;
- Access to information; and
- Failure to recognise and work closely with community-based organisations.

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Cornwell (2003:67) points out that [illegible] participation in development planning will go a long way towards ensuring more suitable development does not mean that it is easy to elicit participation. Furthermore, Cornwell (2003:67) states that participation remains a theoretical ideal, rather than practical reality. Mogaladi (2007:34) stresses that the high social inequalities cause non-participation among the poorer marginalised communities because they have a feeling of powerless and they do not believe that their inputs can have any impact on final plan. Mogaladi (2007:34) further argues that the feeling of powerless increase non-participation of the people in development planning and it is therefore crucial that they are empowered to make meaningful inputs.

Tshishonga and Mbambo (2008:773) points out that some of the reasons attributed to ineffective participation includes community or citizen participation which is often reduced to participation by elite, civil society (Non-Governmental Organizations), business and others with access to resources. Tshishonga and Mbambo (2008:773) go on to indicate that participation is not accessible to the majority of the population in societies characterised by inequality. In addition, there is a growing belief that electoral politics and representatives of democracy have become passive and people who are reluctant to participate in community activity as they do not have enough information to act responsibly (Tshishonga and Mbambo, 2008:773). There is a need to make quick decisions and to base decisions on the best available scientific and technical information.

Dresbach (1992:27) points out that, the situations that may threaten people's life styles may elicit citizen participation and this is particularly true of issues that have particular impact on the communities, such as the construction of a dam, the location of a solid waste facility, consolidation of schools, or the establishment of zoning ordinances. Dresbach (1992:27) further stresses that whether people's perceptions are accurate or inaccurate it makes little difference, and if they perceive to be threatened, they often organize volunteer groups to counter efforts to establish changes. The principle of citizen participation involves citizens, which will voluntarily participate in a community activity when they see some aspect of their way-of-life threatened, or when threatening issues often seem morally, socially, economically, religiously, and soon are unacceptable to a group. Makumbe (1996:2) point out that the current challenge facing development circles is to search for human centred development

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strategies which emphasise active mobilisation and participation of the people of the grassroots level.

Anderson (1990:11) points out that unfulfilled expectations may be yet another challenge of participation, and can be limited to the mere sanctioning of plans and policies and to acquisition of respect by the local authorities in the community. Atkinson (1992:8) affirms that one can predict that people who felt that their participation will have little or no effect on the activities of local government will be reluctant to participate in the development process, and this attitude may also be the results of people's past experience, in which they have participated but have not had any noticeable effect on the course of events. Atkinson (1992:8) further stresses out that the most obvious reason for this behaviour may be lack of adequate information, because people believe that their participation will achieve much more less than it is actually expected. Anderson (1990:11) stipulates that citizen participation in the planning process can be very costly unwieldy and time-consuming, and the challenges of participation in local government is therefore to make citizen participation in the planning process to be less expensive, and less demanding to its supporters. Similarly, there are cases of individuals at Shikundu communities of reluctance from participating on development projects, physically or withdrawing their contributions on meetings for attitude that theirs would not be considered.

Dukeshire and Thurlow (2002:2) assert that in order for the rural communities to play an active role in policy-making process, it is necessary for their members to have access to resources. These resources include adequate funding, government training programs, education, leaders and volunteers to support rural projects and initiatives. However, many rural communities tend to lack one or more of these resources, a situation which interferes with their ability to effectively impact the policy-making process. Furthermore, Dukeshire and Thurlow (2002:2) contend that having inadequate resources negatively impacts a rural community's ability to effectively influence and develop policy compared to other role players in the policy-making process. For example, corporations and professional organizations often have access to large amounts of financial and human resources. This creates an inequity whereby community organizations that may be equally or even more affected by policy change do not have the same opportunity to participate in and influence the process.

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2.8.12 Limits of public participation

Hanekom (1987:43) points out that effective participation will only exist where the public actively take part in those matters which affect them directly. Public participation is possible where the public are interested in matters under discussion, and the public becomes discouraged to participate in policies that involve only talking and not doing (Hanekom, 1987:43).

Furthermore, Hanekom (1987:43) concur that the limitations of public participation, which one may summarise as supporting goals of management in that government will only consider and allow participation in activities that do not disturb but support government goals. Low levels of public participation is when participation is usually low and people need motivation, resources and education to participate in policy making. Threats to professional image of public administration: usually public participation is discouraged by professionals as it may present a challenge to their expertise. Also public participation can pose potential conflict: public participation may cause conflict between interest groups and conflict between public officials. The conflict may be as a result of conflicting ideas from public and officials. Lack of government response: government seems to ignore or disregard citizen contacts; for example, unions, pressure groups, etc. which may be because the reason for the existence of the group is not well defined. Time cost and benefits: public participation can be costly because the targeted portion of the public that should participate (poor illiterate) do not participate; representativity:

It is sometimes confusing whether the small group of active public-spirited citizen is representative of the views of the public at large. Attitude of public administrators: generally public administrators dislike public participation because they believe that it has a negative effect on relations between government and communities. The attitude of administrators may account for the fear or reluctance that citizens generally reveals in approaching public administrators through citizen participation and contact. Participation mechanisms: usually the official provision of public participation is afforded through research institutions; for example, statutory appointed commissions or committee of enquiry, and official invitation to the public to submit evidence and references. It is argued that participation may result primarily in the participation of citizens from urban areas, as they are more informed and more interested in

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participation than those from rural areas. This is so because many public participation activities are not accessible to previously disadvantaged citizens. Lack of information: public officials have a tendency to discourage public participation and perceived opponents in public administration by not providing the public with enough and correct information to enable full participation. This is, sometimes, informed by fear that information disseminated to the public in an effort to gain support and poster public participation may backfire and serve to forearm the opposition.

Mogaladi (2007:28) contends that there are limits of public participation, and that it does not mean that everybody who agrees with what is in the IDP will participate in every stage of the IDP process. Roseland (2000:106) contends that the traditional approach to public demand for greater participation has been described as decide, educate, announce, and defend. Participation does not necessarily mean that everyone comes to full agreement, but rather that there is no substantial disagreement, participant; participants can live with the outcome.

Curtain (1996:256) distinguishes the two dominant models of community participation in community development. The first one is the consensus model: the consensus model puts emphasis on all people within a particular area working together and taking actions to improve the whole community. Furthermore, Curtain (1996:257) emphasises that although disparities of income and access to other resources may be recognized, the underlying assumption is that the similarity of interest is powerful enough to form the basis for building consensus, because this model cannot be applied to areas with high social inequalities among the people. The second model is the conflict model, which sees local inequalities as an expression of the structural causes of poverty and marginalization, while the model equally emphasises bringing people together to discuss their problems and organise collectively in search of solutions (Curtain, 1996:259). This model is more relevant to Shikundu community in Vhembe District which is the area of study because it is based on the socio-economic status of the majority of the people in the ward, that is, highly illiteracy, poverty and unemployment.

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Mogaladi (2007:29) point out that, it is not practically possible to involve the whole community in the planning and execution of local projects. Mosley and Cherret (n.d.:8) alludes that the scale of such involvement is too massive and the public in any case is made up of many different interests, priorities and resources. Based on this view the tendency is often to operate through the community's social and political leadership. According to Lowe (1998:25), this means applying the consensus model, for instance through ward committees and other already existing structures. However, other critics of the consensus model point out that the model reinforces existing power structures that oppress the marginalised poor and disadvantaged groups of society, like those in rural areas of South Africa (Mogaladi, 2007:29). In Ireland, Lowe (1998:25) advocates that it tended to be dominant by a small group of enthusiasts, adept at assembling the illusion of consensus that allows the interests of some to masquerade as the interest of all.

However, Mogaladi (2007:30) argues that when using the conflict model, it requires municipalities to put strategies that put more emphasis on assisting the poor and the most disadvantaged, like the people in the Shikundu communities in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. Furthermore, Mogaladi (2007:30) advocates that the strategies should guard against unintended consequences whereby the strategies work largely for the rich and not for the poor. Lowe (2004:26) contends that the Irish experience is indicative of these unintended consequences during the first European Anti-Poverty Programme in 1970-1980.

2.8.13 The benefits of public participation in community development

Creighton (2005:18) and Scott (2009:36) list the following benefits of public participation:

- "Improved quality of decisions,
- Consensus building,
- Increased ease of implementation,
- Avoiding worst-case confrontations,
- Maintaining credibility and legitimacy,
- Anticipating public concerns and attitude, and
- Developing civil society".

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In support of the above, Theron, Fraser and Davids (2007:2) allude that public participation strategies have two main benefits for the democratic policy-making process, namely first, participation leads to a better policy outcomes; and second, participation assists the public in developing the capacity for improving their lives. Masango (2002:55) also expresses that taking the input of the public into account during the processes of policy-making and implementation is crucial, since it contributes towards combating dictatorship and promotes principals of good governance.

Hanekom (1987:34) points out that, the benefit of involvement are that people are more likely to be committed to a project, programme or policy if they are involved in its planning, and preparation, ant they can identify with it and even see it as their plan. Hanekom (1987:34) alludes that the benefit of educating people about participation results on the enhancement of the quality of citizenship in that the educated citizens is enabled to exercise his or her judgement, contribute to the debate about planning, and is aware of societal problems and the difficulties of finding solutions to them.

Atkinson (1992:9) points out that the advantages to be gained from active participation in the community affairs include that the citizens can bring about desired change by expressing their desire, either individually or through a community group, the individual learn how to make desired changes; the citizens learn to understand and appreciate the individual needs and interests of all community group; the citizens can learn how to resolve conflicting interests for the general welfare of the group; and the individual being to understand group dynamics as it applies to mixed groups.

According to Breuer (2002:12) the voices of communities provide a convincing argument for giving priority to community participation as an active two-way process that may be initiated and sustained both by individuals and communities and by local authorities, and other local organisations. Community participation can thus make an important contribution to achieving a number of objectives, such as increased democracy. Increased democracy in community participation, decision-making, planning and action is a human right. An increasing number of citizens are disillusioned with government and want to see more participatory approaches to democracy (Breuer, 2002:12). It is increasingly being argued that new styles and structures of governance are needed that transcend people being viewed as passive

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recipients of services provided and by elected representatives to enable genuine participation and empowerment of citizen (Breuer, 2002:12).

Breuer (2002:12) further stresses that combating exclusion may result in community development and community organizing often works with specific groups of the population, especially those that are marginalised and disadvantaged; for example, the changing contexts within and between European countries such as the increase in asylum seekers can pose special cultural and political challenges and requires workers be equipped with relevant skills, knowledge and attitude. By giving these communities a voice, community participation can play an important role in combating social exclusion within the societies. In addition, empowering people, mobilizing resources and energy, develops a holistic and integrated, and better collective decisions resulting in more effective service delivery towards development (Breuer, 2002:12).

2.8.14 Promoting and fostering a conducive atmosphere for public participation

Nyalunga (2006:6) point out that some municipalities have an astonishing record of public participation, and budgets that are allocated to promote participation and also to render support to legitimate participatory structures. Other municipalities are battling to promote community participation due to lack of human resources and institutional capacity. Furthermore, Nyalunga (2006:6) asserts that the non-availability of councillors, especially those who work part-time is another hindrance to community consultation, and another problem relates to party politicization of community participation and Ward committees. This in turn marks the involvement of certain participatory structures and ordinary citizens that are not partisans. Friedman (2004:15) stresses that the rampant wave of protests staged countryside in various municipalities are also indication of the weakness that are symptomatic of defective public participation structures such as municipalities and Ward Committees, and the continuous redefinition of municipal boundary affects the equilibrium of community participation.

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Kabemba (2004:15) points out that (...) participation should be seen as an ongoing process rather than an event, it is a process that neither happens naturally nor over night, it requires a strategic and pragmatic interventions and efforts, and the factors as furnished below could help to strengthen and facilitate public participation: continuous consultation with the citizenry and involvement of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs). Nyalunga (2006:6) contends that consultation should be implemented in a step by step way where responsibilities of all participatory structures are clearly outlined, and citizen participation should not be reduced to participation only by elites.

Furthermore, Nyalunga (2006:6) provides that organized civil society, in the form of predominantly Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), business, interest groups and ordinary citizens (especially the poor) are critically agents of the participatory process; promotion of innovative ways of popular participation as opposed to the dominance of Ward Committees over the participatory space; recognition of the contribution of different sectors and interest groups as opposed to the politicization of the participatory space; ensure improved information dissemination and link Ward Committees with community structures; capacity building. Kabemba (2004:16) stresses that it is important that municipalities are capacitated about the role and importance of participation; budget allocations for community consultation, and the government needs to empower people so that they can feel confident and that they have the capacity to confront their problems and find the way towards solutions.

