

DETERMINING THE FUNCTIONALITY OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCILS AS AGENTS OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, SOUTH AFRICA

By

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**Institute for Rural Development
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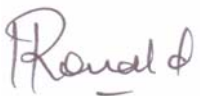
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December 2018

DECLARATION

I, Nyambeni Ronald Mudimeli, hereby declare that this thesis for the fulfilment of the Doctor of Philosophy in Rural Development (PhDRDV) degree submitted to the institute for Rural Development, School of Agriculture at the University of Venda, has not been submitted previously for any degree at this or another university. It is original in design and in execution, and all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

Signature  **Date** 7 December 2018
Mudimeli Nyambeni Ronald

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ABSTRACT

In other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Traditional Councils (TCs) have always been central to the governance of rural communities. In South Africa, they were restructured in 2003 in order to promote effective leadership and good governance. According to the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003, TCs are responsible for land administration, promotion of peace and stability, facilitating service delivery and building sustainable social cohesion in rural communities, among others. In Vhembe District, for example, land disputes, violent protests and xenophobic attacks are experienced. This situation raises the question whether TCs are really functional. Multi stage stratified random sampling was used to select six out of the 43 TCs in the Vhembe District for the purpose of the current study. Age, gender and degree of rurality were considered when selecting respondents. Using the exploratory sequential mixed methods design, a series of studies were conducted to suggest a functionality index for TCs.

The first study was conducted to clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by grassroots communities. Focus group discussions, observation and preference ranking were used to collect data in the six TCs. Using Atlas Ti version 7.5 software, standard of living, service provision, empowerment, agricultural practice, economic development, shopping malls, indigenous culture and traditions, competent human resource and spatial planning were identified as key elements of rural development. The Friedman test of the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to calculate the mean ranks of the identified themes. Most respondents (mean rank 7.57) defined rural development in terms of service delivery with construction of shopping centres (mean rank 3.90) and promotion of culture (mean rank 3.65) being the least popular views. Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P < 0.01$) confirmed service delivery and standard of life to be the most preferred indicators of rural development.

The second study was to explain the roles of TCS in developing rural communities. In addition to reviewing previous literature and legislations, focus group discussions, observations and preference ranking techniques were used to explain the roles of TCs in rural development. Service delivery, land administration, management of resources, social welfare, administration of justice, economic development, records keeping, recruitment of investors, moral regeneration, culture and tradition, and communication were identified as key roles of TC in developing rural communities. The Friedman test was performed to calculate the mean ranks of each of the identified roles. The results indicated that provisioning of service delivery (mean rank 7.34) was the most preferred role TCs are expected to perform in developing rural

communities with communication (mean rank 4.75) being the least preferred. Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P=0.00$) indicated that there was a remarkable significance difference between the most recognised role of TC (service delivery) and the other three (communication, culture and moral regeneration) which were identified as less important in the current study. It was evident in the study that various government policies that defines the roles of TCs did not provide specific duties traditional councillors should perform within the listed fields of functional domains.

The third study was carried out to determine the major attributes of functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa. Leadership and governance, resources, organisational structure, development programmes and social cohesion were the main five attributes of functional TCs identified in the study. Friedman test was computed to establish the mean ranks of each of the identified attributes. The study revealed that effective leadership and good governance (mean rank 3.71) was the most attribute contributing to the functionality of TCs in Vhembe rural communities with social cohesion (mean rank 2.03) being the least identified. The results of Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P < 0.01$) indicated a significance difference only to those pairs of variables including social cohesion. Therefore, the study concluded that social cohesion was the least preferred attribute of functional TCs.

The results of the study were used to develop an index for measuring the functionality of TCs in rural development. The equation is in the form:

$$Y_i = \mu + \beta_1 R + \beta_2 S + \beta_3 DP + \beta_4 SC + \beta_5 LG + \epsilon$$

To become functional, traditional councillors should be equipped with leadership and governance skills for rural development. Based on the findings of the current study, it is further recommended that provisioning of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity in Vhembe rural communities be prioritized over other programmes for development discussed in the study. Furthermore, the study recommends for establishment of guidelines explaining the roles of TCs and to be translated in local languages.

Key words: Functionality, Traditional Council, rurality, social cohesion, rural development

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ABBREVIATIONS

APS	Anti-Poverty Strategy
CAQDA	Computer-Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis
CBD	Central Business District
CLaRA	Communal Land Rights Act No. 11 of 2004
CRDP	Comprehensive Rural Development Programme of 2009
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
IEC	Independent Electoral Commission
ISRDS	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
JKKK	Jawatankuasa Kemajuan Dan Keselamatan Kampung
LED	Local Economic Development
LSLSQ	Likert Scale Leadership Skills Questionnaire
LSSA	Law Society of South Africa
OAT	Organizational Assessment Theory
PAM	Participatory Asset Mapping
RAQ	Resource Assessment Questionnaire
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SONA	State of the Nation Address
SPLUMA	Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
StatsSA	Statistics South Africa
TCs	Traditional Councils
TLGFA	Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act of 2003
VDSC	Village Development and Security Committee

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Traditional leadership has existed in many parts of the world from time immemorial (Dodo, 2013). According to Lalrintluanga (2011), Traditional Councils (TCs) are one of the indispensable instruments of democratic decentralised governance for the people at the grassroots community level. Various countries use different terminologies in reference to TCs. For example, in countries such as Canada and Botswana TCs are commonly referred to as Tribal Councils (Hafizullah, 2015). In India, they are known as Village Councils or *panchayat* (Shah, 2015). The term Council of Chiefs is often used in Zimbabwe and the western part of Zambia (Nseabasi, 2015; Mathonsi, 2017). In South Africa, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 (TLGFA) uses the name Traditional Council to redefine the rural administrative structure formerly known as Tribal Council.

Traditional administrative structures continue to play specified roles in society and public administration (Kapfudzaruwa & Sowman, 2009; Hartle, 2015). In fact, these institutions in Africa predate the arrival of both Arab traders and the later European exploration and colonisation (Dodoi, 2013). Keulder (1998:14) writes that “in none of the African countries such as Namibia, Botswana, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, did the colonial policies manage to completely destroy the institution and its legitimacy”. Moreover, the democratic regimes are unable to completely nullify the roles of TCs in developing rural communities. Therefore, traditional leadership administration structures have their roots solid in African soil. Cuskelly (2011) adds that there is high level of recognition of traditional institutions in the constitutions of most of African countries. Generally, rural communities in Africa and the rest of the world have great respect for their traditional leaders and they treat them with great respect.

Traditional Councils of Nigeria perform amongst others the role of making or contributing to law making and judgment, adjudication in disputes in their communities and land administration (Agbese, 2004; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2015). In his study, Nseabasi (2015) reveals that Nigerians demonstrate high regard and respect for the Traditional Councils. However, the author further explains that the institution of Traditional Council in Nigeria is still dominated by men. Institutions of traditional leadership have long been criticized for excluding women in the decision making structures. Though it might be culturally accepted, exclusion of women in

decision-making bodies compromises transparency and accountability which are the major tenants of democracy.

The government of Sierra Leone remains supportive of TCs in that paramount chiefs are ordained as community leaders and their primary tasks involve among others protecting community safety, resolving disputes and land administration. (Fanthrope, 2005; Acemoglu *et al.*, 2014). However, Robinson (2008) notes that TCs in Sierra Leone are accused of imposing heavy fine on people in local courts and making their subjects to work for them without payment. Regardless of customary and traditional practices, respect for human rights and dignity is a quest for effective leadership and good governance.

Various studies conducted in Namibian communal areas show that the majority of respondents support the institution of traditional leadership (Keulder, 1998; Oomen, 2005). Mamdani (1996) observes that the institution of traditional leadership in Namibia continues to control most of the natural resources in rural areas. Malan (2003) adds that TCs in Namibia are empowered by the Act of the parliament to impose conditions for a grazing right, such as the kind and number of livestock that might graze on the commonage or the area of the commonage to be used for grazing. Moreover, the Namibia Traditional Authorities Act 25 of 2000 gives Traditional Councils mandates to hear and settle disputes between the members of the traditional community in accordance with the customary law. This demonstrates a support and recognition of the institution of traditional leadership by the political leadership in Namibia.

Chigwata (2016) in his study in Zimbabwe reveals that traditional leadership still undertakes important responsibilities especially in rural areas where 67 per cent of the population resides. The author adds that TCs deliver various government responsibilities in some parts of Zimbabwe where the State has no or limited presence. To demonstrate the relevancy of TCs in rural areas, Charumbira (2012) adds that usually, the local population prefer to withdraw cases presided over by the western style courts in favour of the chiefs' courts. However, the Zimbabwean Local Government policy review (2005) reveals that, although the institution of traditional leadership is recognized by the Constitution of Zimbabwe, its officials are occasionally accused of abuse of power, non-compliance with laws; customs and traditions, especially regarding allocation and management of scarce resources such as land. As much as Traditional Councils in Zimbabwe are instrumental for the development of rural communities, lack of leadership and governance skills are evident.

In February 2011, the Malawi Parliament approved legislation re-introducing local traditional courts handling most civil cases and some minor criminal cases, as a means of making justice more accessible to rural Malawians (Ubink, 2014). O'Neil and Cammack (2014) observes that, service provision by traditional authorities in Malawi is failing and that the institution of traditional leadership has become dysfunctional due to lack of accountability. To become functional, it is necessary to establish proper accountability structures in the offices of Traditional Councils in Malawi.

According to West and Scott (1999), during the years of civil war in Mozambique, traditional authorities remained important regarding religion and rituals, family affairs, local level conflicts, matters of inheritance, land tenure, and so forth. Hendricks and Meagher (2007) observe that community disputes in Mozambique are resolved by local traditional authority, particularly in rural areas where access to another forum would require significant travel and expense. This depicts the relevance of the institution of traditional leadership in Mozambique.

According to the World Bank Collection of Development Indicators, 35 % of South Africans are living in rural communities (World Bank, 2016). Moreover, Vhembe District which was the area of the current study has 74 % of population living in traditional areas (Starts SA, 2012). Before the dawn of democracy the term 'Tribal Council' was used in reference to the traditional administration structures that were put in place by the apartheid government. In 2003, the name Tribal Council was redefined by the Act of parliament (TLGFA) to become Traditional Council. As Berat (2014) posits, South Africa was divided and segregated along ethnic and racial lines to advance and perpetuate apartheid ideologies of the time. Each tribal authority had a defined area of jurisdiction and the inter-tribal communion was not encouraged. Therefore, the new terminology 'Traditional Council' was emphasised in order to heal the wounds of the past and to promote social cohesion among people of different tribes. To qualify for the status of a TC, the Tribal Councils which were constituted during apartheid era should comply with the requirements provided in the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003. The Act requires that at least one third of TC members be women, 60 % of members to be selected by the senior traditional leader (chiefs) whereas 40 % of members to be democratically elected from the traditional community. To this far, previous findings reveal that almost all TCs in South Africa have not yet fully complied with the provisions as set in the TLGFA (De Souza, 2014, Mathonsi, 2017).

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

In many parts of the world, TCs are recognised and respected as indispensable administrative structures in rural communities, particularly in deep rural areas where poor people cannot afford access to other justice fora due to travel expenses, time and language barrier (United Nations, 2016). However, poor performance of TCs is still cited as an impediment to rural development. In the current study, the functionality of TCs in developing rural communities was explored in order to develop a functionality index.