Bucccus, Hemson, Hicks, and Piper, (2007) assert that nowhere has the emphasis on public participation been more keenly felt than in the local municipalities. Mostly this is because it is the sphere of government where the greatest constitutional and statutory exist .perhaps it is also because it is the sphere of government perceived as "closest to the people". In light of this, Craythorne (2006:313) argues that there is a moral and legislative obligation on municipalities to develop a culture of participatory democracy where a strong relationship exists between government and civil society in the local level. The aforementioned responsibility of local government is well documented in the South African Constitution and the relevant policies of South Africa relating to public participation. In this light, Piper and Deacon (n.d.) stress four municipal responsibilities to facilitate the creation of participatory democracy culture at local level. They are:

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- To ensure the correct consultation of ward committees;
- To train ward councillors and ward committee members;
- To establish resource committees and, perhaps most importantly; and
- To clearly define the role of ward committees in council processes.

The aforementioned points are critical to effective public participation since ward committee members need to be empowered and trained with regard to the various policies, by-laws and processes of council that would enable them to perform at a satisfactory level (Arends, 2011:33). Ward councillors also need to be empowered with regard to all the new developments within the local authorities and this will enable them to pass the information to the ward committees, who would in turn pass it to the communities. Therefore, continuous training by all stakeholders involved in ensuring efficient public participation has a knock-on effect on how communities are empowered with regard to the service delivery processes. The ward committees' role in council is of an advisory nature meaning that ward councillors could not use the inputs made by the former. This poses possible challenges in respect of the functionality of the ward committee since the member have varying view points to that of ward councillors (Arends, 2011:33).

The White Paper on local Government (1998) identifies four level of citizen participation by the public. The first is as voters in order to ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote. The second is through citizens who express their views during and after the policy development process to ensure that policies reflect community preferences as far as possible. The third is as consumers and end-users who expect value for money, affordable services and courteously and responsive services. These are in line with Batho Pele principles since both documents emphasise value for money and the need for the public to be furnished with information and to be treated courteously. The last level of citizen participation is through organised partners involved in the mobilisation of resources for development via for-profit business, non-governmental organizations and community-based organisations.

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2.8.15 Building community capacity to engage with municipalities

The issue of the agency of poor people in particular, which contributes towards their attitude and opinion formation, and whether they can be motivated to engage with policy debates came up resoundingly in discussion forums with civil society stakeholders (Hick, 2006:6). Basic needs have an impact on people's ability to engage with policy processes, and that those lacking in basic service delivery experience a sense of alienation from government.

In addition, Hick (2006:7) advocates that several authors refer to basic resources and capacity required by participant in order to make full use of government participatory processes. Cornwall (2004:63) speaks of the need to assess what work is required to groups prior to their participation in a process, to ensure that they participate with greater equity (Cornwall, 2004:63). This includes as a starting point capacity building to develop an understanding of the policy framework and process, and to enhance technical and planning capacities. It also extends to include improved advocacy skills to mobilise and organise outside of the policy arena to challenge any barriers to participation, as well as essential awareness-raising and conscientisation (Gaventa, 2003:117). Ntini (2006:70) asserts that the important role played by NGOs in providing support to participatory initiatives is acknowledged, including providing marginalized groups with access to information and material support, as well as establishing 'vertical lines' of communication, linking grassroots issues and structures with national processes.

2.9 THE INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT OF PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mubangizi (2007:9) points out that the call to promote popular participation in development programmes is echoed by international declarations and charters. Apart from the 1989 Manila Declaration on People's Participation and Sustainable Development, The African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation (ACPPDT (1990) as well as The United Nations (UN) Agenda 21 of 1992 both point to the importance of popular participation in shaping national and community development policies and programmes.

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Oakley (1991:vii) points out that the inclusion of public participation in any development initiatives has been recognised as inseparable from development as the disenchantment with development strategies in the mid-1970s led to the emergence of participation as a major new force in development thinking. Davy (2006:9) advocates that one of the most important lessons learnt is that the recurrent failure of development initiatives occurs due to a lack of adequate and appropriate public participation and its supportive techniques and strategies. The importance of public participation internationally will be highlighted as follows:

2.9.1 Participatory processes and approaches to development

Long (2001:5) stresses that public participation and its processes is being asserted as being a fundamental part of people's right to choose how they are governed and how they together with their governments, carry out the work of development. Kotze and Kellerman (1997:37) point out the approaches used when initiating development is incomplete without due consideration and participation of the beneficiaries, and this can only be done via a multidisciplinary approach towards public participation. Furthermore, Kotze and Kellerman (1997:37) provides that this approach should be flexible and change with the ever-changing environment, as development is in context specific and no two development initiatives and processes are the same.

The Africa Institute of South Africa (AISA (2002:295)) stipulates that one of the reasons for the African Charter was to articulate and give renewed focus to the concepts of democratic development, people's solidarity and creativity and self-reliance and to formulate policy recommendations for national governments, popular organisations and the international community in order to strengthen participatory processes and patterns of development. Furthermore, AISA (2002:295) provides that public participation is hindered by the past economic crisis, which cannot be overcome unless the structures pattern and political context of the process of socio-economic development are appropriately altered.

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2.9.2 An enabling environment

The Africa Institute of South Africa (2002:296) provides that an enabling environment is recommended for the practice of public participation as it brings about self-reliance for beneficiaries to take responsibility for their own development and to create environment in which they can become owners of the development process and also increasing the legitimacy of that process. The Manila Declaration (1989) asserts that various structural, social and administrative obstacles hinder the public participation processes and it is inevitable that the public participation process will be carried out, without some form of hindrance, but governments must nonetheless be encouraged and assisted in creating a policy environment for citizen action. Responsive institutions and regulatory policies that enable and not hinder local participation are necessary in creating an enabling environment, in turn, an enabling environment facilitate the participation of all stakeholders and not just for poor in creating responsive institutions (World Bank, 1996:145).

2.9.3 Sustainability

According to the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED, 1987:43)) sustainability means a development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. Kotze and Kellerman (1997:62) contends that the process to follow in order to create sustainable development has yet to be formulated as it still difficult to conceptualise sustainable development within a reductionist fragmented paradigm as it calls for a holistic approach to development whereby the so-called experts and beneficiaries collectively work towards a common goal. Furthermore, Kotze and Kellerman (1997:62) stress that a development process is needed which places the beneficiaries at the centre of the development process independently, without assistance from the so-called expert.

Sustainable development requires the integration of social, economic and biophysical factors in decisions and implementations, to ensure that development serves the present and future generations (Department of Water Affairs and Forestry (DWAF, 2001:v)). Davy (2006:11) provides that it is only through public participation that the beneficiaries have a better understanding of the three dimensions of sustainability namely, economic growth; social equity and ecological integrity.

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2.9.4 Empowerment

According to the Africa Institute of South Africa (2002:298) mobilisation of people in development is central to the public participation process to ensure the empowerment of beneficiaries to effectively involve themselves in creating the structures and in designing policies and programmes that serve the interests of all as well as effectively contributing to the development process and share equity in its benefits. Oakley (1991:6) and Davy (2006:11) stress the three broad interpretation of public participation that has been formulated to include participation as contribution; as organisation and as empowerment.

Swanepoel (2000:135) points out that empowerment is seen as the development of skills and abilities to enable rural people to manage better, have a say in or negotiate with existing development delivery systems. Davy (2006:11) states that people must have the power to influence the decisions that affect their lives because without this participation the ultimate development entirely becomes ineffective.

2.9.5 Indigenous knowledge

The United Nations (1992) stipulates that the indigenous knowledge of beneficiaries are knowledge that only people have and which will contribute to public participation strategies and ultimately to development. It is often overlooked by those responsible for implementing development projects and communities; people should be allowed to define their needs and set their own priorities and this constitutes the participatory approach to development.

According to the United Nations' Agenda 21 (UN, 1992) the government should aim at fulfilling objectives such as the establishment of a process to empower indigenous people and their communities; establishment, where appropriate, of arrangements to strengthen the active participation of indigenous people and their communities in the national formulation of policies, laws and programmes relating to resource management and other development processes that may affect them. Initiation of proposals for such policies and programmes; and the involvement of indigenous people and their communities at the national and local levels resource management and conservation strategies and other relevant programmes should be established to support and review sustainable development strategies such as those suggested in other programme areas of Agenda 21.

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2.9.6 Bottom-up approaches to development

Davy (2006:12) points out that the top-down, technocratic approach used by organizations or governments in implementing development projects have taken the resources out of the hands of the relevant communities. The national government and international agencies continued to believe in top-down, externally designed development programmes, despite mounting evidence of their insufficiency and lack of sustainability (Long, 2001:xvi). The role and status of the technocrat and technocratic approaches contribute not only to the devaluation of indigenous knowledge and experience but also to the sidetracking of the role of people's emotions and feelings in development (Kotze and Kellerman, 1997:35).

Davy (2006:13) contends that this blueprint approach has resulted in the deepening of the poverty cycle and greater underdevelopment as development officials do not implement participatory processes with the stakeholders and measures are not developed to support the participation of stakeholders. Davy (2006:13) further eludes that a bottom-up approach is advocated whereby the beneficiaries have the opportunity to play an active role in decision-making processes which affects them. Oakley (1991:4) states that the realisation of the inadequacies of total dependences on a professionally dominant manner of intervention has resulted in a search for alternative ways to bring about development and the results have led to bottom-up approaches to development, putting people first and putting the last first.

2.9.7 Women's opportunity, abilities and roles in community development

In view of the vital and central role played by women in family well-being and maintenance, their special commitment to the survival, protection and development of children as well as survival of society and their important role in the process of African recovery and reconstruction, special emphasis should be put by all people in terms of eliminating biases particularly with respect to the reduction of the burden on women and taking positive action to ensure their full equity and effective participation in the development process (AISA, 2002:299). Sopchokchai (1996:20) points out that women effectively and successfully participate in the development process, and men, particularly village leaders recognize women's abilities and the necessity that they be included in community development.

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The World Bank (1996:148) provides that it is important to realise that some issues and constraints related to participation are gender-specific and stem from the fact that men and women play different roles, have different needs and face different constraints on a number of different levels. Davy (2006:13) provides that women's participation in development activities has been recognised, but women still have various social, cultural, legal, economic, time and mobility constraints which limit their capacity to participate and this calls for the use of appropriate methodologies in seeking women's views; gender-responsive poverty assessment and the involvement of women in policy work.

2.10 PEOPLE-CENTRED DEVELOPMENT

The founder of the people-centred approach, Korten (1990:47) sees public participation as an undeniable part of people-centred development as every person has the right to participate in the decisions that shape their lives and the opportunity to be a recognised and respected contributor to family, community and society. It roots power in local people and communities, and gives their rights and needs precedence over any rights and needs claimed by corporations and the institutions of the state. People-centred development shifts the emphasis in development action to people, rather than to objects and production and to the enhancement of their capacity to participate in the development process (Kotze and Kellerman, 1997:36).

Davy (2006:14) point out that people-centred development incorporates mutual self-help, self-reliance and sustainable use of resources for the beneficiaries of development and is focused on the use of all resources in such a manner that the beneficiaries are in control of their own development as well as that of the surrounding environment. Public participation forms a fundamental part of people-centred development as this contributes to the overall objectives of sustainable development. Meyer and Theron (2000:156) contend that authentic development enhances the sustainability of the community, and it must be understood as a process of economic, political and social change that need not necessarily involve growth. Sustainable human communities can be achieved only through people-centred development.

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2.11 DIFFERENT TYPES OF INVOLVEMENT IN PARTICIPATION

This portion presents three different types of participation in community development, which are as follows: ratification, negotiation, and execution ant they are discussed below.

2.11.1 Ratification

Kotze (2006:76) points out that ratification means the approval of decisions or actions after they have been taken, in fact, this means legitimizing decisions or actions after someone else has taken them and this is a very weak form of participation in that it can only demonstrate support but cannot influence the contents of the decision or action concerned.

2.11.2 Negotiation

Kotze (2006:77) contends that negotiation implies a direct involvement by parties in discussion leading up to joint decision making through agreement on policy issues in a peaceful way, and negotiation does not guarantee an agreement (or a negotiated settlement), but does present an opportunity to be part of the decision-making process by trying to persuade an opponent, bargain for a compromise, or threaten with force if one's views are not accepted. A veto can thus be exercised over a decision and it is a very effective form of participation.

2.11.3 Execution

Execution is direct involvement by in the planning, drafting, implementation and evaluation of policy programmes once the decision to adopt them has been taken and this is the most effective type of participation members because it presents the opportunity to monitor and be part of the process of execution to ensure that the policy is being implemented correctly (Kotze, 2006:77).

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2.12 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DEMOCRACY AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

Putu (2006:11) points out that attention has to be drawn to the compatibility of public participation with democracy in general, in accordance with the ethos of representativity, and this issue becomes more relevant in the South African context, where public participation is seen not only to play a pivotal role but also enhance local democracy. Further Putu (2006:11) alludes that since the new government took office, different expectations have been raised concerning policy on how government should relate to its community, however, there is a general agreement that participation is a key to success of local development process, and by this, it is implicitly implied that there has to be a representative and administrative system through which the views of the citizens are heard and are fed into policy formulation. Swilling and Monterio (1994:17) stress that the new type of government should promote exclusivity around development planning.

In review of participatory public policy initiatives in rural communities, Taylor (2003:33) points out the ongoing tension between representative and participatory democracy: "Not enough thought has gone into the relationship between the two with the result that many politicians are no longer sure of their role and feel threatened by the power that they feel is being given to community representatives, and it is this that creates "wounded lions" at all levels that frustrate the rhetoric from the centre". Similarly, Gaventa (2004:8) expresses that citizen participation is not simply an exercise of political involvement by ordinary citizens in the policy process, but rather includes a diverse set of collective actors. Furthermore, Gaventa (2004:9) stresses that the democratic impulse needs to be strengthened by finding new ways to enable citizens to share in decision-making that affect them. The truth is that in a mature society representatives will make better decisions if they take full account of popular opinion and encourage public debate on the big decisions affecting people's lives.

Nzimakwe and Reddy (2008:671) point out that for the democratic government to exist, the public must govern or at least be actively involved in government. Without community participation democratic government will cease to exist, and also vibrant democracy insists, therefore, that community participation should be positively encouraged by those in power. This would require that the right of every community member to participate in those government decisions, policies and actions that directly

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affect him or her be legally protected. Thwala and Reddy (2008:671) further suggests that for democracy to come to fruition, it is furthermore important that facilities and instruments of participation be accessible to every member of the community. Clapper in Bekker (2004:56) stresses that when government violates this inalienable democratic right of any individual to participate and exercise an influence on the issues that directly affect him or her, it disqualifies itself from being called democratic.

Tshishonga and Mbambo (2008:769) stress that participatory democracy represents framework for direct democracy where procedures for political participation are used to provide real possibilities for the enrichment of local political and administrative life, as well as for improvements in the responsiveness of public services to the needs of citizens. Ife and Tesoriero (2006:146) argue that in participatory democracy people participate directly in making decisions. Furthermore, Ife and Tesoriero (2006:146) state that in the local government sphere where participatory models are achievable, there has been little attempt to develop participatory options. Academics argue that participatory has four characters that are vital for community development namely; decentralisation, accountability, education and obligation.

Atkinson (1992:7) points out that participation is a means of balancing the demands for central control against the demands for concern for the unique requirements of local government, and rural communities and the more distant any form of government is from public accessibility, the more likely the planning of unpopular projects, programmes or policies becomes. Benveniste (1989:45) stresses out that participation provides a mechanism to ensure the democratisation of the planning process, and in most countries participation in local government is considered a basic democratic right of the people, and this is linked to the notion of popular sovereignty, in that local government should be a creation of the citizenry rather than a separate entity standing above it.

Davids, Theron, and Maphunye (2005:113) point out that public participation includes the people's involvement throughout the decision-making process. Clapper (2004:56) argues that citizenship should be the main purpose served by public administration, as it holds the advantages of making citizens more active and interested in local government and administration issues, encouraging greater accommodation and

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consensus between citizen groups and between citizen and administrators. Nzimakwe and Reddy (2008:672) suggest that the right of any individual to participate is qualified by that individual meeting basic standards of citizenship, such as sanity, loyalty, capability, willingness, and other criteria that meet the tenets of democratic fairness and reasonableness as determined and accepted by the public as a whole.

Atkinson (1992:7) alludes that participation should therefore be the norm in any country striving towards a democratic form of government, participation is a means of fostering equality, has the potential to create a network which could enable a much more divergent form of thinking to take place, and this is based on the democratic principle that all citizens should have an equal opportunity to exert influence through participation in the planning that all citizens have an equal opportunity to exert influence through participation in the planning process of the local authorities if they choose to do so.

2.13 STRUCTURES THAT ALLOW A MEANINGFUL PARTICIPATION

Rural community citizens often feel frustrated when trying to have their policy concerns heard by government and this frustration may be due in part to a structure that seems to limit opportunities for community members to community with government. Changing this structure requires the development of mechanisms that provides both communities with a voice and government with a means to hear community concerns. In Shikundu community there is need to create mechanisms that will allow the government to listen to and represent rural concerns at government table. Mogaladi (2007:30) states that there are structures required for capacitating communities for meaningful participation in local government affairs which include South African Local Government (SALGA) officials, Ward councillors, Ward committees, Community Development Worker (CDW), Traditional leaders, Project Steering Committee members, Small Business owners, and Civic associations.

2.13.1 South African Local Government Association (SALGA) officials

Mogaladi (2007:56) points out that South African Local Government Associations has been mandated to train ward councillors and ward committees. In this study, amongst other things, the challenge of public participation in community development is investigated.

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2.13.2 Ward Councillors

Nyalunga (2006:3) point out that ward councillors are in direct contact to local government, usually, people will turn to a councillor for direct advice and support, and once the problem has been referred to a councillor, the person should demand to know what the councillor is doing or has done to deal with the problem. Kabemba (2004:11) argues that elected representatives are faced with a major challenge in promoting and enhancing people participation, especially in rural communities, where local government structures and systems are still new. It is much critical for the councillors to serve as representatives of the people irrespective of their political affiliations.

Ward councillors are largely perceived as ineffective in advancing community participation at the local government level (Nyalunga, 2006:4). This inefficiency is sometimes caused by among other things, lack of capacity and incentives to persuade them to work whole heartedly towards the betterment of their constituencies. Kabemba (2004:11) argues that whilst ward councillors are the key component of community based involvement, many municipalities still do not have formal or functional ward councillors in place. Furthermore, Kabemba (2004:11) reiterates that in municipalities where ward councillors are operational, these are marked by uncertainty and in some instances, chaos, and this largely stems from the fact that there appears to be no clear cut understanding of the role that ward councillors are supposed to perform. Nyalunga (2006:2) advocates that the lack of representation is exacerbated by the relationship of mistrust that continues to haunt local government stakeholders.

Kabemba (2004:11) states that community members have certain expectations of what they expect of their ward councillors, yet councillors do not meet these expectations. Kabemba (2004:11) also argues that there is no clarity on the roles of ward councillors and Proportional Representation (PR) councillors, there are tensions between ward councillors and councillors. There are also limited resources available to enable ward councillors to function better and improve efficiency. Nyalunga (2006:4) alludes that this is perhaps the most widespread challenge facing ward councillors in their quest to involve communities in matters of local government, and the lack of understanding of roles leads to a greater ill perceptions and misconceptions

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about the performance of ward councillors and other local government stakeholders in general. Nyalunga (2006:4) also stresses that this gap should thus be an entry point for some form of awareness and capacity-building intervention.

Ward councillors serves as a linkage between the ward committee and other government level in that through effective and adequate community participation, national and provincial government levels are in a better position to assess the implementation of various national policies in specific wards, and aid further planning in terms of policy (Department of Co-Operative Governance and traditional Affairs (COGTA), 2009:15).

Arends (2011:29) alludes that ward councillors have an active role to play in public participation by co-ordinating the functions of the ward committees and to ensure that they are active within their respective sectors. Furthermore, Arends (2011:29) contends that wards councillors need to ensure that they receive training on a continuous basis in respect of the matters affecting local government in order to ensure that they stay abreast of any new developments. Since ward councillors work hand-in-hand with the ward committees, the former need to foster an open relationship with the latter and also intervene immediately if any conflicts arise within the ward committees.

2.13.3 Ward committees

The Municipal Structures Act (Act No. 117 of 1998) makes it compulsory for each ward to have a committee, and the ward councillor leads the process of establishing a ward committee. Reddy and Maharaj (2008:203) point out that ward committees are community-based advisory structures with the ward councillor as chairperson, and given the challenges of service delivery, considerable emphasis has been placed on ward committee as a mechanism to facilitate community participation. Craythorne (2006:116) notes "the object of a ward committee is to enhance participatory democracy in local government". Furthermore, Craythorne (2003:118) contends that ward committees are another option contained in the Municipal Structures Act, 1998, which stipulates that only metropolitan and local municipalities may establish such committees. In addition, Craythorne (2003:118) alludes that the object of a ward committee is to ensure that participatory democracy is enhanced in the local government sphere, and such committees are established by rules made by the council

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and consists of: the ward councillor, who is the chairperson; and not more than ten (10) other persons who are elected.

Ababio, 2007:614) points out that ward committees are designed to help achieve developmental goal, and further argues that as partners in participatory democracy, ward committees are creation of legislation and obliged to be active partners in municipal functioning in policy-making and implementation. Nzimakwe and Reddy (2008:671) stress that ward committees serve as a two-way communication channel for both government and communities on matters relating to governance and delivery of basic services. Provision has been made for the functions and powers for ward committees (Section 74 of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998). Ward committee may make recommendations directly to the ward councillor, or through the ward councillor, to the council, the executive committee and the mayor of a municipality. This line of communication depends on the capability of the ward councillor. The council may delegate duties and powers to a ward committee (Craythorne, 2003:119).

In terms of the DPLG (2005:36) communication between the citizens and ward committees is a fundamental function of ward committees. In order to execute its function, ward committees are charged with:

- Advising and assisting the ward councillor on local needs, issues and policy;
- Passing information from residents to council and back; and
- Interacting with other forums and organisations on matters affecting the wards.

Similarly, Piper (2008:42) contends that with respect to community mobilisation, ward committees need to:

- Attend to all matters that affect and benefit the community;
- Act in the best interest of the community;
- Ensure the active participation of the community in service payment campaigns, the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) process, the budgetary process, decisions about service provision, by-laws and by delaminating and chairing zonal meetings.

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2.13.4 Community Development Worker

According to the Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG (2004:17)) a community development worker is a community resource person who collaborates with other community activists to help community members to obtain information and resources from the municipality and service providers. Further the DPLG (2004:17) provides that the aim is to guide them how to meet their needs progressively, achieve goals, identify their community development needs, realise aspirations and maintain their well-being. A community development worker is expected to be living in the communities in which he or she works. Community development worker should among other things deepen insight into people's needs and resources through exchanging information, guiding, educating, providing expertise, enabling, advocating and catalyzing action. They are also expected to promote the notion of participation between themselves and local structures such as ward committees (DPLG, 2004:17).

Mogaladi (2007:30) point out that provision of human resources to the communities by local authorities is vital to build meaningful participation at community level. Mogaladi (2007:30) further argues that although public meetings and the media are appropriate for dispersing information to the communities, employment of adequate and well-trained community workers attached to a particular community is equally crucial to facilitate and increase interaction between local planning authorities and people staying in the rural areas.

2.13.5 Traditional leaders

In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Chapter 12 specifically acknowledges the institution of traditional leadership and its place and role in the system of democratic governance. Nyalunga (2006:4) point out that, another important way that communities, particularly traditional communities can participate in local government is through the structure of traditional authorities.

Tshipala (2009:20) concurs that traditional leaders are suitably placed to encourage their communities to undertake activities, such as small-scale farming and agriculture, in order to mitigate the effects of the economic slowdown that rural areas in South Africa is facing. Furthermore, Tshipala (2009:20) contends that traditional leaders are resource to strengthen the community and forms of government; for example, they are

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better located to encourage people's participation in public affairs compared to municipalities. Traditional leaders also play a role in participation and are an important component of a councillor's constituency (Nyalunga, 2006:4). The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 (Act No 41 of 2003), recognizes tribal authorities as traditional councils with important functions linked to local government (Nyalunga, 2006:4).

However, Tshipala (2009:27) provides that many functions of the traditional leaders are integral to the sustainability of rural development, these includes convening community meetings to consult on needs and priorities and to provide information; presiding over the traditional courts to maintain law and order, and resolving disputes. Nyalunga (2006:4) provides that the functions of the traditional councils are to facilitate the involvement of the traditional community in the development of a local government's Integrated Development Plan (IDP). This system of leadership is however, still faced with challenges which deters community participation. It remains a daunting task to forge coexistence of two diverse and conflicting systems of governance (Modern democracy vs. traditional authority), the party politicization of tribal structures invariably compromise the credibility and autonomy of the institution and its leadership, and the traditional leaders who are partisan bar the efforts to spearhead community participation (Nyalunga, 2006:4).