Shah (2011) in his study concludes that village councils of rural India make the process of arbitration expensive and time-consuming due to their lack of problem solving skills. Robinson (2008) notes that TCs in Sierra Leone are accused of imposing heavy fine on people in local courts and making their subjects to work for them without payment. In Zimbabwe, the Local Government policy review (2005) reveals that traditional councillors are occasionally accused of abuse of power, non-compliance with laws; customs and traditions, especially regarding allocation and management of scarce resources such as land.

In 2003, TCs in South Africa were restructured in order to improve their functionality within the context of rural development (George & Binza, 2011). According to the TLGFA, TCs are responsible for land administration, promotion of peace and stability, facilitating service delivery and building sustainable social cohesion in rural communities, among others. In Vhembe District, for example, land disputes, worsening violent protests and xenophobic attacks continue to be experienced in areas under TCs. Considering this situation, are TCs really functional?

Without a clear understanding of what constitute rural development in a given context, Traditional Councils (TCs) may fail to champion development in rural communities. The first objective of the current study sought to clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by the communities themselves. In spite of various legislations established to define the roles of TCs in the democratic South Africa, it seems traditional councillors are not yet aware of their functions in developing rural communities. The second objective of the current study was conducted to explain the roles of TCs in developing rural communities. Moreover, without clear determinants of functionality of TCs, it might not be easy to determine if a TC is functional or dysfunctional. The third objective of the study was conducted to identify the attributes of functional TCs for the purpose of developing a functionality index.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study was to develop an index for measuring the functionality of Traditional Councils as agents of rural development. To achieve this aim, the following objectives were used to guide studies underpinning this thesis (see Table 1).

1.4 Conceptual Framework of the Study

An inductive approach was adopted for the study. Individual concepts defining the functionality of TCs were conceived in order to establish a functionality index. Previous studies show a number of frameworks on the factors affecting the functionality of organisations in their quest to improve their performances (Peters & Waterman, 1982, Nanthagopan, 2011). For the purpose of the current study, five superordinate dimensions were identified as resources, organisational structure, leadership and governance, development programmes and social cohesion.

It was assumed that some dimensions carry more weight than others. Therefore, the weight of each of the identified dimension contributing towards the functionality of TCs was calculated. The calculations were based on the perceptions of the study participants. That was carried out in order to obtain the equation defining the functionality index. As presented in figure 1, three studies were conducted to suggest various dimensions contributing to the functionality of TCs. In this inductive approach different methods of analysis was used to generate a new theory defining the functionality of TCs in rural development.

1.5 Operational Definitions of Key Terms and Concepts

Functionality

Functionality in the context of the current study refers to the extent to which the TCs are serving the purpose for which they were established so much that signs of development as anticipated by the traditional communities concerned become evident in their rural areas.

Table 1 Objectives of the Study

Study Objectives	Research Questions
1 To clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of the Vhembe District, South Africa.	i. What does 'rural development' mean? ii. What constitute developed rural community? iii. What constitute undeveloped rural community?
2 To explain the roles of Traditional Councils in achieving rural development.	i. What roles should TCs play in achieving rural development?
3 To determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs	i. What are the attributes of functional TCs? ii. What are the attributes of dysfunctional TCs?
4 To develop an index for measuring the functionality of TCs in their quest for rural development.	

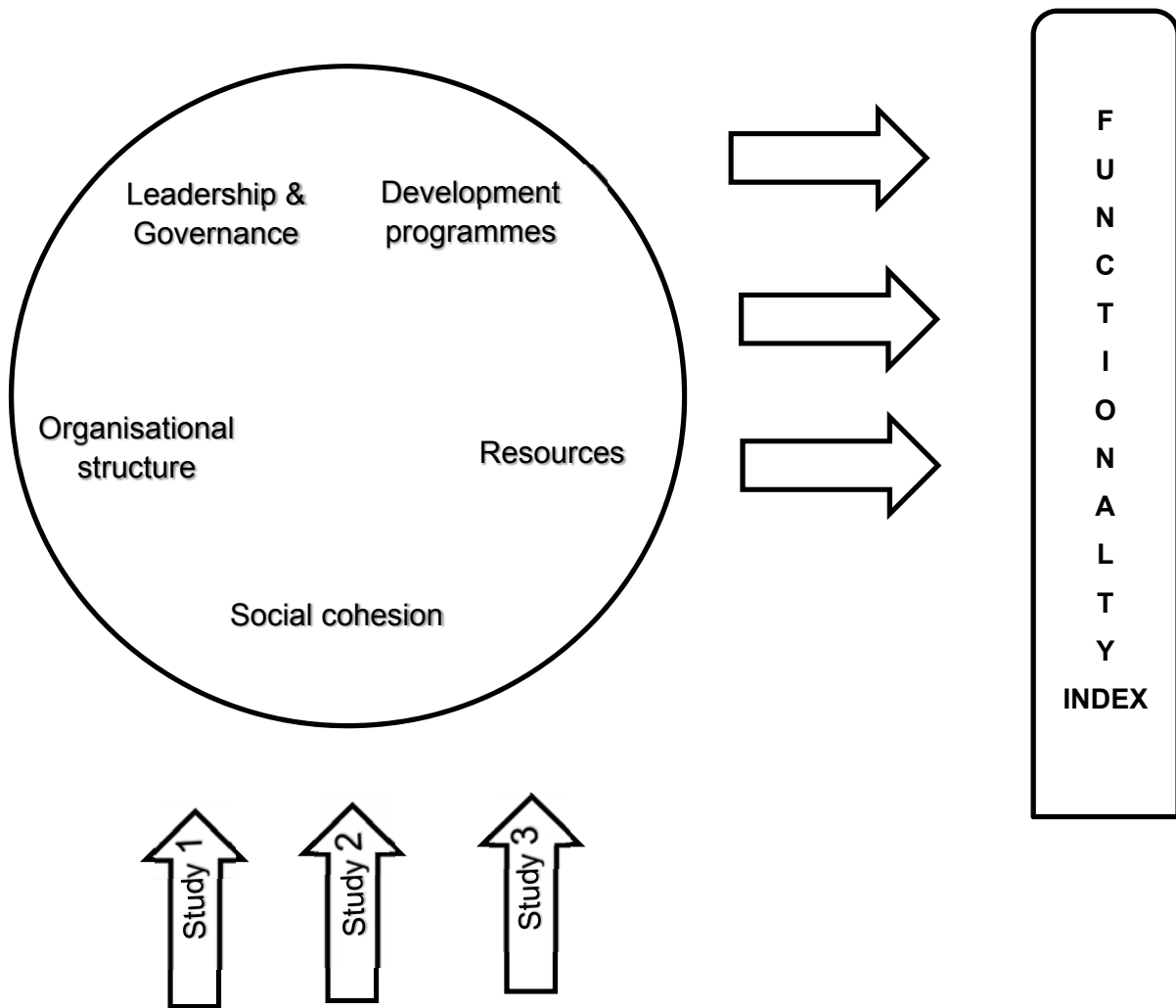


Figure 1 Proposed conceptual framework for functionality of a Traditional Council

Traditional Council

The term, Traditional Council refers to the Principal TCs that were established in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003. The Act recognizes three levels of administration in rural communities, the Kingship Council, the Principal Traditional Council and the Headman Council. The current study was conducted focusing on the Principal TCs.

Leadership

Northouse (2010: 3) defines leadership as “a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal.” In light of this proposition, the term leadership can be summarised as the process in which members of TCs work together with their communities and other stake holders to achieve socio-economic development in their rural areas. The researcher believes that management, administration and governance are critical elements of good leadership. Therefore, leadership in the context of this study encompasses management, administration and governance.

Social cohesion

Social cohesion refers to the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities (Department of Arts and Culture, 2013). Social cohesion in the context of the current study refers to the extent to which TCs plan for and promote social integration and inclusion in their rural communities.

Rural development

Rural Development refers to an integrated process, which includes social, economic, political and spiritual development of the poorer sections of the society (Ojonemi *et al.*, 2014). Rural development in the context of this study is conceived to be the process of improving the overall quality of life and economic well-being of people living in relatively isolated and sparsely populated areas. Therefore, TCs are regarded as cornerstones in the process of rural development.

1.6 Organisation of the Research Thesis

The purpose of the current study was to develop a functionality index for measuring the performance of TCs as agents of rural development. The thesis is organised to comprise of seven chapters. Chapter one is the background of the study. The chapter gives the state of affairs of the functionality of TCs in Africa and beyond in order to set the context of the study problem and objectives. Chapter two is a critical review of secondary data from previous research findings, legislations and other sources in order to achieve the study objectives. This chapter outlines perspectives of the TCs functionality from wide geographical spectrum. Theoretical framework of the study was also discussed in details. Chapter three gives a road map, techniques and instruments used to conduct the study. The chapter also outlined the sampling and data analysis processes. Chapter four, five and six are the results chapters. These chapters discuss the processing and results of primary data collected for the study. The results chapters are organised in the form of scientific papers which are ready for publication. Therefore, each of the results chapter is comprise of an abstract, a brief methodological imperative, results, discussions and conclusions. Since each chapter is a standalone paper, a list of references is also provided at the end of the chapters. Chapter four discusses the perceived meaning of rural development by communities in Vhembe District of South Africa. It provides definitions of rural development from a South African policy perspective which are construed in terms of the nine themes. Which are discussed in details. A part from identifying and explaining the eleven roles of TCs in rural development chapter five further provides a summary of suggested roles for TCs as prescribed by South African legislations and other published material. Chapter six discusses the attributes of effectively functional TCs. The chapter further provides a list of the sub-attributes defining the functionality of TC in order of their importance.

Chapter four, five and six are the results chapters. These chapters discuss the processing and results of primary data collected for the study. The results chapters are organised in the form of scientific papers which are ready for publication. Therefore, each of the results chapter is comprise of an abstract, a brief methodological imperative, results, discussions and conclusions. Since each chapter is a standalone paper, a list of references is also provided at the end of the chapters.

Chapter seven gives the overall synthesis of the study, key findings, and recommendations. The chapter further explains the development of the equation that defines the functionality of TCs. Lastly, a list of appendices comprising of consent letter, research instruments and ethical clearance certificate are included at the end of the thesis.

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CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW ON FUNCTIONALITY OF TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCILS

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, literature relevant to the functionality of Traditional Councils (TCs) in contributing to rural development is reviewed. The definition of rural development is explored. A review of status quo of functionality of TCs in various countries is analysed and discussed. Furthermore, the dimensions contributing to the functionality of TCs are outlined. Conceptual frameworks for the study is presented.

2.2 The Current State of Affairs of Traditional Councils in Various Countries

Current literature reveals that institutions of TCs still exist in many parts the world today (Dodo, 2013). These institutions remain important in developing rural communities despite the founding of modern state structures. However, the names given to the institutions of TCs differ from country to country. For example, the term village council in India and Pakistan is used in reference to the traditional administration structure (*Panchayat*) (Chattopadhyay *et al.*, 2010; Shah, 2015). The *Jirgas* (equivalent to TCs) in Afghanistan are referred to as the customary village councils (Hafizullah, 2015). In Kenya and Tanzania the traditional administration structure is known as the village elders (Makokha, 2014). In Botswana, the term Tribal Council is still used for the traditional administration structure (Sharma, 2010). As already alluded to, the same name 'Tribal Council' was used in South Africa until 2003. After the promulgation of Act 41 of 2003 in South Africa, the name Tribal Council was changed to Traditional Council. The reconceptualization was to promote a council which embraces all members within its area of jurisdiction regardless of the ethnicity or tribe in which the members belong. This was done to promote social cohesion among members of different tribes staying in the same rural communities.