Furthermore, Nyalunga (2006:4) stresses that traditional leadership of 'Amakhosi' is flawed by a lack of a clear cut roles and functions, and the lack of capacity on the part of traditional leaders is also a problem. The Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003 which was enacted to redeem these problems had been lambasted by Amakhosi for being westernized in its provision and consultation, this has exacerbated the mistrust that exists between traditional and democratic authorities, and there is also an ongoing dispute over traditional authority boundaries and the merger of tribes (Nyalunga, 2006:4).

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2.13.6 Project Steering Committee members

Mogaladi (2007:59) contends that the project steering committee members are people who are selected by residents in a ward to monitor projects emanating from the Integrated Development Plan (IDP). They are selected per project and should report to the ward councillor, ward committee. Ward people on the projects and are responsible for signing off projects and authorizing that service providers can be paid after project completion. Furthermore, Mogaladi (2007:59) stresses that it is most crucial for these people to understand how to do the monitoring of the projects they are mandated to monitor and therefore capacitating them to play this role is vital for the success and sustainability of the projects.

2.13.7 Small Business owners

This category includes builders, electricians, plumbers and small-scale farmers. Mogaladi (2007:59) also alludes that some of the electricians, plumbers and builders who participate in community development learnt these skills from working for big business, and small-scale farmers are those people with livestock and piece of land that they use for crop production. Mogaladi (2007:59) further contends that sustainable community development is realized when community members play an active role in their own development, Small Businesses can play this active role during the implementation phase of the IDP projects like building RDP houses, toilets, installing electricity, etc, therefore want to be capacitated on how to participate effectively during certain phase of the IDP process, and this kind of participation by Small Businesses will also results in job creation and economic development in their own communities that is the core of the IDP.

2.13.8 Civic associations

Zuern (2002:11) contends that the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) has positioned itself as an intermediary between communities and local government authorities and defines itself today as a revolutionary social movement seeking to promote people-driven and people-centred development. Furthermore, Zuern (2002:11) advocates that civic structures also to assist in developing the communities, representing them and acting in partnership with such communities.

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In terms of the Constitution of the South African National Civic Organisation (SANCO) as amended and adopted by the 3rd National Conference-April 2001: SANCO therefore, commits itself to the attainment of the following goals:

- Improvement of the living conditions of all the residents of South Africans;
- Eradication of poverty, homelessness and insecurity; building of a united community and a united South Africa;
- Promotion of socio-economic and political justice for all;
- Creation of empowerment structures; job creation, wealth creation and distribution of resources;
- Attainment of social security and comfort for all;
- Contribution to the promotion and protection of the freedoms, rights, and values enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996);
- Promoting the participation of youth and women in all its activities;
- Support and promotion of the struggle for the rights of children and people with special needs;
- Contribution to the reconstruction and development in South Africa;
- Elimination of all vestiges of apartheid; and
- From time to time, collaborate with organisations and social formations that will help to attain the aims and objectives of SANCO.

According to Pieterse and Simone (1994:34) civics watch for the unfolding democracy; ensures that a community enjoys peace and welfare; fight for the ever-growing needs of the residents and counterchecks the imbalances, injustices and oppressive measures again the residents; and serve as a catalyst for development, allowing people to participate in projects and enabling them to take the initiative in development efforts. In addition, Reddy (1995:102) contends that in the past decade civic organisations have been in the forefront of organizing and mobilizing communities around a range of both bread and butter and national political issues. Furthermore, Reddy (1995:102) stresses that recently a shift has been taking place and many civics have become increasingly interested in exploring possibilities of participation in concrete development programmes; for example, issues that have

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been targeted includes the provision of social services, projects, community facilities and programmes associated with low-income housing and improved services.

2.14 STRENGTHENING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION MECHANISMS

Hick (2006:6) asserts that local government policy makers recommended numerous initiatives that could be undertaken to strengthen community-based involvement in municipality decision-making. Cornwall (2004:62) alludes that municipalities should build on existing civil society sectoral groupings and district forums, as this is where there is already energy and interest. These forums could then be used for municipality and civil society stakeholders to come together to deliberate on policies and programmes. These could be limited to sectoral stakeholder discussions, but should include opportunities for multi-sectoral groups to come together to make input on broader policy (Cornwall, 2004:62).

Furthermore, Cornwell (2004:62) states that municipalities should draw on civil society networks to assist in convening and facilitating these forums. There is a need for capacity building interventions for civil society stakeholders to enable them to engage meaningfully in these processes. This could be facilitated by NGOs, and should include information on structures and processes of municipalities, and opportunities to engage with decision-making, as well as share a sense of some of the challenges faced by municipalities. Municipalities should ensure that information on the policy or programme to be discussed is disseminated widely before-hand, as well as information on the planning or decision-making process itself (Gaventa 2003:115). Civil society stakeholders also put forward a series of recommendations on how participatory.

2.15 PARTICIPATION IN COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Participation is the active involvement of people at the grassroots level in the choice, execution and evaluation of programs designed to improve their livelihood (Omiya: 2000:197). Lisk (1985:16) defines popular participation as the active involvement of a broad mass of people in the choice, execution and evaluation of programmes designed to bring about a significant upward movement in their levels of living. Davids, Theron, and Maphunye (2009:156) point out that participation of community stakeholders as beneficiaries in the development process acknowledges that development should relate to empowering and liberating people.

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Dhimole and Tabiyo (2000:1) stress that participation in communities are open to involvement by all groups, and responsibilities are divided up so that the special talents and interests of contributing organizations are engaged, and the power and responsibilities are decentralised. Participation is regarded as the as a cornerstone of good governance and as a means of enhancing community development (Hussein, 2003:273).

Tshishonga and Mbambo (2008:768) point out that community participation and engagement have become mainstream concepts in both local and international development and democracy policy directions. From a developmental context, community participation is hailed as one of the apex building blocks of development. Tshishonga, and Mbambo (2008:768) further point out that in South Africa, it is an undisputed fact that the shift from apartheid government to a democratic governance more particularly in local government, has created significant new opportunities for people from disadvantaged communities to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. Sharma (2000:178) says that participation enables the community to address its felt needs through self-help projects and to realise grassroots democracy, as well as to ensure fair and equitable distribution and access to resources and optimal use of local resources for effective community development.

Mubangizi (2007:4) points out that public service delivery that is aimed at promoting sustainable livelihoods needs to have efficiency and community participation as some of its fundamental principles. Mogale (2003:225) notes that the notion of public participation has widespread common sense appeal and impact; he agrees that public participation lead to an expectation that transformation of the system will take place to benefit those to whom development projects are targeted. In this literature, participation is always associated with actions of communities, groups or individuals in terms of the development, improvement or change of an existing situation (De Beer and Swanepoel, 1998:20).

Khan and Haupt (2006:45) stress that participation implies the readiness of both the government and the community to accept responsibilities and activities, and it also means that the value of the contribution of each group is seen and used. Craythorne (2003:264) points out that community participation has to be focused if it is to succeed, and in this regard the participation by the local community in the affairs of a

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municipality must take place through p[illegible]ctures set up for this purpose, in terms of the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 such as ward committee. The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 states that this has to be done through the mechanisms, processes and procedures for participation in local governance established in terms of this legislation.

Fonchingong and Fonjong (2003:203) point out that participation and community development have been identified as key concepts in development with the emphasis on the direct involvement of ordinary people in local affairs. Cornwell (2003:62) concur indicating that, in the period after the early 1970s, development practitioners and theoreticians alike increasingly emphasised the contribution that communities can make to development, and to development planning. Cornwell (2003:62) Further indicates that, the top-down approach to development, where outsiders provide goods or a service they think communities may need, has had to make a way for a bottom-up approach, and this approach is also known as people-centred development which takes people and their needs as the starting point of any development initiatives.

2.16 RURAL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES INTRODUCED BY GOVERNMENT SINCE 1994

Following the transition to democracy, The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act, of 1996 stipulates that for a common South African citizenship, with all citizens having equal access to the rights, privileges and benefits. Gwanya (2010:5) contends that South Africa is one of the few countries on the continent with a constitution which entrenches democracy, eliminates all forms of discrimination, promotes and protects human rights but also strive to attain socio-economic rights for all. Furthermore, Gwanya (2010:5) stresses the fact that the South African government has placed the need to address poverty and inequality firmly at the centre of its development agenda as reflected in the various development policy documents and strategies that have been developed in the few years that that the government has been in power and the gigantic efforts made since the 1994 democratic elections. To date these have been geared towards ameliorating the negative consequences of economic, social and political exclusion and marginalization of the rural people. However, many policy and institutional measures are in place to improve the lives of the rural people and regenerate rural economies have limited success.

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2.17 STRATEGIES FOCUSING ON RURAL DEVELOPMENT: 1994 AND 2001

The following section presents the strategies focusing on rural development since 1994 to 2001. This section will discuss the following issues: the rural development strategy of the government of national unity of 1995, the rural development framework of 1997, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) and sector specific strategies.

2.17.1 The Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity of 1995

Gwanya (2010:7) contends that the Rural Development Strategy of the Government of National Unity (RDSGNU) of 1995 set out the mechanisms by which rural people and their elected representatives at rural District Councils and Local Councils could take charge of the development process in their own areas. Furthermore, Gwanya (2010:7) stresses that rural people, women in particular, bear the largest burden of poverty and suggested that if the inequalities and inefficiencies of the past could be changed, rural areas could become productive and sustainable, and also suggested that building local government in rural areas is the first step in this direction and that rural people must be at the heart of this strategy.

2.17.2 The Rural Development Framework of 1997

The Rural Development Framework of 1997 describes how, if the government is working with rural people and could achieve a rapid and sustained reduction in absolute rural poverty (Rural Development Framework, 1997:1). Gwanya (2010:7) stipulates that the framework attempts to answer questions on how to involve rural people in decisions affecting their lives, through participation in rural local government; how to increase employment and economic growth in rural areas; how to provide affordable infrastructure and improve services in rural areas and resolve the problems posed by the remote, low-potential areas into which people were crowded during the apartheid era; how to ensure social sustainability in rural areas and how to increases rural local government capacity to plan and implement and assemble the essential information for planning, monitoring and evaluating both the process and progress of development.

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According to The Rural Development Framework (1997:1) the most notable value of the framework was its attempt to define rural areas as the sparsely populated areas in which people farm or depend on natural resources, including the villages that are dispersed through these areas, and in addition, they includes the large settlements in the former homelands, created by the apartheid removals, which depend for their survival on migratory labour and remittances. Though not adopted as an official definition most government departments seem to have adopted this definition as a working definition, and this is not surprising considering that it is closely related to the conditions of rural communities prior to 1994; for example, the former homelands and farming communities.

2.17.3 The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS)

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) was announced by the former state president, Thabo Mbeki in 2001 and later evolved to be a programme the objective of which was to intensify a sustained attack on poverty and underdevelopment throughout the country. The programme would seek to transform rural South Africa into socially cohesive and stable communities with viable institutions, sustainable economies and universal access to social amenities (Medium Term Strategic Framework, 2009a:2).Gwanya (2010:8) point out that the problem grew out of consistent failures of rural development projects to accomplish established targets and not delivering the success yields initially anticipated. One of the key reasons for this lack of success was not the actual development projects, their content, nor their structural set-up, but the failure to coordinate projects and activities that would yield integrated service delivery, the eradication of poverty and the promotion of sustainable development.

The Medium Term Strategic Framework (2009a:2) stipulates that the ISRDPS would therefore serve as a mechanism for the integration of government development projects. Gwanya (2010:8) contends that the ISRDPS had proposed the involvement of the local communities in their own development and the targeting of vulnerable groups; for example, youth women and the disabled people, and at the implementation level the programme was in most cases coordinated at government level leaving out the key stakeholders, the community and only considering them as the beneficiaries of government programmes.

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2.17.4 Sector specific strategies

Gwanya (2010:9) states that the sector specific strategies were established strictly focusing on rural areas; for example, rural sanitation, rural transport and rural housing strategy, and has also been developed by different sector departments. Gwanya (2010:9) further stresses that the other programmes that focus on the entire country; for example, the Comprehensive Social Security Programme (CSSP) and social wage, such as free basic services; no fee paying schools and subsidised housing and have made impact in the rural areas. The expanded Public Works programme that was designed to equip participants with skills and work experience that would enhance their ability to earn a living, reduce poverty and provide income relief through temporary employed were introduced and it was envisaged that the programme would be large enough to have a substantial impact on employment and social cohesion; especially for young people, women and the rural poor (Gwanya, 2010:9).