According to Shah and Tariq (2013), the Pakistan judicial system is usually overcrowded. As a result, people resort to Panchayat for conflict resolution. The authors further posit that cases of the exploitation and violations of human rights by the Panchayats have been taking place in this parallel justice system which sometimes uses superstitious methods to determine the truth. Unlike in India where TCs are supported and regulated by the Government, traditional

administration structures in Pakistan have freedom to exercise their rights and pass their own bylaws (Oraa, 2011). Thus, absence of regulating mechanisms such as policy framework and institutional arrangements exposes the traditional communities of Pakistan for abuse by the traditional administration structures.

Unelected village councils or Panchayats are widespread in parts of India (Ganesh & Madapa, 2015). The Panchayats are comprised of older men from dominant castes who prescribe rules for social behavior and interaction in villages. These traditional administration structures are known for making controversial decisions and passing inhuman judgment to offenders (Oraa, 2011). It is on record that the Panchayat in Baghpat District of India has allegedly ordered that two sisters be raped and paraded naked as a punishment after their brother eloped with a married woman (Pradesh, 2015). This bizarre incident had caught the attention of international community.

In South Africa, TCs are defined in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 (TLGFA). The Act outlines various functions of TCs including, land allocation and administration, promotion of indigenous knowledge system, promotion of social cohesion and promotion of peace and stability. However, the state of affairs in the Vhembe District rural communities is characterized by many challenges which include among others, violent protests, granting of the same piece of land to more than one persons and evidence of xenophobic tensions and conflicts (Barry, 2000; Rasila & Mudau, 2012; Mafukata, 2015). Given the roles of TCs and the current state of affairs in the Vhembe traditional communities, it was not known whether the TCs are functional. Moreover, the index that defines functionality of TCs was also not in existence.

2.3 Definition of Rural Development

The meaning of rural development has been the subject of much debate and little agreement. There has been no universally acceptable definition of rural development, and thus, the concept is being used differently in divergent context. Despite lack of a universal definition, there was consensus in considering the rural setting as one of the fundamental elements towards rural development (Chambers, 1983; Chigbu, 2012; Sony, 2012).

The traditional definition of rural development is centred on only the exploitation of land's natural resources such as agriculture and forestry (Ward & Brown, 2009). However, the modern schools of thought focus on a broad range of development goals than merely promoting agricultural or resource based activities. Chigbu (2012) argues that rural development actions are intended to further the social and economic development of rural communities. Therefore, both social and economic developmental programmes are to be prioritized for rural development to take place. The World Bank defines rural development in terms of improved food supplies and nutrition, together with basic services, such as health and education. There is a general belief that improved food, health and education will directly enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life of people living in rural areas.

Another perspective to the definition of rural development is a consideration to promote and retain local cultures (Salamon, 2003; Luloff *et. al.*, 2008). Thus, rural development was perceived as a comprehensive and multidimensional concept which should encompass all the elements of development such as entrepreneurship, physical infrastructure and social infrastructure.

Cruywagen (2010) claims that shopping malls are making positive contributions to the development of rural communities. However, the current study did not find enough supportive evidence from literature. In fact, Heffner (2015) contends that the impact of shopping centres in rural spaces is a very dynamic process and requires systematic research.

In general, it is accepted that the main objective of rural development is to improve the living standards of rural people by harnessing the resources available in their localities. According to Chambers (1983), rural development is a strategy to enable a specific group of people, poor rural women and men, to gain for themselves and their children more of what they want and need. This definition entails that rural development only happens with the participation of rural people themselves. Thus, only local people may understand the needs, culture, customs, traditions and resources available in their locality. Hence, it is imperative to document the meaning of rural development as perceived by rural people themselves.

2.4 Measuring Rurality

One of the variables included in the current study is the degree of rurality. However, there is no consensus among scholars about the varying definitions of rurality. Rurality is a comparative rather than absolute measure. Studies conducted in rural health in countries such as Canada, Scotland and Australia identify various factors that determine the degree of rurality (Hart *et al.*, 2005; Roberts & Green, 2013). The ten factors identified include distance to a secondary referral centre, barriers to access, number of health care providers, ability to provide specialist services, distance to tertiary referral center, level of on-call responsibility, difficulty in obtaining locums, availability of equipment and availability of public transportation. According to Inagami *et al.*, (2016) the index of relative rurality is based on four dimensions of rurality: population, population density, extent of urbanized area and distance to the nearest metro area. An important point about rurality was made by Minore *et al.*, (2008) who classify rurality in terms of distance to the nearest service centers. The authors propose the scale of fewer than 20km, 20-49km, 50-99km, 100 -199km, 200 or more km. Therefore, the closer the distance to the service center being the lower rural space. The authors further argue that the distance to service is the most useful in terms of highlighting issues of access in rural health research.

In South Africa different dimensions are used to measure the degree of rurality. According to the Human Sciences Research Council report, the presence of urban features in rural spaces would make an area less rural (HSRC, 2005). The Report released by Statistics South Africa (2011) identifies tribal leadership, commercial farms and informal settlements as dimensions to grade the rurality of an area. According to Roberts and Green (2013) the degree of rurality is a factor of demographic, geographic and cultural dimensions. Leibowitz (2017) included population density as another key indicator of rurality which impact on the provision of services to rural people.

2.5 South African Perspectives on the Concept of Rural Development

According to Gwala, (2010), apartheid regime was the main course of poor development in South African rural communities. When the new democratic dispensation was established in 1994, The Government established various programmes in order to facilitate development in rural areas. The programmes include, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP), Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS), Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy (APS) and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP).

2.5.1 Reconstruction and development programme

The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was established in 1994. It defines development in terms of poverty alleviation and through investment in infrastructure and the provision of social services. The RDP was an integrated, coherent socio-economic policy framework established by the government of South Africa in 1994. This policy document provided three dimensions of rural development. First, was the inclusive approach that empowers rural people to participate in the development agenda. According to the RDP policy document, rural development is not about the delivery of goods to passive citizenry. It is about fostering active involvement of community members in decision making processes. Education and training programmes were seen as critical tools to empowering rural residents. The RDP policy document further provides that for rural development to take place, there should be sufficient provisioning of basic services such as housing, water, energy, health, security and social welfare. The RDP document also measure rural development by the extent to which poverty has been addressed in rural communities.

2.5.2 The Rural development framework

The Rural Development Framework was prepared by the rural development task team in 1997 following the closure of the RDP office. This framework policy thrives to achieve development by creating an environment in which government works with rural people to reduce poverty. It attempts to define rural development in terms of empowering rural people in decision making processes, employment opportunities, economic growth, affordable infrastructure and improved service delivery.

2.5.3 The Integrated sustainable rural development strategy

The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) is another programme established in 2001 to address rural poverty and underdevelopment. The (ISRDS) defines rural development in terms of sustainable economic development; agricultural, small-scale mining, tourism, sustainable energy and social cohesiveness of rural communities.

2.5.4 Towards an anti-Poverty strategy

Towards an anti-poverty strategy (APS) is a rural development programme that was launched by President Thabo Mbeki in 2008. The main aim of the programme was to reduce poverty among the country's poorest citizens. The APS identifies nine pillars as indicators of rural development. The pillars are creation of economic opportunities, investment in human resource, income security, basic services, improving healthcare, access to assets, social inclusion and social capital initiatives, environmental sustainability and good governance.

2.5.5 The comprehensive rural development programme

The Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) was established by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reforms in 2009. The CRDP identifies five development indicators for rural communities. The indicators are, empowerment of rural communities, enterprise development and village industrialization socially, cohesive traditional communities, improved access to basic services and agrarian transformation.

Based on the above reviewed documents, rural development in South Africa is mainly defined in terms of the nine themes. The themes are poverty alleviation, social cohesion, agrarian transformation, empowerment of rural people, safety and security, job creation, economic growth, health, education, social cohesion, and good governance. Unlike in other international rural communities, promotion of cultural values is not included as one of the themes defining rural development in the South African context. Hence, Olivier (2010) believes that critical review of the developmental policies in South Africa calls for a radical new approach towards the perspectives of rural development.

2.6 Organizational Structure of Traditional Councils as a Determinant of Functionality

The Panchayat (in India and Pakistan) is a system of governance which serves as a basic unit of local administration in rural communities (Ganesh & Madapa, 2015). The Panchayat system has three levels, Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the block level and Zila Panchayat at the district level (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). This system is closely related to the South African form of governance in rural communities. In South Africa, the Headman Council is at the village level, led by the Headman, followed by the Principal Traditional Council

which is composed of several villages led by a chief or principal traditional leaders. The Kingship Council is the highest level of government in rural communities and it is led by the Paramount Chief.

Side-lining of women and youth from participating in the structures of traditional leadership is not only limited to Africa. Previous studies indicate that in many parts of the world, youth and women are not represented in structures of traditional leadership (De souza, 2014; Esarey & Jacqueline, 2014). Although many countries have passed legislations to promote youth and women representation in traditional administration structures, very few have implemented the provisions. While the constitution of India guarantees 33 % seats of women participation in the country governance structures, previous studies show that women are not given opportunity to participate in the functioning of village governments and to date such discrimination continues to exist in village councils (Khobung, 2012; Parween, 2014). Chattopadhyay *et al.* (2010) in their study affirm that village council meeting in rural west Bengal are scarcely attended and almost always excluded certain classes and members of the community. The authors conclude that the exclusion compromises transparency and accountability in decision-making in rural communities. In Pakistan, the electoral systems at all levels of local government including the village councils have seats reserved for women, peasants/workers, non-Muslims and youth, in addition to the general seats (Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, 2013). However, the requirements as set in the electoral policy are not always implemented in all villages (Shah, 2015). In Malaysia, Village Development and Security Committee (VDSC) or locally known as Jawatankuasa Kemajuan dan Keselamatan Kampung (JKKK) is a community based-organization established by the Federal Government to perform village administration and development (Ahmad *et al.*, 2015). The organization is considered as the village council. It consists of ten to fifteen members with the village head as chairman and holds an important place in the political, economic, sociocultural systems in the country. According to Ahmad *et al.* (2015) the VDSC is comprised of members from the religious, youth, women and civil service leadership. Unlike in other countries reviewed for this study, the arrangement of including other stakeholders such as religious formations and youth is unique to the village council of Malaysia.

According to Sommers (2008), about 70 % percent of the rural population in Africa is comprised of young people who are less than 30 years old. However, most often, the structures of TCs in Africa are dominated by adult male despite the international advocacy of youth representation in these structures (Sommers, 2008). Hoffman and Jamala (2012) observes that when youth do

not participate in decision making structures, they participate in violence against ruling regimes. In Kenya, women form a majority of the population (52 %) and it is estimated that 80 % of them live in rural areas and play a significant role in the agricultural sector (Muiru, 2012). According to the author, men dominate leadership and decision-making positions in local government institutions. Like in the majority of African countries, the institutions of TCs in Sierra Leone is also dominated by male elders excluding youths and women (Manning, 2009). Manning added that marginalization of youth might have gravitated the 10-year civil conflict in Sierra Leone. The author also revealed that young people are increasingly resistant to performing chieftom labour, and increasingly willing to challenge authorities on resolutions taken by the institutions of TCs.