2.18 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS AND PARTICIPATION

Nyalunga (2006:4) contends that a key agent of participation is an active civil society, and the involvement of the civil society is perceived as essential for democratic consolidation. According to Friedman (2004:15) argues that participation by civil society remains an important check on government, which helps to ensure that it accounts to citizens. Nyalunga (2006:4) stresses that, post 1994 legislative frameworks provides a space for the proliferation of community based organisations and create a platform for public participation in local governance through legitimate bodies that exist in the communities such as political parties, cultural groups, civic forums, business, youth organisations, women's organisations, and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs).

In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act of 1996, Section 152, there are other things that the local government is to encourage such as the involvement of communities and community organizations in local government. Similarly, the Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act 117 of 1998) stipulates that it requires the municipalities to engage in consultation with civil society in meeting needs of local communities. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998, advocates that municipal councillors should promote the involvement of community groups in the design and delivery of municipal programmes (1998 sec B Par1.33). Nyalunga

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(2006:6) states that these government policies were promulgated to recognize as bona-fide (Good faith) role players in broad range of civil society in assisting government in promoting public participation and championing the interests of the citizens.

2.18.1 The role of Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) in the development process

NGOs are those voluntary organisations with an interest in the development of community-based associations and international relief and development agencies (Bratton, 1989:571). Furthermore, Bratton (1989:571) contends that NGOs and international relief and development agencies are pure service organisations with a large professional staff, field officers in several countries, and world-wide budgets which compare in size with those of the smaller government in Africa. In Shikundu village, Centre for Positive Care (CPC) which includes Child Care Forum and Home-Based Care (CCFHBC) are typically example. The roles are however worth stating, as this research is concerned about the need for them to ensure that community structures participate in community development.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:39), Makumbe (1996:74) and Ntini (2006:70) mentioned the following roles of NGOs in the development process in improving the living standards of the rural poor; contributing towards enhancing the lives of the poor and protecting their basic rights; promoting popular participation through facilitating resource mobilisation; mobilizing the rural populace for development activities that will results in the alleviation of poverty, squalor, hunger and ignorance in a better way than when done with government, international donors and the private sector. Broadening the channels through which resources and benefits can reach groups (the needy) without too many bureaucratic delays or resource diversion; promoting improvement in the sustainable quality of life of people through, *inter alia*,

- Community development;
- Facilitating popular access to basic human needs such as clean water, health, training and credit facilities, thus improving the living standards of rural people;
- Improving the level of awareness and skills base of the less advantage people through training and education activities;

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- Organising grassroots people to participate in such activities as cattle-feeding schemes, woodlot development, well digging, and construction of toilets, clinics and schools;
- Providing local communities with expertise and resources such as capital and equipment;
- To carry out development projects in which beneficiaries themselves effectively participate and increasing diversity of opportunity in society by promoting human rights, equal rights and democracy.

2.18.2 Roles of Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) in the development process

Bratton (1989:571) views Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) as those small and intimate membership organisations run by the members themselves, and relying on limited amounts of primarily local resources. From 1994, Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) played an important role in assisting government in raising awareness of the implications of the new dispensation, while the period from 2000 to date has seen CSOs not only assisting with service delivery, but also playing an increasingly vocal advocacy and monitoring role (Friedman, 2004:15). Kabemba (2004:13) contends that the political environment is however, not always conducive for CSOs to articulate their mandates, it is sometimes a hassle for CSOs to participate in local governance due to political nature of consultations.

Nyalunga (2006:6) advocates that participatory mechanism at local level are normally structured along Ward lines and a few CSOs are ward or constituency-based, this invariably bars their participation. Similarly, most municipalities use Ward Committees as their IDP participatory structures, inevitably the role of CSOs is rendered insignificant, and some problems however, related to their own lack of capacity and inability to deliver on their mandates, and legitimacy is another controversial issue faced by CSOs (Nyalunga, 2006:6). Kabemba (2004:15) contends that some Civil Organizations are deemed illegitimate because they are not democratically elected and eventually are accorded a mediocre status. Furthermore, Kabemba (2004:15) stresses that in many instances civil society has been left out of major political and economic decisions on matters concerning the people. De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:41), White (1986:249), Gow and Morss (1981:12), and Ntini (2006:72) states that Community-Based Organisations play important roles in acting

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as channels for governmental and non-governmental attempts at development; linking the local people with outside organisations to enable the flow of inputs to their development efforts; mobilizing the local people to play their proper role in community development. These organisations also play a role in proving a basic for development, as they are building an organisation and bringing the community together around mutual concerns and needs; carrying out community development in their rural settings and assessing in overcoming individual financial handicaps that are likely to derail projects needing capital and other inputs.

De Beer and Swanepoel (1998:13) point out the following as examples of community-based organisations: burial societies, sports clubs, choirs, savings clubs, women's groups and independent churches, and these groups are basically involved in activities which include some of the following: sewing, knitting, gardening and home-making.

2.19 THE ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF PARTICIPATION

The Civil Society Organizations and Partnership Programme (CSOPP) (1998:4) provides that there are arguments for and against the promotion of greater people's participation, these arguments are less concerned with societal level participation in democratic and representative institutions, but more with people's participation in development activities, and they can be summarised as follows:

2.19.1 Advantages of participation

- People's participation can increase the efficiency of development activities in that, by involving local resources and skills, it can make better use of expensive external costs;
- It can also increase the effectiveness of such activity by ensuring that, with people's involvement, they are based upon local knowledge and understanding of problems and will therefore be more relevant to local needs;
- Participation helps to build local capacities and develop the abilities of local people to manage and to negotiate development activities;
- Participation can increase coverage when local people are able to assume some of the burden of responsibilities and thus help to extend the range of activities of a development activity;
- Participation can lead to better targeting of benefits to the poorest via the identification of key stakeholders who will be most affected by the activities;

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- Crucially participation can help secure the sustainability of the activities as beneficiaries assume ownership and are willing to maintain its moment; and
- Participation can often help to improve the status of women by providing the opportunity for them to play a part in development work.

2.19.2 Disadvantages of participation

- Participation cost time and money;
- it is essentially a process with no guaranteed impact upon the end products;
- Participation can greatly add to the costs of a development activity and therefore its benefits have to be carefully calculated;
- The process of participation are irrelevant and a luxury in situations of poverty and it will be hard to justify expenditure on such a process where people need to be fed and their livelihoods secured;
- Participation can be destabilizing force in that it can unbalance the existing socio-political relationship and threaten the continuity of development work;
- Participation is driven by ideological favour and is less concerned with seeking to secure direct benefits for people from development activities than with promoting an ideological perspective into development; and
- Participation can results in the shifting of the burden onto the poor and the relinquishing by national government of their responsibilities to promote development with equity.

2.20 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the review of literature related to the challenges that communities face with regard to participation in the development projects has been documented. Issues like citizenship participation, community development, governance and public participation were explicitly presented. Ways that municipalities use to promote and foster a conducive atmosphere for public participation, the context of public participation strategies, advantages and disadvantages of community participation were also outlined. In addition, an empirical evidence regarding challenges of public participation in community development in Shikundu was documented to support literature reviewed. The next chapter presents details regarding the research design and methodology that are adopted to realise the objectives of this study.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter 2 of this study provided a comprehensive literature review gathered from various authors on various challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects. This chapter focuses on the research design and methodology. It also describes the design of the empirical investigation to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. The chapter inclusively outlines the objectives of the study, nature of the study, research design, and population of the study, sampling techniques and methods thereafter, data collection method, data recording, data analysis procedures, assessment of the research and data verification, followed by ethical considerations of the research respondents.

3.2 THE OBJECTIVES OF THIS EMPIRICAL STUDY

The objective of this study was to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. Specifically, this study aimed to:

- To assess the level of public participation in rural community development;
- To reveal the challenges that impedes public participation in rural communities towards development.
- To explore the possible ways to encourage public participation in rural communities towards development.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

Babbie and Mouton (2009:647) define research design as a plan or a blue print or a structured framework of how you intend conducting the research process in order to solve the research problem. Kumar (2005:75) defines research design as a procedural plan that is adopted by the researcher to answer questions, validly, objectively, accurately and economically. For this study, the researcher intended following a quantitative research paradigm to test the generalisations about public participation of

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rural community members in the Limpopo Province towards their respective communities' development. The plan of action that used for this investigation was an empirical survey using questionnaires to gather data under a quantitative research design. The researcher selected ten villages in Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani of Thulamela Municipality to establish how rural community members in these communities view public participation from poor rural communities.

A survey questionnaire was applied to purposefully civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members who serve community development. An effort was made to get them give their main observations of the extent to which they understand the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects. Borg, Gall and Gall (1993:36) holds that quantitative researchers make assumptions that they can discover "laws" that lead to a reliable prediction and control of educational phenomena. Similarly, this study attempted to uncover the basic facts that enclose lack of public participation in rural community development projects of the Shikundu community of Vhembe District.

3.4 STUDY AREA

The area of study for this investigation was centred in the Shikundu rural community located in the far north of the Republic of South Africa under Vhembe District municipality in the Limpopo Province. The study area is predominantly a rural area where series of developmental projects are being delivered by Thulamela local municipality. Villages that served as the area of focus for the study are located under Ward 7 and Ward 10 of local governance and is predominantly occupied by Tsonga–Shangaan speaking people which made this investigation simpler since the researcher also speak the same language. Shikundu community is made up of ten villages which incorporates Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani. All the ten rural villages were covered in this study.

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3.5 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

In order for the researcher to conduct an effective research process on challenges of public participation in rural community development projects, the population for this study was placed accordingly over all civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members from Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani of Shikundu community who serve in development structures of those villages. However, it should be emphasised that researchers cannot study everyone, everywhere, doing everything (Punch, 2005:101). Briefing of specific sampled subjects of the study is provided in the next paragraph.

3.6 SAMPLING

Mulder (1992:55) views a sample as a group which is selected from the population and it is thus less than a population. Denzin and Lincoln (2009:186) indicates that sampling involves selecting units of analysis (e.g. people, groups, artifacts, settings) in a manner that maximises the researcher's ability to answer research questions set forth in a study. For the purpose of this study, ten Shikundu communities which comprises of Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani of Vhembe District have purposefully been selected by virtue of containing potential community members living in poor conditions in the various villages. A non-probability purposive sampling was applied to select civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members to participate. A total of 120 respondents completed the questionnaires and all 120 questionnaires were returned. Some community members in the communities live in poor living conditions.

3.7 INSTRUMENTATION

A self constructed structured questionnaire was applied to collect data for this study. The questionnaire was preceded by a covering letter motivating the respondents to complete it. The questionnaire was made up of two sections: Section A, which contained the Biographical details of the respondents and Section B which contained the content details of the study. All items were made up of closed-ended statements that were free from contingencies to dispel misunderstandings from the respondents.

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All the questionnaire statements were too short and precise. Twelve questionnaires were allocated to each of the ten villages.

3.8 PILOT STUDY

De Vos (2002:211) indicates that a pilot study is the pre-testing of a measuring instrument consisting of "trying it out on a small number of persons having similar characteristics to those of the target group of respondents". This is particularly appropriate for studies in which researchers organise a self administered data gathering, primary data. For this study, self prepared and pre-tested (piloted) questionnaires was distributed to civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members who have knowledge of development processes in their respective villages. No error was detected from the questionnaires during the pilot study process, and as a result the questionnaires were finally distributed to the respondents.

3.9 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Robson (1993:304) indicates that "collecting the data is about using the selected methods of investigation. Doing it properly means using these methods in a systematic and professional fashion." It is the main process in every social science research because it is concerned with gathering information from the physical areas under study. The records that are done during the process are safely kept for future reference.

For this study, a total of one hundred and twenty questionnaires were distributed amongst ten villages of Shikundu in Thulamela Municipality, the total number of one-hundred and twenty questionnaires was returned. The questionnaires used comprised closed-ended statements which were intended for straightforward responses, to provide statistical descriptions, relationships and analysis. The questionnaires were hand-delivered to the ten villages in Shikundu communities, and they were collected three days later. The researcher followed all moral and ethical procedures to requested civic chairpersons in facilitating the distribution and collection of survey questionnaires, which later was then collected for analysis. The questionnaire were directed to all civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members from Magomani, Ximixoni, Mahlohlwani, Hlengani, Nghezimani, Nkovani, Phaweni, Manghena, Shifaxani and Gonani.

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3.10 DATA RECORDING

My own primary gathered data was recorded on a computer aided spread-sheet (Microsoft Excel). The possible responses are placed in rows whereas the numbers of questionnaires are indicated on the left hand side of all the columns.

3.11 DATA ANALYSIS

The research question and the purpose for which data is collected determine the nature of the data analysis. De Vos (2002) asserts that data analysis is the breaking down of the data and searching for codes and categories, which are then assembled to form themes. The data obtained during the research process is systematically reorganised into an easy readable format using computer programmes. White (2005:15) indicates that descriptive statistics are used when analyzing quantitative data. For this study, the analysis of data was done through computer software programme, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Data was analysed and interpreted to construct a theoretical framework around which to understand the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects. Tables which explain the percentages and frequencies are given, followed by a discussion.

3.12 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethics in research is the system of moral belief about what is right and what is wrong and also as a system of moral belief about what a research can and cannot do to research participants (Reaves, 1992:35). Piper & Simons (2005:35) describe ethical issues in research as an action of conducting research that benefit respondents or participants in positive ways, an ethical act of doing no harm to research respondents or participants. Social science research cannot be effectively and properly implemented unless the researchers abide by the principles that guide the professional field of research in terms of ethics. The ethical issues which will be followed in this study indicated the appropriateness of the study's methodology and highlighted all the morality of humankind as possible. For the purpose of this study, the issues to be considered are as follows:

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- **Permission to conduct the research project** – For the purpose of the study, the researcher sought for and obtained permission to conduct research from the Shikundu Traditional Council (See Annexures A and B on Page 136 and 137). The study was directed to the civic structures, ward councillors, ward committee members and community members.

- **Informed consent** – With informed consent respondents have the right to know what the research is about, how it will affect them, the risk and benefits of participation before they participate. Bless, Hagson-Smith and Kagee, 2006:143) revealed that the researcher must have the time to explain to respondents what the study entails. A cover letter requesting the respondents was provided, explained the value and the purpose of the study (see annexures C on Page 138). All the participants were notified of how the information they contribute is going to be utilised. Denzin & Lincoln (2009:195) indicate that it is the research's code of ethics that participants must agree voluntarily to participate without any physical or psychological coercion. After the researcher's proper and polite consultation with Civic chairpersons, a consent letter to verify their willingness to participate in the study will be signed by each of the respondents. The study was explained to the respondents for the purpose of letting them know exactly what is required from them, even to allow them to decide on participation the researcher ensured the respondents the comfortability that they deserve when participating.

- **Voluntary participation** – This is the ethical principle that people should never participate in research unless they explicitly or freely agree to participate (Neuman, 2006:135). In this study, it was the duty of the researcher to make it clear to the respondents that they should participate voluntary without being threatened or intimidated.

- **Confidentiality and anonymity** – This study involved real people and real life, so absolute confidentiality was maintained. During the data collection process, respondents and participants were informed of their right not only to talk or put their response with confidence, but also were assured status of being free to take part in the study, and that their willingness can be withdrawn at any stage of the study process. The threat of sensitivity as well as possible invasion of privacy was avoided. The questionnaire applied guaranteed more confidentiality than the

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interviews could, since respondents will remain anonymous, thereby avoiding the danger of becoming unpopular and being victimised. With regard to their identities, it was indicated to all of them that the study does not demand their names in anyway, this encouraged free participation in terms of providing data which best describe their understanding.

- **Respect for respondents** – For this study, all respondents have legal and human rights. This study did not at any stage intimidate the respondents and was characterised by mutual respect throughout the research process. Bless et al (2006:142) alludes that the researcher should ensure that the dignity and self-respect of participation is always maintained. Above the respect for respondents, this study ensured that no deception of respondents of any form occurred. The researcher ensured that there was no misinterpretation or deliberate misinterpretations of data entertained from respondents.

3.13 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an explanation of the empirical investigation was provided. It dealt with the objectives of the empirical study and the nature of the study, research design, population of the study, sampling techniques and procedures thereafter, instrumentation and pre-testing the instrument, data collection method, data recording, data analysis procedures, followed by ethical considerations of the research respondents. The findings based on the analysis and interpretation of the data is presented in the next chapter.

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CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented the research design of the empirical investigation and the subsequent methodologies that the researcher followed and which indicated the structure and the procedures that were followed to answer the researcher's study questions. It has been revealed that the study was conducted in a quantitative research methodology and this chapter present, analysis and interpretation of the study. The quantitative research methodology was centred on a survey responses and statistical analysis. The following sections focuses on reporting the empirical investigation by providing answers to the perceptions and understanding of the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. The data regarding the rural participation in community development projects was collected by using a quantitative method which involved the application of questionnaires from the community members, civic structures, ward committee members and ward councillors. The responses to the questionnaires items are presented graphically in tabular form and are followed by a brief synthesis of the findings for the item and the detailed findings are discussed in chapter 5.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS OF RESPONDENTS

In this section the researcher presents the biographical information of the respondents in this study. The information is presented in graphical and tabular form and followed by a synthesis of the findings.

Table 4.1 Gender of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Male	53	44,2%
2	Female	67	55,8%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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Table 4.1 presents the biographical information of the respondents in terms of gender. A total of 120 respondents took part in this study, of the 120 respondents, 53 (44,2%) were males whereas 67 (55,8%) were females. All targeted 120 respondents managed to return the questionnaires, and all the questionnaires were analysed. The respondents in this study all live in Shikundu communities in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. There were more female respondents than men.

Table 4.2 Age of respondents

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Less than 30 years	12	10,0%
2	31 – 40 years	36	30,0%
3	41 – 50 years	53	44,2%
4	51 – 60 years	17	14,2%
5	61 years and older	02	1,6%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Most of the respondents, 53 (44,2%) who took part in this study were aged between 41 and 50 years. 36 (30,0%) of the respondents were aged between 31 and 40, and 17 (14,2%) were between 51 and 60. Few respondent at 12(10,0%) were youth aged at less than 30 years and the least at 2 (1,6%) were older than 61 years of age. It can therefore be concluded that in this study, there has been a relatively better representation of the population in terms of age distribution of respondents.

Table 4.3 Position of respondents in the community

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Community member	101	84,2%
2	Civic Structures	14	11,7%
3	Ward committee member	03	2,5%
4	Ward councillors	02	1,6%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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Initially, it was planned for this study that fifteen ward committee members shall be part of the study, but during the time of data collection, only three members who constituted 03 (2,5%) were available and took part in the study. The majority of the population who took part in this study were community members, who at the same time formed an integral part of the study since they were the ones who were affected by service delivery. 101 (84,2%) of the community members took part in this study. Fourteen 14 (11,7%) civic members from the ten villages also responded to the questionnaires, while only two ward councillors who constituted 2 (1,6%) of the total number of respondents successfully completed the questionnaires.

4.3 COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

In this sub-section, data is analysed using graphical statistics which is further divided into four themes which arose from the survey questionnaire respondents. The four themes are challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in development projects; level of public participation in the Shikundu rural community development; lack of public participation in rural community development and measures that can be taken to address challenges that impede participation

4.3.1 Major challenges of Shikundu community on participation in development projects

This sub-section presents data regarding the major challenges of Shikundu community on participation in development projects. The data is presented in the form of tables followed by brief interpretation.

Table 4.4 Community members participate in community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	34	28,3%
2	Agree	69	57,6%
3	Not sure	10	8,3%
4	Disagree	6	5,0%
5	Strongly disagree	1	0,8%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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Sixty-nine (57,6%) of the respondents agreed with the idea that community members participate in community development, 34 (28,3%) respondents strongly agreed. On the other hand, 6 (5,0%) disagreed and on 1 (0,8%) disagreed with that community members participate in community development. Ten 10 (8,3%) respondents were not sure whether community members participate or not participate in developing the communities. Most community members in rural communities were aware of the significance of participation for better development. The statistics shows that to a greater extent community members participate in community development. However, there is a need to ensure that all community members have been participated because if 7 (5,8%) respondents who revealed that community members do not participate in community development, it shows that there are some community members who fails to understand the significance of participation in community development.

Table 4.5 Community leaders consult community members for any development process going on.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	42	35,0%
2	Agree	55	45,8%
3	Not Sure	13	10,8%
4	Disagree	9	7,6%
5	Strongly disagree	1	0,8%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Thirteen (10,8%) respondents in the Shikundu community kraal were not sure whether community leaders consult community members for any development process that needed to be provided in the community or not. While 42 (35,0%) of the respondents strongly agreed, fifty-five respondents (45,8%) just agreed that community leaders consult community members for any development process going on the community. On the other hand, few respondents at 9 (7,6%) disagreed that community leaders consult community leaders about the services that need to be provided in the community whereas 1 (0,8%) strongly disagreed. The figures indicate that consultation by community leaders in Shikundu community was satisfactory to the majority of the community members.

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Table 4.6 Community leaders are open to community members in any community development activity.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	32	26,7%
2	Agree	46	38,4%
3	Not Sure	24	20,0%
4	Disagree	14	11,2%
5	Strongly disagree	4	3,7%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Most respondents at 46 (38,4%) agreed that community leaders were open to community members in any community development activity, on the other hand, 14 (11,2%) respondents disagreed with the idea of community leaders being open to community members in every community development activity, whereas. Thirty-two (26,7%) respondents strongly agreed that there is openness from community leaders to community members with regard to community development activity, whereas only 4 (3,7%) strongly disagreed. Twenty-four (20,0%) were not sure whether community leaders were open when providing community members with information to any activity of developing the community. Such a statistics indicate that openness from community leaders is satisfactory to the majority of community members.

Table 4.7 Community members join community activities for community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	24	20,0%
2	Agree	74	61,7%
3	Not Sure	13	10,8%
4	Disagree	06	5,0%
5	Strongly disagree	03	2,5%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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Thirteen (10,8%) respondents were unsure whether community members join community activities for better community development which improves the living standards of community members. Twenty-four (20,0%) strongly agreed with the idea, whereas the majority at 74 (61,7%) merely agreed with the idea that community leaders join community activities for community development in Shikundu communities. On the other hand, 06 (5,0%) merely agreed while 03 (2,5) strongly disagreed that community members do not join community activities for development of the community. The largest number of the respondents joined community activities for collective access to services. These scenarios revealed that majority of community members were actively involved in the development of their communities.

Table 4.8 Local municipality encourages community members to participate for effective community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	23	19,2%
2	Agree	47	39,2%
3	Not Sure	19	15,8%
4	Disagree	20	16,7%
5	Strongly disagree	11	9,1%
	TOTAL	120	100%

More respondents at 47 (39,2%) agreed with the idea that local municipality encouraged community members to participate in community development, and 23 (19,2%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, 20 (16,7%) disagreed that local municipality encouraged community members to participate for effective development of the community, whereas 11 (9,1%) strongly disagreed and 19 (15,8%) were not sure. As indicated in literature review that local municipalities must develop a culture of community participation and create appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures, the figures above indicate that community members were encouraged by the local municipality to participate in community development. Community members were most likely to be encouraged to participate in developing their community.

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4.3.2 Level of public participation in the Shikundu rural community development

This portion presents the level of public participation in the Shikundu rural community development. It also provides an understanding of the level of participation in rural community development. The information in this section are presented in graphical and tabular forms and followed by a discussion of the findings.

Table 4.9 Community leaders influence community members to participate in community development projects.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	31	25,8%
2	Agree	62	51,6%
3	Not Sure	14	11,7%
4	Disagree	11	9,2%
5	Strongly disagree	02	1,7%
	TOTAL	120	100%

The majority of respondents at 62 (51,6%) agreed that community leaders influence community members to participate development projects, 31 (25,8%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, 11 (9,2%) disagreed and just 2 (1,7%) strongly disagreed with the idea that community leaders influenced members of the community to participate in community development projects. Only 14 (11,7%) revealed that they were not sure whether community leaders influenced community members to participate in community development project or not. Just above, the statistics were in favour that community members were being influenced by community leaders to participate in developing the community. Ninety-three at (77,4%) respondents for example, responded that community leaders do influence community members to participate in community development projects.

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Table 4.10 Community members committed to participate in community development projects

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	22	18,3%
2	Agree	74	61,7%
3	Not Sure	14	11,6%
4	Disagree	08	6, 7%
5	Strongly disagree	02	1,7%
	TOTAL	120	100%

With regard to commitment of community members to participation in community development projects, 77 (61,7%) of the respondents agreed, while 22 (18,3%) strongly agreed with the idea that community members were committed to participate in community development projects. Only 8 (6,7%) disagreed and a mere 2 (1,7%) strongly disagreed respectively that community members were not committed to participate in community development projects, and 14 (11,6%) were not sure in that regard. When people were given tasks to gather information and act upon it, they became committed to participate. When the participants were made to do the work on their own by being given responsibilities to seek solutions to their own by being given responsibilities to seek solutions to their challenges, they took charge of the events.