In South Africa, the TLGFA outlines the composition requirements of TCs. The framework Act prescribes that at least one third of TC members be women. According to the Act, ordinary community members should not exceed 40 % of the total number of selected members and the royal family members should not be less than 60 % of the total number of community members. According to the government gazette which was published in May 2015, the minimum number of TC members is 18 and the maximum number being 50 (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2015). However, literature reveals that TCs in South Africa have not yet complied with the mandate prescribed by the TLGFA (Mathonsi, 2017). De Souza (2014) also notes that the process of electing members of TCs was often not monitored by the responsible government department or the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC). The author further argues that without provincial regulations to govern traditional council elections, the election process is often plagued by confusion and conflict since no election guidelines are provided in the TLGFA. The framework Act further prescribes that, after January 2010, all council members should occupy office for a period of five years. However, this piece of legislation is controversial in the sense that a senior traditional leader who was not democratically elected would become the ex-officio member and the chairperson of the council for the rest of his/her life.

2.7 Social Cohesion as an Attribute of Functional Traditional Councils

There are many attempts to conceptualize and to measure social cohesion by previous studies (Hawtin & Kettle, 2000; Gilchrit, 2004; Gregson et al., 2013). The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) defines social cohesion as one that works towards the well-being of all the members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of

belonging, promotes trust and offers members the opportunity of upward social mobility (OECD, 2011). In the current study, social cohesion is perceived as the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities (Department of Arts and Culture, 2013). Therefore, a socially cohesive society is perceived to be society that over-rides differences in race, gender, class, generation, and geography, to ensure inclusion and equality of opportunity for all.

Studies conducted in Ghana, Botswana and Zimbabwe, affirm the importance of TCs in providing social cohesion and maintaining traditional values in rural communities (Augustine, 2016; Mathonsi, 2017). Colonialism in Africa has left Africans disjointed and TCs can play a vital role in unifying and reviving the spirit of Ubuntu among Africans. According to Langer *et al.* (2015), social cohesion is a key element of stability, peace and freedom. In addition to providing peace and stability, social cohesion may provide a favourable environment for participatory democracy, equality and human dignity.

Social cohesion is distinguished as one of the major attribute of functional TCs along with organisational structure, effective leadership and good governance, development programs and resources (Gregson *et al.*, 2013). In South Africa several policy documents were enacted to promote social cohesion in traditional communities. The Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005 prescribes that TCs should strive to promote nation building, harmony and peace amongst people in rural areas. Moreover, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 entails that the institution of traditional leadership must promote nation building and bring peace and stability amongst people. The study conducted by Khambule & Siswana (2017) on social cohesion and xenophobic attack in South Africa reveals that low levels of social cohesion are contributory to xenophobic attacks experienced in the country.

Previous studies identify several ways in which social cohesion can be promoted. Gregson *et al.* (2013) in their study concludes that community networks such as savings clubs for income-generating projects, burial societies (community insurance schemes for funeral expenses), youth groups, sports clubs, and political parties have potential of enhancing social cohesion. Factors such as faith-based organizations, community radio stations and public participation are

also identified as pillars for enhancing social cohesion (Swart, 2010; Maina, 2013; Fonner, 2014).

2.8 Leadership Skills as Enabler of Traditional Councils in Rural Development

The existing literature identifies different types of leadership skills which are indispensable to TCs for rural development. The most common identified leadership skills for TCs include establishing a compelling vision, communication skills, team dynamics skills and management skills. (Shah, 2011; Sotunde, 2012; Sohmen, 2013; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015).

2.8.1 Vision crafting and casting

Current literature considers vision crafting and casting as key leadership skills (Sotunde, 2012). According to Miller (2013), vision serves as a signpost pointing the way for all who need to understand what the organization is and where it intends to go. Developing a vision for the future, communicating that vision, and influencing others to follow that vision are indispensable skills to effective leadership (Maxwell, 2007). Sotunde (2012) adds that an organization cannot fully achieve its reasons for existence without a proper definition of its vision. Therefore, it is imperative for members of the TCs to acquire necessary skills in order to establish and communicate compelling and inspiring visions for their rural communities.

2.8.2 Communication skills

It is commonly believed that effective communication skills are vital for the success of any organization. Communication is the thread that holds various interdependent parts of an organization together and when it ceases, organization activity ceases to exist (Anyadike, 2014). Traditional Councils connect the local governments and village communities. Thus, council members need to be equipped with skills for writing and presenting request for government allocations and also communicate the responses to village communities (Ahmad *et al.*, 2015). Communication skills for rural leadership include interpersonal processing, listening, observing, speaking, questioning, analysing, gestures, and bargaining (Lussier & Achua, 2010). The value of acquiring presentation skills by Traditional Council members was evident in the literature (Bhattacharyya, 2009). The study conducted by Singh *et al.* (2010) on the significance of information and communication technologies in village councils of India reveals that modern

information and communication technologies facilitate speedy, transparent, accountable, efficient and effective interaction between the public, citizens, business and other agencies. Previous researchers concur that the use of Internet, wireless networks and other communication mediums improve the quality of the public system and delivery of public services in rural communities (Singh *et al.*, 2010; Thottunkel & Kuppathanath, 2015). Against this background, it is therefore vital for TCs to get support of resource and knowledge in order to improve their communication skills and begin to exploit the latest technology.

2.8.3 Team dynamics skills

Sohmen (2013) defines a team as a group of people who work together in cooperative, goal-oriented effort to achieve results by developing a shared vision. Previous studies identify collaboration, adaptability, emotional intelligence as indispensable skills in fostering teamwork in organisations (Manzoor *et al.*, 2011; Akindele, 2012). Ahmed *et al.* (2015) in his study on the roles of chief councils of Malaysia recognises the need for skills in building cooperation and engagement within the council members for effective village leadership. There is clear evidence from previous literature suggesting that teamwork is a correlate of institutional performance (Manzoor *et al.*, 2011; Mafini & Pooe, 2013) This suggests that Good teamwork is essential for high performance in any business or non-profit organisation including TCs.

2.8.4 Problem solving skills

Previous research results reveal problem solving as one of the major function of TCs in all parts of the world (Shah, 2011; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015). In fact, often than not, National Governments establish legislations which give the institutions of traditional leadership mandate to settle both civil and criminal disputes with an option of imposing a fine or penalty (Acemoglu *et al.*, 2014; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015). Previous findings identify variety of skills such as situational analysis, identification of problem, generating the solutions and implementing the solution which leaders require in problem solving (Lunenbug, 2010). Ahmad *et al.* (2015) recommends traditional leadership practitioners to be trained in problem solving skills. In his study, Shah (2011) affirms that lack of problem solving skills by rural Indias village councils makes the process of arbitration expensive and time-consuming.

2.8.5 Management skills

Boone & Kurtz (2010) defines management as the process of achieving organisational objectives through people and other resources. Myeni (2010) summarises management functions as planning, organizing, staffing, policy-making, leading, financing and controlling. The study conducted by Ganesh & Madapa (2015) reveals that council of chiefs (Panchayats) had failed to implement community programs due to poor management skills. In South Africa, TLGFA recommends TCs to manage the affairs of the traditional communities according to customs and traditions. TCs are also responsible for land allocation and management in communal areas. However, land management in rural areas of South Africa is a concern. Commenting on the state of affairs on land management in Africa, Barry (2000) argues that there have been grants of the same piece of land to more than one person. The author adds that the courts are very busy with land disputes cases. Filing and record keeping are also identified in the literature as central to traditional council administration (Akindele, 2012). Therefore, it remains imperative that TCs be equipped with the aforementioned management skills for the development of rural communities.

2.9 Essential Programmes for Developing Rural Communities

There is consensus from previous findings that community development programmes are indispensable tools for the transformation of rural communities (Ozor & Nwankwo, 2008; Abiona & Bello, 2013). According to Eleberi *et al.* (2014), rural communities are characterized by peasant agricultural activities, high level of illiteracy, poverty, ignorance and superstitious belief system that retard and rejects modern development. Consequently, there is a need to establish relevant programmes that will enhance socio-economic well-being of rural citizens in order to reduce the tendency of rural-urban drift. The success of rural community development is extensively influenced by people's ownership and participation (Bede & Ojokheta, 2010). However, it is evident from previous findings that women are not accorded equal opportunities as men for participation in planning for development programmes in rural communities (Labaris & Yusuf, 2013; Eleberi *et al.*, 2014). The diverse social backgrounds as well as the character of people's belief, attitude and general ways of life affect their worldview and consequently their choice of community development programmes (Ozor & Nwankwo, 2008; Eleberi *et al.*, 2014). Eleberi *et al.* (2014) further argue that community members should be mobilised for active participation especially in programme selection, planning and implementation. This necessitates

the need for TCs to consult with all people in the traditional community across their divide in matters of planning programmes for rural develop.

Community development programmes differ according to the country and locality (Bede & Ojokheta, 2010). Most community development programmes in developing nations focus on peoples' felt needs and basic amenities such as the provision of good roads, electricity, health clinics, markets, school buildings, and farm settlements among others (Ozor & Nwankwo, 2008). Rural development programmes were established for the purposes of poverty alleviation, social cohesion, security and stability (Acker & Gasperini, 2009). However, previous authors reveal corruption, misuse and malpractice in the implementation of the programmes for development by rural leadership councils in some countries (Ahmad *et al.*, 2015; Pradesh, 2015).

2.10 Essential Resources for Enabling Traditional Councils to Achieve Rural Development

Traditional Councils need adequate supply and proper management of financial, human, material and information resources to carry out their functions. It is evident in the previous studies that most of TCs do not receive fixed financial allocations from governments to manage and administer their area of jurisdictions in spite of the role and responsibilities that were prescribed for them (Anyadike, 2014; Ahmed *et al.*, 2015).

The success of a TC is heavily reliant on the talent and strength of its members (Shah, 2011). Previous studies have revealed that TCs do not have skilled personnel to deal with conflict resolution and financial matters (Dutta, 2013; Anyadike, 2014). The need for appropriate material resources in the office of TCs cannot be over emphasized. The most common identified material resource relevant and much needed by TCs include, offices, furniture, telephones, computers, electricity, photocopier machines, stationary and vehicles (Dutta, 2013; Anyadike, 2014). According to Opoku (2015) the world's most vital resources impacting on organisational performance is information. The authors adds that information is required to solve problems and make decisions affecting both the present and the future. Mackenzie & Gordon (2016) identify different sources of organisational information. The sources include books, gazettes, policies, guidelines, reports, minutes, manuals, guidelines and procedure. Information is available and accessible in two main formats namely, hard copies and electronic. It is expected that the

majority of TCs have access to non-electronic information due to their difficulties in accessing and manipulating computer technology.

2.11 The Roles of Traditional Councils in Achieving Rural Development

Constitutions and various pieces of legislation affirm the roles of TCs in many countries of the world. George and Binza (2011) agree that before the democratic and liberalisation process began, the institutions of traditional leadership had far-reaching administrative and judicial powers in various parts of Africa and abroad. Panchayat institutions in India have evolved with the backing of the 73rd Amendment act 1993 to the Constitution of India. Their constitutional and legislated roles include developing rural infrastructure and housing, education, public health, safety and security, agriculture, provisioning of water and water infrastructure, management of resources, social welfare and disaster management (Mishra, 2011; Shah, 2015).

Ntsebeza (2003) identifies the following generic roles for TCs in African context: Allocation of land; preservation of law and order; provision and administration of services, social welfare, economic development; arts and culture, promotion of education, safety and security, and health. However, powers to perform the allocated functions were not clearly conferred to TCs by legislative frameworks. Traditional Councils (TCs) of Nigeria perform amongst others the role of making or contributing to law making and judgment, adjudication in disputes in their communities and land administration.(Agbese, 2004; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2015). Nevertheless, Orji (2013, 43) lamented “While the functions of the local government are clearly spelt out in the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, no role was assigned to the traditional ruler ship.” Therefore, there is a dire need to legislate and summarize clear roles for TCs. The Constitution of Zimbabwe gives powers to traditional leadership administration to execute various functions which include, promoting and upholding cultural values, facilitating development; administering Communal Land, protecting the environment and resolving disputes. Botswana has passed several laws to define the roles of TCs such as Chieftaincy Act; Customary Courts Act; Tribal Territories Act and House of Chiefs Act. However, unlike in Zimbabwe, the Constitution of Botswana is not clear about the roles and powers of TCs. Hence, Augustine (2016) argues that the roles of TCs in Botswana should be recognized through the Constitution, just like those of the local authority, where the roles are spelt out clearly in the Constitution.

The roles of TCs in South Africa were defined by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (Act 108 of 1996) and other various pieces of legislations established in terms of the Act of Parliament. However the Constitution is not clear on the specific roles, powers and functions of TCs. South Africa has the same situation facing Botswana, The roles, functions and powers of local governments were clearly spelled out in various municipal, provincial and national legislations but very little effort was done to define the roles and the powers of TCs in rural development. Apart from the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, other legal instruments which tried to define the roles of TCs include, Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, The White Paper on Local Government of 1998, White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003, Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 and the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005. The details of how each of the aforementioned legislations impact on the roles of TCs are discussed in chapter 6.

2.12 Issues Underpinning the Literature Review

Traditional Councils in South Africa and the rest of the world were found to be dysfunctional in many areas including leadership, administration of justice and administration of land. It is evident in the review that members of TCs require various skills to improve their functionality. In many parts of the world, TC structures are unable to provide candid justice as expected. They constantly make controversial decisions and passing inhuman judgment to offenders. It is also emphasised in literature that rural development only happens with the participation of rural people themselves. Thus, only local people may understand the needs, culture, customs, traditions and resources available in their locality.

Based on the reviewed documents, rural development in South Africa is mainly defined in terms of the nine themes. The themes are poverty alleviation, social cohesion, agrarian transformation, empowerment of rural people, safety and security, job creation, economic growth, health, education, social cohesion, and good governance. However, promotion of cultural values is not included as one of the themes defining rural development in the South African context. It is evident in literature that various policies established to improve rural development and transformation agenda in South Africa were not successful as it was planned due to lack of support from traditional leadership.

There is consensus from previous findings that community development programmes are indispensable tools for developing rural communities. In many of African countries, rural development programmes are established for the purposes of poverty alleviation, social cohesion, security and stability. Most community development programmes in developing nations focus on peoples' felt needs and basic amenities such as the provision of good roads, electricity, health clinics, markets, school buildings, and farm settlements among others.

South Africa has the largest number of traditional councillors as compared to other countries reviewed for the study. For example, the *Jawatankuasa* of Malaysia is comprised of ten to fifteen members and the *Panchayats* of India have only five members in total. Yet, South Africa has a minimum of 18 and a maximum of 50 members (Pradesh, 2015). Unlike in other reviewed countries such as Pakistan and Samoa, TLGFA for South Africa does not make any provision for encouraging youth participation into the structures of TCs. A weakness of the TLGFA 41 of 2003 was also noted during the course of the review. This legislation empowers the senior traditional leader or the chief to be a chairperson who sits in the council as an *ex-officio* member. According to the Framework Act, all council members should occupy office for a period of five years. Controversially, the senior traditional leader is accorded a special treatment of presiding over the council as long as he/she lives. This special treatment is against the major principle of democratic governance. Literature also reveals that elections of TCs in South Africa are not monitored by the relevant government department or the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC) and that there are no regulations governing these elections.

In literature, social cohesion is revealed as one of the distinguished functions of TCs in rural development. It is also portrayed as an ingredient to stability, peace, freedom and participatory democracy. However, there are different opinions among researchers with regard to factors that promote social cohesion. Some scholars propose that religious organisations have an important strategic significance for a social formation where as others view churches and other faith based organizations as threats to social cohesion. Therefore, it is vital to further investigate the role of faith-based organization in promoting social cohesion in the Vhembe rural communities.

2.13 Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Organizational Assessment Theory (OAT). The proponents of this theory such as Peters & Waterman (1982) and Nanthagopan (2011) propose that organisational

performance is a function of interrelated dimensions. Therefore, without knowing the critical dimensions of organisational performance, investing the money on improving the performance of an organization will not provide the desired results (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Nanthagopan, 2011).

The McKinsey 7S Framework was the earliest model developed by well-known business consultants Robert and Waterman, in the early 1980s (Peters & Waterman, 1982). In this model, seven dimensions were identified as structure, strategy, systems, skills, style, staff and shared values. The McKinsey model is based on the premise that, for an organization to perform well, these seven elements need to be aligned and mutually reinforcing. Thus, the model can be used to help identify what needs to be realigned to improve performance. In the same vein, Nanthagopan (2011) identifies seven dimensions which are critical to organizational performance. Nanthagopan study reveals that all the identified factors; organizational capacity, human resources, financial resources, physical resources, strategic leadership, management capability and networking and linkages had positive impacts towards the performance of organisations. Moreover, the study identifies management capability as the most important dimension for improving organizational performance. The study further shows that management capability accounted 67 % variation against 33 % shared by the other six dimensions. Nanthagopan study provided empirical evidence to support theoretical models that link critical dimensions of organisational capacity with successful organisational performance.

Both McKinsey and Nanthagopan studies identify some dimensions as more critical to organizational performance than others. Cawsey *et al.* (2012: 52) argues “Either way, the model indicated areas of strong and weak alignment, so concentration can be made in certain areas” While McKinsey study categorises the seven dimensions into hard and soft elements, Nanthagopan study accounted on specific values each identified dimension contribute to organizational performance.

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CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, the research methodology used in the study is articulated. The chapter further describes the study area, population, sample selection and procedures adopted for data collection. Finally, data analysis techniques and ethical considerations for the study are also elucidated.

3.2 Description of the Study Area

The study was carried out in the Vhembe District of South Africa. The Vhembe District is found in the Limpopo province and comprised of four local municipalities namely, Makhado, Musina, Collins Chabane, and Thulamela. Figure 2 shows the demarcations of the four local municipalities in the Vhembe District. Vhembe District lies in the Northern part of the Limpopo Province and it is bordered in the East by the Kruger National Park; South East Mopani District, South West Capricorn District and North East Botswana. The main languages spoken in the District are Tshivenda and Xitsonga. Sixty nine (69 %) of the population speaks Tshivenda, 27 % of the population speaks Xitsonga and the remaining percentage being that of Northern



Figure 2 Vhembe District Municipality in Limpopo Province

Source: Municipalities of South Africa. <https://municipalities.co.za/overview/129>

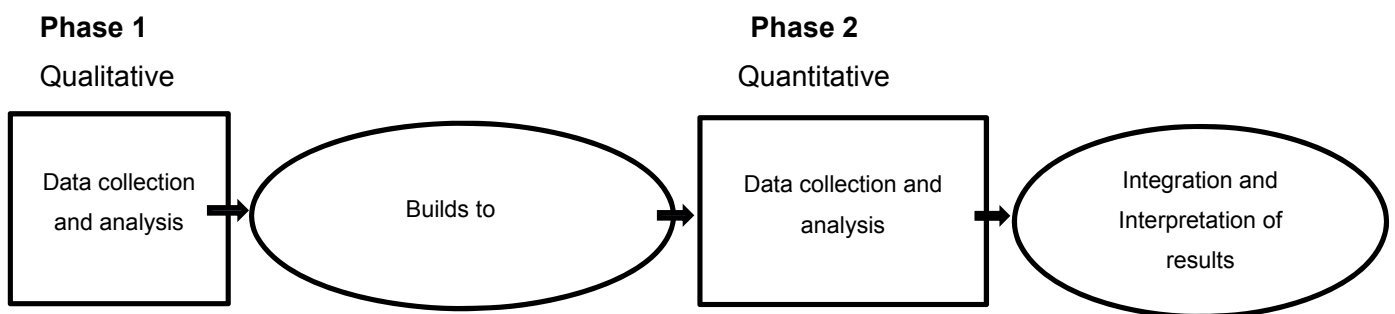


Figure 3 Research Design. Source (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Muller *et al.*, 2013)

The quantitative phase was developed based on the results of qualitative phase. The themes that were identified in the first phase of the study were later compared, measured and explained. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods has presented a more enhanced insight into the functionality of TCs than using one of the methods independently (Hong & Espelage, 2011; Creswell, 2012; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). The most advantageous characteristics of conducting mixed methods research in the current study was the success of triangulation. Hence, it was possible to compare the data sets from variety of sources such as focus group discussions, questionnaires and archived data to ensure better understanding of the functionality of Traditional Councils as compared to using either quantitative or qualitative method (Flick, 2014).

3.4 Population and Sampling Procedures

There are 43 TCs in the Vhembe District. Twenty eight TCs belong to the Venda speaking communities whereas 15 TCs are for Tsonga speaking communities. However, there are seven rural communities in the Vhembe District that do not fall under any principal traditional leaders or chiefs. Such communities are led by elected chairpersons. These community leadership organisations are not categorised as Traditional Councils in terms of the Traditional Leadership

and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003. However, the Act classify them as community authorities. The seven community authorities in the Vhembe District are Valdesia Mambedi, Kurhuleni, Xhigamane, Ntlahaveni, Tiyani, Rungulani and Mphambo and they did not form part of the study. To qualify for the status of a Traditional Council, the traditional community should have a recognised principal traditional leader (chief) as a chairperson of the council.

3.5 Multi-Stage Cluster Sampling Technique

Multi-stage cluster sampling was adopted for the study. In this technique, large clusters of population are sub-divided into smaller clusters in various stages for the purpose of reducing the sample further (Nafiu, 2012). All the Forty-three TCs in the Vhembe District were stratified into Venda and Tsonga traditional communities. As already alluded to, there are 28 TCs for the Venda speaking and 15 TC for Tsonga speaking (see table 2 and 3). Each stratum was further stratified according to the three levels of rurality (low, medium and extreme) as propose by Inagami *et al* (2016). The rurality landscape was determined by increase with distance from the

Community Entry

- Meetings with community leaders
- Mobilising Participants

Phase 1 (Qualitative) Data collection

Techniques: Focus group discussion
Key informants interviews

Instruments: Open-ended Interview Guide

Participants: (6 TCs in Vhembe)

- TC members
- Adults male & female
- Youth male and female

Phase 1 Data Analysis

SETTING THE SCENE AND BUILDING UP TO

Phase 2 (Quantitative) Data Collection

Techniques: Focus group discussion
Face to face administered questionnaire

Instrument : Preference Ranking Questionnaire

Participants: (6 TCs in Vhembe)

- TC members
- Adults male & female
- Youth male and female

Phase 2 Data analysis

Integration & Interpretation of Results

46

Phase 2 Data analysis

Developing functionality Index

Figure 4 Flowchart for implementation of the thesis research

Table 2 Description of Venda Speaking Traditional Councils

	Name of TC	Village in which TC is located	Local municipality	Distance from local municipality in KM	Level of rurality	Number of headmen/head women
1	Davhana	Davhana	Collins Chabane	51	Medium	2
2	Khakhu	Khakhu	Thulamela	53	Medium	4
3	Kutama	Kutama	Makhado	33	Medium	5
4	Lwamondo	Lwamondo	Thulamela	35	Medium	11
5	Makuya	Makuya	Thulamela	55	Medium	10
6	Manenzhe	Manenzhe	Musina	60	Extreme	4
7	Masakona	Masakona	Collins Chabane	74	Extreme	5
8	Mashamba	Mashamba	Makhado	53	Medium	2
9	Mashau	Mashau	Collins Chabane	59	Medium	4
10	Masia	Masia	Collins Chabane	57	Medium	5
11	Mphaphuli	Mbilwi	Thulamela	17	Low	39
12	Mphephu	Dzanani	Makhado	51	Medium	32
13	Muila	Muila	Makhado	74	Extreme	5
14	Mulenzhe	Mulenzhe	Collins Chabane	27	Low	9
15	Mulima	Mulima	Makhado	55	Medium	9
16	Mutele	Mutele	Musina	126	Extreme	4