Table 4.11 Community members attend workshops related to community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	08	6,7%
2	Agree	47	39,2%
3	Not Sure	30	25,0%
4	Disagree	22	18,3%
5	Strongly disagree	13	10,8%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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Workshops are one form of communication and on this aspect, thirty at 25,0% of the respondents were not sure whether community members were able to attend workshops on development of their community, on the other hand, 22 (18,3%) disagreed that community members attended workshops related to community development. 13 (10,8%) strongly disagreed that community members attended workshops related to community development. On the other hand, 47 (39,2%) agreed that some community members did attend workshops related to the development of the community. Only 8 (6,7%) strongly agreed. Though most community members attended community development workshops, the figures need to increase in favour of disclosing information to the community in order to ensure satisfactory on the part of the community members at all times.

Table 4.12 Ward councillors are elected to capacitate community members to participate in community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	37	30,8%
2	Agree	54	45,0%
3	Not Sure	24	20,0%
4	Disagree	03	2,5%
5	Strongly disagree	02	1,7%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Ward councillors must be representative and enhance public participation, 54 (45,0%) of the respondents agreed that ward councillors were elected to capacitate community members to participate in community development projects, and only 37 (30,8%) strongly agreed to the statement. A total of 5 (4,2%) alluded that ward councillors were not elected to capacitate community members to participate in community development. Three (2,5%) revealed that they were not sure whether ward councillors were elected to capacitate community members to participate in the development of community or not. It was indicated in the literature review that ward councillors are the most direct form of access people have to government and the majority of the respondents revealed that community members are being capacitated by ward councillors to participate community development.

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Table 4.13 Community structures attend IDP meetings as convened by local municipality.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	33	27,5%
2	Agree	49	40,8%
3	Not Sure	30	25,0%
4	Disagree	06	5,0%
5	Strongly disagree	02	1,7%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Only a total of 82 (68,3%) of the respondents agreed that community structures did attend Integrated Development Proggramme (IDP) meetings as convened by local municipality, 8 (6,7%) disagreed and 30 (25,0%) were not sure whether community structures attended IDP meetings as convened by local municipality or not. If community structures attend IDP workshops at the local municipality, they will promote participation of all citizens in the community.

4.3.3 Lack of public participation in rural community development

This section provide a description of lack of public participation in community development in Shikundu communities, and the information in this section are presented in graphical and tabular forms and followed by discussions.

Table 4.14 Community members receive feedback related to community development activities

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	37	30,8%
2	Agree	56	46,7%
3	Not Sure	14	11,7%
4	Disagree	11	9,2%
5	Strongly disagree	02	1,6%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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The majority of respondents at 56 (46,7%) agreed with the idea that community members did receive feedback on community development activities, 37 (30,8%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 11 (9,2%) disagreed and just 2 (1,6%) strongly disagreed with the idea that community members received feedback related to community development. Only 14 (11,7%) revealed that they were not sure whether community members did receive feedback related to community development activities or not. Such statistics revealed that feedback was provided to the citizens to be aware of development activities that were taking place in the community.

Table 4.15 Community leaders respect the worthy of community members' inputs.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	22	18,3%
2	Agree	60	50,0%
3	Not Sure	17	14,2%
4	Disagree	18	15,0%
5	Strongly disagree	03	2,5%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Regarding the fact that traditional leaders are better located to encourage people's participation, a total of 60 (50,0%) of the respondents agreed with the statement that community leaders did respect community members inputs, while a total of 22 (18,3%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, eighteen respondents constituting (15,0%) disagreed with the statement, meaning that to them, community leader did not respect the worthy of community members' inputs, while 3 (2,5%) strongly disagreed. Three (2,5%) respondents revealed that they were not sure whether community leaders respected the worthy of community members' inputs. Community members' inputs were regarded worthy by community leaders and by so doing, community members felt self-actualised and self-esteemed. Community members felt confident and respected in the community as they participated. All inputs were treated with respect and welcomed as a source of inspirations with potential values for the entire community. Community leaders encouraged all citizens to bring forth their best for the common good.

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Table 4.16 Participation by community members enables community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	26	21,7%
2	Agree	65	54,2%
3	Not Sure	21	17,5%
4	Disagree	07	5,8%
5	Strongly disagree	01	0,8%
	TOTAL	120	100%

Despite the fact that participation is one of the key ingredient of an empowered rural community, the majority of 65 (54,2%) of the respondents agreed with the idea that participation by community members enables community to develop, only 26 (21,7%) strongly agreed with the statement. On the other hand, 7 (5,8%) of the respondents disagreed while 1 (0,8%) strongly disagreed meaning that a total of 6,6% of the respondents revealed that participation by community members did not enable the community development. Only 21 (17,5%) indicated that they were not sure about this idea. The majority of community members did participate for interaction with other community members in that they regarded community participation as the best platforms for social interaction. So participation is, in Shikundu an end of development. Participation is one of the key ingredients of an empowered community.

Table 4.17 Community members have adequate information to participate efficiently towards community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	14	11,8%
2	Agree	52	43,3%
3	Not Sure	37	30,8%
4	Disagree	13	10,8%
5	Strongly disagree	04	3,3%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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A total of 66 (51,1%) respondents were in the idea that community members do have adequate information to participate efficiently in community development projects, while 37 (30,8%) were not sure. On the other hand, 17 (14,1%) disagreed with the statement that community members had adequate information to participate efficiently in community development projects, which suggested that they were not having full information in order to participate fully towards community development. Participation in community interest resulted in empowering of fifty- five (55,1%) of the respondents as opposed to 17 (14,12%) respondents in the community. However, there is a need to ensure that adequate information at all times have to reach the majority of community members for fully active participation.

Table 4.18 Local municipality ensures that communities are made aware about IDP meetings in the ward.

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	16	13,3%
2	Agree	47	39,2%
3	Not Sure	33	27,5%
4	Disagree	13	10,8%
5	Strongly disagree	11	9,2%
	TOTAL	120	100%

With regard to making the community aware about the IDP meetings in the ward, 47 (39,2%) respondents showed that local municipality did ensure that communities were made aware about IDP meetings in the ward, 16 (13,3%) strongly agreed with the idea. On the other hand, a total of 13 respondents constituting 10,8% disagreed with the statement, meaning that to them, local municipality did not ensure that communities are made aware about IDP meetings in the ward. Local municipality need to ensure that all community members are made aware of all projects taking place in the wards.

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4.3.4 Measures that can be taken to address challenges that impede participation

The following paragraph focuses on the measures that can be taken to address the challenges that impede participation. The responses to a questionnaire items are presented graphically and in a table form and are followed by a discussion of the findings for the item.

Table 4.19 Community members have adequate skills to benefit the community

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	18	15,0%
2	Agree	44	36,7%
3	Not Sure	28	23,3%
4	Disagree	24	20,0%
5	Strongly disagree	06	5,0%
	TOTAL	120	100%

While 18 (15,0%) of the respondents strongly agreed, forty-four respondent at (36,7%) just agreed that community members in Shikundu communities did have development skills that can benefit the community. On the other hand, 24 (20,0%) disagreed and on 6 (5,0%) strongly disagreed with the idea that community members had development skills to benefit the community's future. Twenty-eight (23,3%) respondents were not sure whether community members did have development skills to benefit the community's future. The statistics show that community members did have a development skill which means that they were to be given an opportunity in the development projects.

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Table 4.20 There are resources for capacitating rural citizen to participate actively towards community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	08	6,7%
2	Agree	25	20,8%
3	Not Sure	29	24,2%
4	Disagree	32	26,7%
5	Strongly disagree	26	21,6%
	TOTAL	120	100%

The majority of the respondents at 32 (26,7%) disagreed with the statement that there were availability of resources to capacitate rural citizens to actively participate towards the development of community, while 26 (21,6%) strongly disagreed. Eight (6,7%) strongly disagreed with the statement. On the other hand, 25 (20,8%) agreed that there were resources for capacitating rural citizens to participate actively towards development of the community, while just 29 at 24,2% were not sure with that regard. There should be resources to capacitate citizens to participate effectively and efficiently in the development of the communities.

Table 4.21 Community members contribute resources (money, materials, labour) towards community development

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	14	11,7%
2	Agree	33	27,5%
3	Not Sure	24	20,0%
4	Disagree	25	20,8%
5	Strongly disagree	24	20,0%
	TOTAL	120	100%

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According to the respondents at (39,2%), community members contributed resources such as money, materials and labour towards the development of the community. Only 49 at 40,8% disagreed that community members contribute money, materials and labour towards the community development. Twenty-four at (20,0%) of the respondent indicated that they were not sure whether community members contributed money, materials and labour towards the development of the community. Community members should be educated to understand the necessity of providing resources to enable and help to the better life of citizens in rural communities.

Table 4.22 There is openness to participation in decision-making processes

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	22	18,3%
2	Agree	55	45,8%
3	Not Sure	26	21,7%
4	Disagree	11	9,2%
5	Strongly disagree	06	5,0%
	TOTAL	120	100%

The data presented in table 22 indicate that 55 at a total of (45,8%) of the respondents in the study agreed with the statement that there was openness to participate in decision-making processes, while 22 (18,3%) strongly agreed. On the other hand, eleven (9,2%) disagreed with the idea that there was openness in decision-making, and while 6 (5,0) of the respondents strongly disagreed. Twenty-six (21,7%) were not sure in that regard. The figures show that there is openness to participate in decision-making processes. It means that a conclusion can be drawn that when people are made to participate in decision-making processes regarding issues that relate to and affect them, they become part of the initiatives and this sense of ownership encourages them to participate fully.

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Table 4.23 Community members are aware as to where to lodge complains when they are unhappy with the project

	Response	Frequencies	Percentage
1	Strongly agree	21	17,5%
2	Agree	46	38,3%
3	Not Sure	26	21,7%
4	Disagree	15	12,5%
5	Strongly disagree	12	10,0%
	TOTAL	120	100%

According to the respondents, 46 at a total of (38,3%), the majority of the respondents agreed that community were aware on where they could lodge a complaint for redress. Fifteen (12,5%) disagreed that community members were not aware as to where to lodge complains when they were unhappy with the project, and while 21 at (17,5%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 12 (10,0%) on the other hand strongly disagreed. 26 (21,7%) of the respondents were not sure about the statement. Community members should be always know where to lodge complains when they are unhappy about a certain project.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, data obtained from the respondents was presented, analysed and interpreted in tabular form on challenges facing Shikundu Rural Communities on the participation in community development projects. The data obtained indicate that there was average of rural participation in community development projects. Participation tends to outweigh the average participation that deters rural community participation in community development projects. The next chapter presents discussions of findings, recommendations for further research studies and recommendations for rural communities similar to that of Shikundu to engage fully in community development projects for the better of our country.

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CHAPTER 5

SYNTHESIS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The first chapter presented an orientation to this study, whereby a background, problem statement, aim of the study, specific objectives of the study, hypothesis and research questions of the study were presented. It was also indicated that the study was placed over a quantitative research design. The researcher hypothesised that low level of public participation in the rural communities results in people not making inputs in their development; challenges that rural community leaders encounter impede community members to engage in community development; availability of measures to address the challenges that impede participation will help to overcome poor participation and lack of public participation in rural communities undermines development in those communities.

In this chapter an overview of the study is presented focusing on the research question; the aims of the study and the research methods applied to solve the research problem. A synthesised summary of findings is also presented followed by recommendations for the context of the study and for future research study on a similar research context.

5.2 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

This study was about challenges facing Shikundu community in the Vhembe District of Limpopo Province on community participation in community development projects. This study was conducted in order to answer the research question that arose from the level of public participation in rural communities towards development; the challenges that hinder public participation of people in rural communities towards development and the measures that can be undertaken to improve rural communities in public participation. The study was quantitative in nature and the aim was to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. Non-probability sampling technique and its subtype's purposive judgemental sampling method were used. The researcher used survey questionnaires to collect data. Data was analysed

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with the aid of tables to present respondents' perceptions in terms of percentages and some excerpts from literature to support the findings.

The objectives of the study were:

- To assess the level of public participation in rural community development;
- To reveal the challenges that impedes public participation in rural communities towards development.
- To explore the possible ways to encourage public participation in rural communities towards development.

The critical research questions were:

- What is the level of public participation in rural communities towards development?
- What are the challenges that hinder public participation of people in rural communities towards development?
- What are the measures that can be undertaken to improve rural communities in public participation?

In the process of addressing the study's aims and to answer the research question, it was hypothesised that:

- There will be low level of public participation in rural communities results in people not making inputs in their development.
- It was hypothesised that the challenges that rural community leaders encountered impede community members to engage in community development.
- The availability of measures will be provided to address the challenges that impede participation will help to overcome poor participation.
- Lack of public participation in rural communities undermines development in those communities.