17	Mutsha	Mutsha	Thulamela	53	Medium	4
18	Nesengani	Tshino	Thulamela	40	Medium	5
19	Nthabalala	Nthabalala	Makhado	37	Medium	15
20	Rambuda	Rambuda	Thulamela	36	Medium	17
21	Sinthumule	Sinthumule	Makhado	22	Low	7
22	Thengwe	Thengwe	Thulamela	32	Medium	31
23	Tshakhuma	Tshakhuma	Makhado	48	Medium	7
24	Tshikonelo	Tshikonelo	Collins Chabane	16	Low	8
25	Tshikundamalema	Tshikundamalema	Musina	154	Extreme	15
26	Tshimbupfe	Tshimbupfe	Collins Chabane	37	Medium	8
27	Tshivhase	Mukumbani	Thulamela	28	Low	48
28	Tsianda	Tsianda	Makhado	49	Medium	3

Table 3 Description of Tsonga-Speaking Traditional Councils

	Name of TC	Village in which TC is located	Local municipality	Distance from Local municipality in KM	Level of rurality	Number of headmen/head women
1	Bungeni	Bungeni	Collins Chabane	70	Extreme	6
2	Elim/Shirly	Elim/Shirly	Makhado	26	Low	0
3	Gidjana	Gidjana	Collins Chabane	27	Low	4
4	Khomanani	Khomanani	Collins Chabane	67	Extreme	4
5	Madonsi	Madonsi	Collins Chabane	13	Low	13
6	Mavambe	Mavambe	Collins Chabane	8	Low	14
7	Mhinga	Mhinga	Collins Chabane	41	Medium	7
8	Mtititi	Mtititi	Collins Chabane	28	Low	2
9	Mudavula	Mudavula	Collins Chabane	35	Medium	5
10	Mukhomi	Mukhomi	Collins Chabane	17	Low	5
11	Mulamula	Mulamula	Collins Chabane	25	Low	4
12	Nkhensani	Nkhensani	Collins Chabane	74	Extreme	3
13	Ribungwane	Ribungwane	Collins Chabane	69	Extreme	0

14	Xigalo	Xigalo	Collins Chabane	8	Low	7
15	Xikundu	Xisaxani	Collins Chabane	27	Low	10

As presented in Table 4, the distances between the traditional council offices and their local municipality CBDs were obtained from Google maps. That was done to assess the influence of rurality landscape to the functionality of TCs. Minore *et al.*, (2008) classify rurality in terms of distance to the nearest service centres. The authors propose the scale of fewer than 20km, 20 - 49km, 50 - 99km, 100 -199km, 200 or more km. Therefore the closer the distance to the service center, the lower rurality it becomes. The authors further argue that the distance to service is the most useful in terms of highlighting issues of access in rural health research.

Six TCs were sampled for the purpose of the study. Apart from the differences in tribes and the rurality landscape of TCs, willingness to participate in the survey also informed the sampling decision. It was initially planned to include the size of TC as another variable to be considered in sampling. However, the classification of TCs into small, medium and large according to the document obtained from the Vhembe District office seemed inaccurate. Traditional Councils which appear large were classified as small and those appearing small as large. However, consideration was made to include large, medium and small TCs in the sample. Traditional Councils of Mphaphuli (low level of rurality), Kutama (medium level of rurality) and Mutele (extreme rurality) were sampled from the Venda traditional communities. On the other stratum,

Traditional Councils of Madonsi (low level of rurality), Mhinga (medium level of rurality) and Ribungwane (extreme rurality) were selected from the Tsonga speaking communities.

3.6 Training of Research Assistants

Distance Scale	Rurality pattern	Number of TCs in Venda speaking communities	Number of TCs in Tsonga speaking communities
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Two research assistants were recruited and trained for two days on the tools and techniques for data collection. Representation from both Vhavenda and Vatsonga speaking was considered when selecting the team. The team was also trained on the rituals and protocols observed by the aforementioned ethnic groups. Two people who had dipper knowledge of the culture and traditions of the Vhavenda and the Vatsonga tribes were invited to help in the training sessions conducted.

3.7 Gaining Community Entry

The process the current research team undertook in order to access entry into traditional communities was a central element to the entire research project (Ochoka et al., 2010).

Table 4 Classification of Traditional Councils According to Rurality Pattern

0 to 29 Km	Low level of rurality	5	9
30 to 59 Km	Medium level of rurality	18	2
60 Km and above	Extreme rurality	6	4
	Sub -Total	28	15

NB: Distance scale adapted from Minore *et al.*, (2008)

During community entry, the research team attempted to minimize the social distance between themselves, members of traditional councils and other key informant participants (Lee, 1993). For the purpose of smooth community entry, the principal researcher recruited the research team of members who were familiar with the languages spoken in the Vhembe rural communities. The team was then trained on the customs and protocols observed by the two tribal groups found in the study area.

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA), Vhembe House of Traditional Leaders, the office of the Vhavenda Kingship and all the traditional councils sampled for the study. Letters to request for the permission from the aforementioned authorities to conduct the study were delivered to their respective offices. Considering that the consent was easily granted, it seems conducting studies of this nature was not new to the authorities consulted. The main aim of investing time in exercising effective community entry was to build respectful, open and trusting partnerships during the study. The principal researcher further investigated and recognised the positions and roles of various stakeholders such as *Vhakoma*, tribal administrators within the community and adopted the most appropriate approach in meeting, interacting and working with them during the study period.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

Empirical studies involving human subjects require additional precautionary ethical practices (Ferreira, 2015). The approval to conduct the study was obtained from the University of Venda Ethics Committee prior to data collection (see attached appendix). A permission was obtained from the Department of Cooperative Governance, Human Settlement and Traditional Affairs; Vhembe House of Traditional Leaders, and the office of the *Vhavenda* king and all the TCs sampled for the study. Meetings with community leadership including traditional leader and senior members of traditional councils were held to ensure their consent to participate in the study. An introductory letter was attached to every questionnaire explaining the purpose of the study and seeking voluntary participation of the respondents (see attached appendix). To ensure informed Consent, all respondents were requested to sign a consent form before they participated in the study. Confidentiality and anonymity were assured to the participants of the study by protecting the participants' identity, privacy and dignity. For this reason, participants were not required to provide their names in the questionnaires and no respondents name was used in the discussion of results for this study. All sources of information used for this study were acknowledged accordingly in order to safeguard respect for intellectual property.

3.9 Data Collection and Analysis

Various data collection techniques and tools were used for the current study. Triangulation of this nature helps to facilitate validation of data through cross verification from two or more

sources (Rothbauer, 2008). Focus group discussions, interviewing and participatory preference ranking were the main data collection techniques employed in the investigation. A variety of preference ranking techniques were used in the study. Preference ranking techniques provide a comprehensive and rational framework for structuring a decision to a problem. This approach was employed in the current study because of its ability to allow respondents to identify and analyse alternative dimensions that are relevant to improving the functionality of TCs (Chatterjee & Chakraborty, 2014; Zardari *et al.*, 2015). Participatory tools were easy to administer in traditional communities which were comprised of different demographic groups where the majority had low level of literacy. Two different kinds of preference ranking tools were developed for the purpose of data collection. First, the pairwise comparisons matrix was developed to rank the primary five components that are critical to functionality of TC. According to Zardari *et al.* (2015), pairwise comparison involves the comparison of each criterion against every other criterion in pairs. This method was considered for study three (objective three) in which respondents were requested to determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa by ranking only five variables in order of importance. Unlike the direct ranking tool, pairwise comparison matrix compels respondents to give thorough consideration to all elements of functionality (Chatterjee & Chakraborty, 2014; Pan *et al.*, 2014). The authors adds that pairwise comparison matrix can only be used when variables are few. Second, the direct ranking tool was used for study one and two. In study one, the objective was to clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of Vhembe District. Respondents were requested to rank the nine indicators of rural development. In study two, the objective was to explain the roles of Traditional Councils in developing the Vhembe rural communities. Respondents were requested to rank the 11 roles of TCs in order of preference. The direct ranking technique allows respondents to simply assign numerical value to represent the importance of each criterion (Zardari *et al.*, 2015). The number of variables that required ranking were many in objective one and two. Therefore, it would be inconveniencing to use pairwise comparison matrix in multiple entities. Pan *et al.* (2014) confirms that the complexity of using pairwise comparisons matrix can be quite high for large sets of variables.

After data collection, interviews that were conducted with 30 focus groups were recorded using note books and voice recorders. Transcribed verbatim were entered into Atlas. ti version 7.5. A deductive analysis approach was used to generate themes, because the goal was to explore pre-determined concepts of TCs functionality from the perspectives of the participants (Patton, 2015). New codes and themes were developed as they emerged from the data. Quotations,

observations, and memos regarding each topic were consolidated and analysed to identify common themes, relationships and families.

Questionnaires were administered to 70 focus groups in six sampled TCs for the purpose of quantitative data collections. Thus, the groups that participated in the first phase were replicated to make quantitative statistics viable. Some Traditional Councils were larger than others. Therefore, the size of the TC was considered in replication such that the TC focus groups were more in some study areas than others. Data were entered into SPSS version 25 for analysis. Friedman (non-parametric) test was performed for the three objectives of the study to determine if there were difference in the respondents' ranks in order to reject or accept the null-hypothesis (There is no difference in the respondents' ranks). The rationale for using Friedman analysis was to retain all the variables which were identified in the first phase of the study for the purpose of developing a functionality index. Wilcoxon signed-rank was further calculated with Bonferroni-adjusted of significance level to assess the degree of differences between the ranks. The test was administered to calculate the difference between each of the combinations of pairs for the given attributes of functional TCs. Furthermore, the Kendall coefficient of concordance was administered to assess the degree of agreement among participants who ranked the variables. Kendall's coefficient of concordance W , is always between 0 and 1, such that all values closed to zero indicate perfect disagreement among the raters and all values close to one indicate perfect agreement or unanimity among the raters (Hamed, 2016).

3.10 Pilot-testing the Study

Prior to undertaking a sequential mixed method study on the functionality of traditional leadership councils in rural development, a pilot test was conducted. The purpose of conducting the pilot survey was to assess if the interview guide and the pair wise comparison matrix which were designed to collect data were reliable and valid to all the respondents across their demographic representations (Doody & Doody, 2015). In addition to assessing the instrument, Snow (2016) affirms that pilots study help researchers to refine data collection and to learn important information about participant prior to undertaking the larger study.

In the current study, pilot testing was conducted in two Traditional Councils which were not part of the six sampled study areas. One was chosen from the Venda speaking communities and the other from the Tsonga speaking communities. Both of the TCs were purposefully sampled

considering the distance closest to the principal researcher due to budget constrain. After pilot testing, the interview questions which were used for the first phase were translated into local languages. The reason for translation was due to the fact that reading a question in English language and translating into vernacular during interviews was time consuming. In addition to translation, some of the questions were reworded and to others the order was altered to avoid ambiguity. During the second phase of the study, pairwise comparison matrix was used for all the questions. However, it was noticed that questions with eight or more variables were difficult to complete and in many cases the scores were having ties which makes it difficult to assign the weight of the variables. Therefore, in the final version of the questionnaire, the direct ranking tool, instead of the pairwise comparison matrix was used with all the questions with eight or more variables.

Beside modification of the instrument, important lessons about the participants and data collection process were documented and mitigation measures were put in place. The majority of members comprising the Traditional Council group were old and they required considerable time to discuss and to complete the questionnaires than other groups. On the other hand, the group comprising youth would finish fast and request that they be served with refreshments before other groups could complete their interviews. Bringing refreshments in the venue during data collection was further avoided and an arrangement was made with the service provider to serve refreshments when all the groups have completed data collection process. Arrangement for extra venues and chairs for the purpose of breakaway sessions was overlooked. Therefore pilot study assisted in that proper arrangements of accommodation and other logistics were considered during the actual data collection process. Ethical and cultural dilemmas also emerged during pilot survey. A lesson was learned about dressing codes of research assistants in a Venda speaking traditional community. One female research assistant was once denied access to the data collection venue due to the fact that she was wearing a pair of trousers. However, her access was negotiated and she was later allowed to participate in data collection process. As Lee *et al.* (2014) posit, by conducting pilot tests, the researcher gain experience with and train the research team accordingly.

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Chapter 4: PERCEIVED MEANING OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT BY COMMUNITIES IN VHEMBE DISTRICT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract

The definition of rural development has evolved over time. This has been a result of differences in the goals of development aspired by various development agencies and communities. Moreover, there is no comprehensive universally accepted definition of rural development.

Without a clear understanding of what constitute rural development in a given context, Traditional Councils (TCs) may fail to champion rural development as expected. The current study clarifies the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of Vhembe District, South Africa. Focus group discussions, observations and preference ranking techniques were used to collect data from six (TCs). Using Atlas Ti version 7.5 software, nine themes defining rural development were identified. These were standard of life, service provision, empowerment, agricultural practice, economic development, shopping malls, indigenous culture and traditions, competent human resource and spatial planning. Friedman test in IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was used to calculate the mean ranks of the identified themes. The results indicated that the majority of people (7.57 mean rank) in the Vhembe traditional community defines rural development in terms of service delivery. Culture & tradition as well as shopping malls received the lowest mean rank of 3.65 and 3.90 respectively. The outcome of Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P < 0.01$) confirmed that provisioning of basic service and standard of life were the most outstanding indicators in the definition of rural development. Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that the provisioning of basic services such as water, sanitation and electricity be prioritized over constructing shopping malls in rural spaces.

Key words: Indigenous culture, rural economy, sustainable rural development, *zunde*

4.1 Introduction

The meaning of rural development has been the subject of much debate and little agreement among rural development scholars and practitioners. There has been no universally acceptable definition of rural development in literature. Despite lack of a universal definition, there was consensus in considering the rural setting as one of the fundamental elements in developing rural communities (Chambers, 1983; Chigbu, 2012; Sony, 2012). The Comprehensive Rural

Development Programme which was established by the Department of Rural Development and Land Reforms in South Africa entails that rural development should embrace diversification of the rural economy according to conditions prevailing in different areas (Department of Rural Development and Land Reform, 2009). Thus, the aspirations and the will of local people become imperative in defining development in rural communities. Therefore, without a clear definition of what development means to a particular rural community, planning for development might become a futile exercise.

The popular definition of rural development is centered only on the exploitation of land's natural resources such as agriculture and forestry (Ward & Brown, 2009). However the modern school of thoughts focuses on a broad range of development goals rather than merely promoting agricultural or resource based activities. The World Bank (2015) defines rural development in terms of improved food supplies and nutrition, together with basic services, such as health and education. There is a general belief that improved food, health and education will directly enhance the physical wellbeing and quality of life for rural people. Another perspective to the definition of rural development was a consideration to promote and retain indigenous cultures (Salamon, 2003; Luloff et. al., 2008). Rural areas are usually characterized as culturally homogenous and relatively stable places as compared with their urban counterpart. Rural residents' perceptions of nature, biodiversity and sustainable use of natural resources are culturally determined (Burton & Paragahawewa, 2011). Many of the cultural activities are an important part of the well-being and health of rural people.

The current wave of interest in spatial planning and land use management for rural development has provides a new definition and indicator of a developed rural space (Midwood & Dawson, 2015). It is important to recognize the value of spatial planning in sustainable development, prudent management and protection of nature and cultural heritage in rural areas. Woods (2015) defines rural development in terms of the level of development relative to urban. The short fall in this definition is that transformation of rural into urban areas compromises the sanctity of rural spaces. O'Hagan (2000) affirms that rural development is all about seeking to sustain vibrant rural communities, capable of adapting to economic, social and cultural change, enjoying a high standard of living, sufficient income and employment opportunities to allow individuals and families to live with dignity. Thus, the modernization of rural into urban disregards the virtue of rural environment. It is not about changing the rural into urban but developing the rural into its vibrant state.

Chigbu (2012) posits that rural development should not only be fulfilled with agricultural activities but includes poverty alleviation, infrastructure provision and other actions to uplift the economic status of people in rural areas. Chigbu further argues that rural development actions are intended to advance the social and economic development of rural communities. Thus, agricultural development cannot take place without a simultaneous development of other sectors. Against this background, rural development is conceived as a comprehensive and multidimensional concept which should encompass all the elements of development as defined by the local people.

Gwanya, (2010) claims that South African underdevelopment of rural areas can be attributed to the apartheid regime which created a legacy of underdevelopment and poverty in rural areas. When the new democratic dispensation was established in 1994, the Government had to put in place development instruments and institutional measures to redefine and plan for development in rural communities. The instruments include the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) of 1994, the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy of 2001 (ISRDS), Towards an Anti-Poverty Strategy (APS) of 2008, and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) of 2009. These instruments define rural development in terms of sustainable economic development, agricultural practices, sustainable environmental, good governance, sustainable energy, empowering rural people and provisioning of basic services such as housing, water, energy, health, security and social welfare. The current study was conducted to clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of Vhembe District, South Africa.

4.2 Methodology

4.2.1 Study design

An exploratory sequential mixed method design was adopted for this study. The design integrates qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Muller *et al.*, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Zheng, 2015). As shown in figure 5, the qualitative phase was used to explore different

concepts defining rural development as perceived by communities in rural area. As Muller *at al.*, (2013) propose, the identified variables were used to prepare for the quantitative data collection tool. Therefore, the quantitative phase was developed based on the results of qualitative phase. In the second phase of the study, the identified roles were compared, measured and explained.

4.2.2 Study site and sampling procedure

The current study was conducted in Vhembe District of South Africa. The main languages spoken in the District are Tshivenda and Xitsonga. Sixty nine percent (69 %) of the population speaks Tshivenda, 27 % of the population speaks Xitsonga and the remaining percentage being that of Northern Sotho, Afrikaans and other languages (Statistics South Africa, 2012). The district consist of 43 traditional councils and 520 headmen councils (Tshitangoni, 2014). Multi-stage cluster sampling was used to select the traditional leadership councils of Mphaphuli, Kutama and Mutele from the Venda speaking communities and Madonsi, Mhinga and Ribungwane from the Tsonga speaking communities. The participants were sampled from different levels of rurality (low, medium and extreme) as proposed by Inagami et al. (2016). As shown in Tables 2 and 3, the rurality landscape was determined by increase with distance from the central business district (CBD). The distances between the traditional council offices and local municipality CBDs were obtained from Google maps. That was done to assess the influence of rurality landscape on the perceived meaning of rural development.

In the first phase of the study, five focus group discussions were conducted in each of the six sampled TC. Four participating groups were organised according to gender and age (adult male, adult female, youth male and youth female). The fifth group was comprised of the TC members and had mixed age and gender. The group was not split because the majority of TCs which participated in the study were mainly composed of adult males.

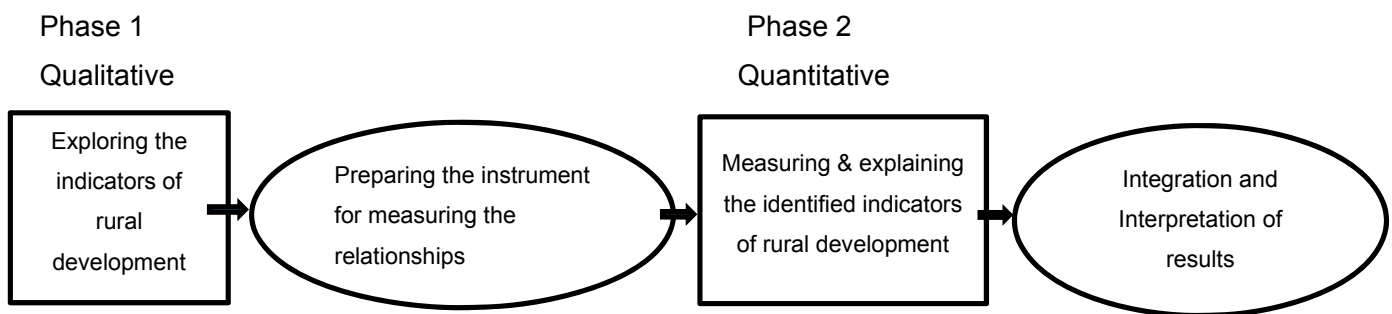


Figure 5 Research design. Adopted from Creswell (2012) and Muller et al., (2013): Modified to suit the study objective one.

In the second phase, the five groups that were organized for the first phase were further split. As stated in chapter three, some traditional councils were larger than others. Therefore the size of the TC was also considered such that the TC focus groups were more in some study areas than others. Thus, a total of 70 focus group discussions were conducted during the second phase of the study.

4.2.3 Data collection

Secondary data were collected from various publication types including academic journals, reviews, newspapers, conference proceedings, magazines, reports and books. During the first phase, interviews were conducted with thirty (30) focus groups. Semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. Apart from taking field notes, the interviews were audio recorded to avoid missing information while asking questions. In addition to interviews, an observation sheet was prepared to record non-verbal behaviours of participants during focus group discussions. Preference ranking technique was employed in the second phase of the survey to collect quantitative data. Seventy (70) focus groups were organised to complete the structured questionnaire by placing the given themes defining rural development in order of preference. However, one indicator of rural development 'promotion of culture and traditions' was added to the eight that were identified during the first phase. Thus, the participants were requested to rank the nine variables in the second phase of the study. The ninth indicator of rural development was included in the survey because it was highly recommended in the previous studies.

4.2.4 Data analysis

Qualitative data were transcribed and summarized. The data were then uploaded into Atlas.ti software version 7.5 for further processing. All identified indicators of rural development were labelled and coded accordingly. The software also assisted in identifying relationships among the identified indicators of rural development. Visual representation of themes representing the indicators (meaning) of rural development is presented in figure 6. The themes that emerged were considered the main indicators of rural development. The figure corresponding the themes in the network diagram represents the number of focus groups that recognised particular indicators defining rural development. For example, figure 6 shows that there were four focus groups that recognised special planning as an indicator of rural development.