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5.3 RESEARCH PROBLEM AND THE FINDINGS FROM THE INVESTIGATION

The research problem of this study focused on the levels of community participation as well as probing ways that can be adopted to overcome the hurdle of poor participation in community development projects in Shikundu Villages. As indicated earlier in this study, a quantitative research design was adopted. Literature revealed that public participation in rural development is a vital phenomenon, and people participation is an essential part of effective and accountable governance at local government level. The majority of respondents during the collection of data for this study also agreed with the idea that community members participated in the development of their communities in the ten villages of Shikundu community. However, exceptions are there that there were few cases of community members who did not actively participate in community development. This reveals that there are few community members at Shikundu who today are still unaware of the significance of participation in community development. The researcher views participation as a cornerstone of good governance and as a means of enhancing community development.

All the ten villages of Shikundu community did not contribute resources such as money, materials and labour towards any activity which results in developing the community. The majority of respondents in this study disagreed with the statement that community members contributed resources such as money, materials and labour that helped to alleviate poverty in the community. Few respondents indicated that they were active when it comes to contributing resources that better assisted in developing the community. Most respondents indicated that there were no resources to capacitate rural citizens to participate actively towards community development. The researcher viewed community members' reluctance to volunteer in providing resources because they were often more concerned with daily tasks than thinking about coming up with a vision of their community's future, they wanted their children to go to schools, to have decent jobs, a safe and clean environment in which to live.

The researcher found that the majority of community members did have adequate information to participate efficiently in community development. Few respondents revealed that there was lack of adequate information to participate actively in the development of their communities. Exceptions were there that there was a growing

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belief that electoral politics and representatives of democracy have become passive and people were reluctant to participate in community activity as they did not have enough information to act responsibly. It was further revealed that local municipalities did ensure that communities were aware about the Integrated Development Plan in a ward. Majority of community members attended workshops related to community development. In short, the study investigated the levels of community participation in rural community development, and ways that could be adopted to overcome the hurdle of poor participation in community development projects in Shikundu Villages. Local people are the leading authorities on matters concerning their area, and should be afforded the opportunity to give input on the social and political environment, as well as their traditions, values, psychological outlooks, lifestyle, and the daily hardship they face. Inaccessibility of information to the rest of the community members was the reason that attributed to ineffective participation in poor rural communities.

The hypothesis that low level of public participation in rural communities results in people not making inputs in their development; and that the challenges that rural community leaders encountered impede community members to engage in community development; and that the availability of measures to address the challenges that impede participation will help to overcome poor participation; and lack of public participation in rural communities undermines development in those communities was realised as expected.

5.4 SYNTHESIS OF THE RESEARCH FINDINGS

The most important findings of this research study can be summarised as follows:

- The majority of Shikundu community members did participate in community development projects.
- Community leaders did consult community members for any development processes going on, in the community.
- Community leaders were open to community members in any development activity.
- Community leaders influenced community members to participate in development projects.
- Most community leaders respected the worthy of community members' inputs.

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- Most community members participate in community activities for community development.
- Most community members were committed to participate in community development projects.
- Most community members attended workshops related to community development.
- Local municipality encouraged the community members to participate effectively in community development.
- Local municipality ensured that communities were always aware about the IDP meetings in their wards.
- Ward councillors revealed that were elected to capacitate members to participate in community development.
- Most community structures agreed that they attended IDP meetings as convened by local municipality.
- Majority of community members did receive feedback related to the community development activities.
- Majority of community members revealed that effective participation by community members enabled the community to develop.
- Majority of respondents revealed that there was openness to participation in decision-making processes.
- Few community members did have adequate information to participate efficiently towards community development.
- Most community members did have development skills to benefit the community's future.
- There were few resources to capacitate rural citizens to participate actively towards developing their community.
- Few community members who contributed resources such as money, material and labour towards community development.
- Most community members were aware as to where to lodge complains when they were unhappy with the projects.

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5.5 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

It has been proved by several previous researchers that when rural communities participate in community development projects, there will be greater chances for the success of such communities' development wise (Reid, 2000:3). The following four major themes arose from the findings from which recommendations are made:

5.5.1 Recommendations with regard to major challenges of Shikundu community on participation in development projects

- Both community structures and community members should be encouraged to fully participate in community development.
- Community leaders should consult the citizens about the any level and quality of the development activity that the community is entitled to receive.
- Local municipality should encourage community members to participate effective in community development regularly by ensuring that all community members take part in the development projects.

5.5.2 Recommendations on the level of public participation in the Shikundu rural community development

- Community leaders should use their expertise to influence the citizens to engage and partners deeply in the work of rural community development.
- Community members should become committed and active citizens in community development projects by sharing the authority on the basis of which administrative agencies carry out their legislative mandates.
- Both community structures and community members should be motivated to attend workshops on community development, as workshops are one form of communication which derives the realisation of improved participation.
- Ward councillors should promote and enhance participation in governance, especially in rural communities for rural citizens to actively participate in community development projects.

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5.5.3 Recommendations on the lack of public participation in rural community development

- Community leaders should allow community members to raise matters concerning their area, and should be afforded the opportunity to give input on the social and political environment.
- Community members should regarded participation as having a potential to reduce poverty and social injustices by strengthening citizens rights and voices, influencing policy-making, enhancing local governance and improving the accountability and responsiveness of the communalities.
- Community stakeholders should be provided with information to enable the citizens to actively involve themselves in community development.
- Local municipality should ensure that all communities are aware about the Integrated Development Plan meetings that need to be held in the wards.

5.5.4 Recommendations on measures that can be taken to address challenges that impede participation

- Community members should be granted an opportunity on development projects, as they are having development skills that can benefit the community's future.
- There should be always adequate information that will enable to capacitate rural citizens to participate fully towards community development.
- Community stakeholders should be encouraged to provide resources that will help in improving the living standards of people in the communities.
- At all the times, community members should be given information to be aware as to where to lodge complains when they are unhappy with the project in the community.

5.6 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE STUDY

The researcher recommends that it is important in the community that community leaders ward councillors and civic structure to educate community members the significance of participation in community development projects. The researcher recommend that in order to ensure efficient and effective public participation the local municipality should address Batho Pele Service Delivery Improvement Plans (SDIPs)

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in the annual report in order to improve the implementation of community participation. All community members need to actively participate in community development matters. These sentiments were shared by over 89% of the respondents. Rural communities are faced with the challenge of participation and if community members participate and engage deeply in the work of rural community development they will raise more resources, achieve more results, and develop in a holistic and ultimately more beneficial way which will improve the living standards of all community members.

It is recommended that once there is effective and efficient rural participation among all stakeholders in Shikundu, there is every possibility that the communities will be highly developed. It is also recommended that the government must ensure that all government mechanisms for public participation are strengthening and capacitating the rural communities to engage in the development of the communities. The government must also take into consideration that in order to alleviate poverty in rural communities, people must be centre in every development projects.

Public participation process must be well planned, budgeted for and implementation and timeous and proper noticed must be given to community participation meetings. All the requirements provided in Chapter Four of the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act need to be adhered to in order to ensure effective and efficient citizen participation throughout the Shikundu Community and the Municipality as a whole. There is still a chance for future researchers to focus on the important role of participation in rural development projects in order to understand this problem better.

5.7 CONCLUSION

The study was about the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District of Limpopo Province. The study found that the majority of community members did participate in development project, but there were some of the community members who are still unaware of the significance of participation. In addition, inaccessibility of information to the majority of community members disabled citizens from participating actively towards community development. It is sufficient that the villages in Shikundu community did feel included in community participation processes even though the

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public meetings were being organised in an efficient and effective manner. Public participation is a complex process with many challenges faced by rural communities and this suggest that ways to address these challenges may be most effective when communities and government work together in partnership. Recent efforts to reduce the challenges to public participation at both community and government levels has likely increased government' understanding of rural community needs as well as increased rural communities' understanding of how they can work effectively. It can be concluded that public participation can make a different in improving the living standards of the citizens. Openness in decision-making and participation should be regarded as a necessity. The researcher wishes to express the hope that this study may assist the communities of Shikundu community to actively participate in development projects and engage with all activities of local government.



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REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH **ANNEXURE A**

PO Box 352
SASELAMANI
0928

October 17, 2011

The Tribal Officer
Xikundu Tribal Authority
Private Bag X2153
XIKUNDU
0980

Dear Madam/ Sir

I hereby request to conduct a research study in the villages under Xikundu Tribal Authority.

I am a registered student at the University of Venda doing Masters in Public Administration (MADMIN). My research topic is "***Challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province***".

In anticipation, please accept my sincere appreciation for your willingness to assist me.

Yours sincerely

.....
MAHOLE EPHRAIM
11572333
073 644 6301

SHIKUNDU TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER
Received 2011 -11- 11
PRIVATE BAG X2153
XIKUNDU, 0980
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

© University of Venda

SHIKUNDU TRADITIONAL COUNCIL

Ref: 14/2-2011
Enq: Maluleke M
Cell:0728914629



Private Bag 2153
Xikundu
0980
Date: 11-11-2011

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The Shikundu Traditional Office confirmed that Mahole Epraim.of IDNO: 860910 5657 084.is a subject of Chief H.J Maluleke , under the supervision of headman Hlengani.

He has been granted a permission on conditions that all ethical principle of conducting researchare adhered to by the student.It will be our pleasure if on completion of his study ,a copy of the findings is submitted to the Tribal Council for our records.

Hoping the matter to receive the attention it deserves.

Secretary
M.J.Maluleke.....
Chief
H.J.Maluleke

SHIKUNDU TRADITIONAL COUNCIL
OFFICE OF THE PREMIER
2011 -11- 11
PRIVATE BAG X2153
XIKUNDU, 0980
LIMPOPO PROVINCE

© University of Venda

P.O. Box 352

SASELAMANI

0928

October 17, 2011

Dear Sir/Madam

I am a registered student at the University of Venda doing Masters in Public Administration (MADMIN). My research topic is "Challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province".

I should be most grateful if you would help me with this part of my research project by completing the inventory. May I assure you that the survey is anonymous and is designed mainly to obtain an overall statistical picture.

In anticipation, please accept my sincere appreciation for your willingness to assist me.

Yours sincerely

MAHOLE EPHRAIM
11572333
073 644 6301

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The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges facing Shikundu community with regard to participation in the development projects in Vhembe District, Limpopo Province. This is an opportunity for you to reflect on your perceptions about challenges that communities experience during participation in development projects. For each of the following statements place an X in the box that applies to you.

SECTION A: BIOGRAPHICAL DETAILS

1. Gender

Male	1
Female	2

2. Age

Less than 30 years	1
31 – 40 years	2
41 – 50 years	3
51 – 60 years	4
61 years and older	5

3. Position in the community

Community member	1
Civic member	2
Ward Committee member	3
Ward Councillor	4

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SECTION B: COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION IN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS

Item no	Major challenges of Shikundu community on participation in the development projects	Place an X in the box that applies to you				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
4	Community members participate in community development.	1	2	3	4	5
5	Community leaders consult community members for any development process going on.	1	2	3	4	5
6	Community leaders are open to community members in any community development activity.	1	2	3	4	5
7	Community members join community activities for community development.	1	2	3	4	5
8	Local municipality encourages community members to participate for effective community development.	1	2	3	4	5

Item no	The level of public participation in rural community development	Place an X in the box that applies to you				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
9	Community leaders influence community members to participate in community development projects.	1	2	3	4	5
10	Community members are committed to participate in community development projects.	1	2	3	4	5
11	Community members attend workshops related to community development.	1	2	3	4	5
12	Ward councillor is elected to capacitate community members to participate in community development.	1	2	3	4	5
13	Community structures attend IDP meetings as convened by local municipality.	1	2	3	4	5

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Creating Future Leaders

Item no	Lack of public participation in rural communities development	Place an X in the box that applies to you				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
14	Community members receive feedback related to community development.	1	2	3	4	5
15	Community leaders respect the worthy of community members' inputs.	1	2	3	4	5
16	Participation by community members enables community development.	1	2	3	4	5
17	Community members have adequate information to participate efficiently towards community development.	1	2	3	4	5
18	Local municipality ensures that communities are made aware about IDP meetings in the Ward.	1	2	3	4	5

Item no	Measures to address the challenges that impede participation	Place an X in the box that applies to you				
		Strongly Agree	Agree	Not sure	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
19	Community members have development skills to benefit the community's future.	1	2	3	4	5
20	There are resources for capacitating rural citizens to participate actively towards community development.	1	2	3	4	5
21	Community members contribute resources (money, materials, labour) towards community development.	1	2	3	4	5
22	There is openness to participation in decision-making processes.	1	2	3	4	5
23	Community members are aware as to where to lodge complains when they are unhappy with the project.	1	2	3	4	5

Thank you very much for your time and contribution.

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