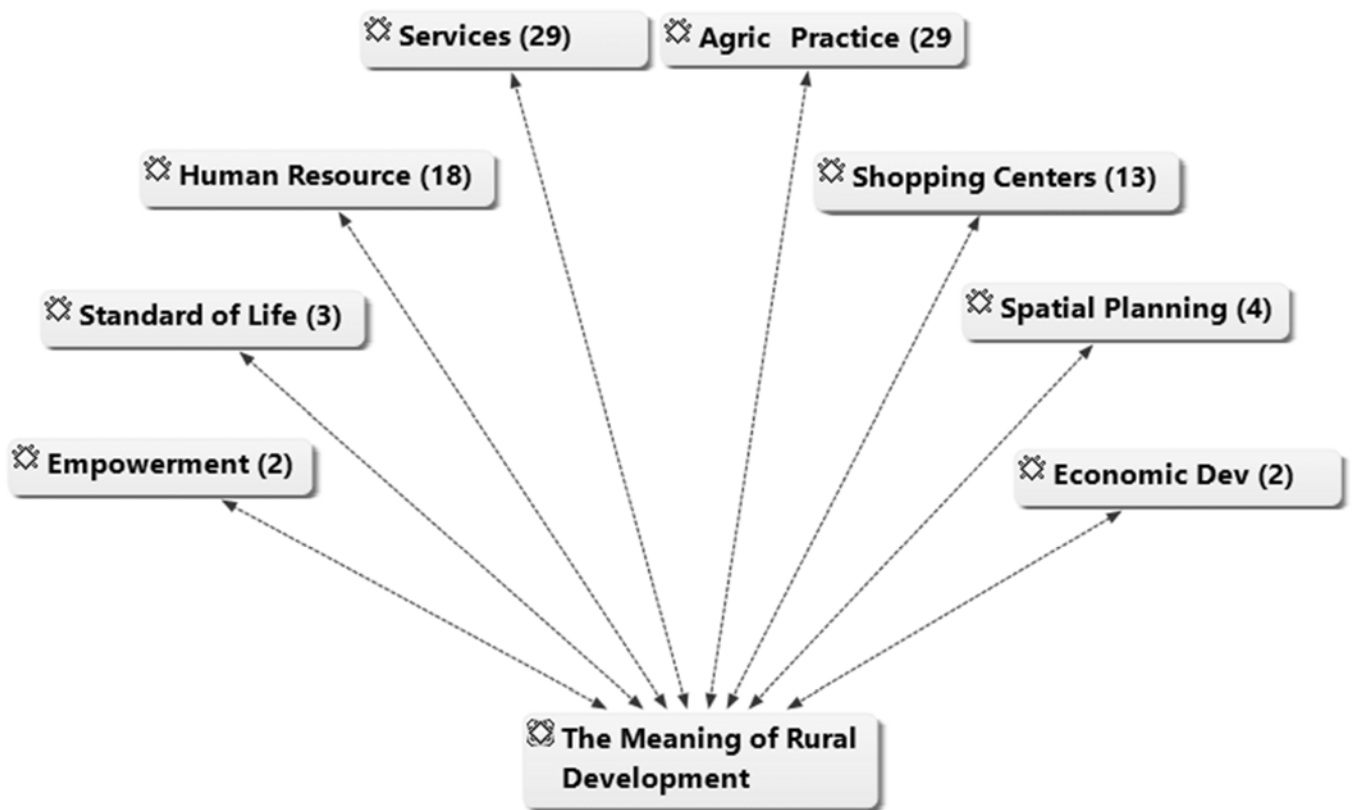


Figure 6 Visual representation of themes defining the meaning of rural development

Data collected during second phase of the survey were entered into IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. The Friedman test was performed to access the differences between the ranked variables:

$H_0 =$ There are no differences between the (ranked) variables.

This provided direction to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The confidence level was put at 95%. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was further administered with Bonferroni-adjustment of significance level to assess the differences between the identified phrases defining the roles of TCs in rural development.

4.3 Results

4.3.1 Phase one: Exploring the indicators of rural development

In an attempt to conceptualise rural development in their context, participants in the current study identified various indicators of rural development. The indicators were classified into eight specific themes as shown in Table 5. The themes were: agricultural practice, economic development, empowerment of rural communities, competent human resource, spatial planning and land use management, provisioning of basic services, establishment of shopping centres and standard of life. Each of the identified themes are elaborated in the following sections.

Provisioning of basic services

As already alluded before, the majority of focus groups which participated in the study (29 of 30) believed that provisioning of basic services was an indication that rural development had taken place. Participants argued that without provisioning of basic services such as water, electricity, education and primary health, development could not be realized. As shown in Table 5, only one Tsonga speaking adult male focus group from extreme rurality did not include provisioning of basic services as one of the indicators of rural development. Some participants were also emotional when discussing issues concerning provisioning of basic service. Raising voices, standing and pointing were the observed behaviours during focus group discussions.

Development Indicators	Low rurality	Medium rurality	Extreme rurality	Youth		Adult		TCs	Tsonga	Venda	Total
				Male	Female	Male	Female				

Table 5 Frequencies of focus groups per identified indicator of rural development for different variables

Provisioning of basic services	10	10	9	6	6	5	6	6	15	14	29
Agricultural practices	9	10	10	5	6	6	6	6	14	15	29
Competent human resource	7	4	7	4	6	3	3	2	11	7	18
Establishment of shopping centres	2	7	4	4	1	2	3	3	7	6	13
Spatial planning and land use management	0	1	3	0	2	0	0	2	3	1	4
Standard of life	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	3	3
Empowerment of rural communities	0	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	0	2	2
Economic development	0	2		0	1	0	0	0	0	2	2

Agricultural practices

As illustrated in Table 5, the majority of focus groups which participated in the study (29 of 30) identified 'agricultural practices' together with 'provisioning of basic services' as key indicators of development in rural spaces. The results further revealed that only one male youth focus group from Tsonga speaking community which is located in low rurality did not identify agricultural practice as an indicator of rural development. It was unanimous among all focus groups comprised of traditional council members to define development in terms of agricultural practice. However, focus groups which were comprised of youth were more vocal on the issue of land for agricultural development. One of the male youth participants expressed his view as follows:

"There are no jobs, we need land to grow food, and we need land to make for the living. How can we attain development without land and skills for practicing agriculture?"

Competent human resource

Many respondents (18 of 30 focus groups) agreed that having competent human resources such as educators, doctors, social workers and lawyers in rural spaces is an indication of development. Interestingly, all focus groups comprised of adult female anonymously believed that competent human resource is a critical component for rural development. One of the mothers from an extreme level of rurality had this to say:

"Highly qualified people do not want to work in our area. Once people become educated they relocate to cities. For us development would mean that we have competent principals at our schools and competent nurses at our clinics."

The results further revealed that there were more focus groups from the Tsonga speaking communities (11 of 18) which defined rural development in terms of competent human resource than those from Venda speaking communities (7 of 18).

Establishment of shopping centres

A handful of focus groups (13 of 30) believed that establishment of shopping centres in rural areas was an indication of development. The majority of focus groups which identified

establishment of shopping centres as an indicator of rural development are from medium and extreme level of rurality. The results further revealed that more male youth focus groups (4 of 13) than female youth focus group (1 of 13) cited establishment of shopping centres as an indicator of rural development. Unexpectedly, some of the focus groups especially those comprised of traditional council members were vehemently against establishment of shopping malls in rural areas. Participants argue that they do not see any economic or social value of shopping centres and malls established in their rural spaces. One of the traditional council members lamented:

“Leaders are taking agricultural land for shopping centres, all we eat and wear are the products of agriculture. If we give our traditional land to build shopping centres, where are we going to cultivate food?”

Spatial planning and land use management

Few focus groups (4 of 30) identified ‘spatial planning and land use management’ as one of indicators of rural development. Of these, the majority (3 of 4) were coming from extreme level of rurality. The results also revealed that none of the focus groups from low level of rurality defined rural development in terms of spatial planning and land use management. During the focus group discussions, most participants argued that a developed rural area has land fill sites and cemeteries well demarcated by competent surveyors. Some respondents further suggested that the traditional council should co-opt retired surveyors or people with knowledge of special planning to help in land use and management.

Standard of life

Very few focus groups (3 of 30) believed that rural development is defined by level of wealth, comfort, material goods and necessities available to people living in rural areas. The results further indicated that there was no focus group from extreme rurality which included standard of life in the list of development indicators. In addition, this development indicator was only cited by focus groups which comprised of traditional council members. One of the traditional council members put it in this way:

“We can never say we have achieved rural development while we are still using cow dung to polish the floor and containers to carry water on the head and fire wood for cooking. We want to open water taps inside our houses, we want to use electric stoves like those in towns.”

Empowerment of rural communities

As already alluded before, ‘empowerment of rural communities’ was cited by very few focus groups (2 of 30). This indicator was only cited by focus groups from medium and extreme level of rurality. As illustrated in Table 5, only focus groups comprised of youth and traditional council members who are from the Venda speaking communities included ‘empowerment of rural communities’ in their list of indicators of rural development.

Economic development

Very few focus groups (2 of 30) cited ‘economic development’ as one of the indicators of rural development. Together with the indicator ‘empowerment of rural communities’ economic development was the least cited indicator in the study. The results revealed that the two focus groups that identified economic development were all comprised of youth located in the medium level of rurality. The results further revealed that there was no focus group from Tsonga speaking community which had cited economic development as an indicator of rural development.

4.3.2 Phase Two: Preference ranking of the identified indicators of rural development

As alluded before, Preference ranking technique was employed with the seventy (70) focus groups to complete the structured questionnaire by placing the nine indicators of rural development in order of preference. Of the nine indicators, eight were the identified themes drawn from the first phase of the survey. The themes were agricultural practice, economic development, empowerment of rural communities, competent human resource, spatial planning and land use management, provisioning of basic services, establishment of shopping centres and standard of life. However, the indicator ‘promotion of culture and traditions’ was included in the list by the principal researcher as the ninth indicator due to its recurrent in the literature.

The results of Friedman test analysis showed a Chi Square (χ^2) value of 124.473, with a significance level of 0.00, indicating that indeed there was a differential rank ordered preference for the nine indicators of rural development. The mean value for the nine indicators were computed (see Table 6). The analysis revealed that service delivery was the most preferred development indicator with the highest mean rank of 7.57. The results were consistent with the qualitative survey findings of the study where 'provisioning of basic service' indicator was also identified by the majority of participating focus groups (29 of 30). Standard of life, empowerment of rural communities and agricultural practice were also among the top ranked indicators. The analysis also revealed that the indicators 'establishment of shopping centres' and 'promotion of culture and traditions' were the least preferred by participants.

A post-hoc comparison of the rank ordered preferences for the nine indicators for rural development was conducted using non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The test was performed to calculate the differences between the most ranked indicators (provisioning of basic service) with each of the other eight. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was calculated with Bonferroni correction applied. Bonferroni adjustment is a method for correcting the significance level when multiple comparisons are made (Chen & Feng, 2017). To compensate for type 1 error the significance value of $P = 0.05$ was divided by 9 (the number of ranked indicators) and a new significance value of 0.01 was obtained.

As indicated in Table 7, the results of Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated that there was a remarkable significance difference between provisioning of basic service and the other seven development indicators with P value of 0.00 in each. The seven indicators were empowerment of rural people, agricultural practice, spatial planning and land use management, establishment of shopping centres, promotion of culture and traditions, local economic development and relevant human resource. However, the analysis also indicated that there was no significance difference between provisioning of basic service and standard of life.

4.4 Discussion

Both the qualitative and the quantitative phase of the study revealed that service delivery was the most preferred indicator of rural development. There is consensus in the previous research findings that provisioning of basic services is fundamental to improving standard of life (Osman et.al, 2014; Reddy, 2016). Provision of basic services seem to be a catalyst for economic and

social development in rural communities. It cuts across all other aspirations for a developed rural community.

Table 6 Friedman rank test analysis of differences in identified indicators of rural

Rural development indicators	Mean rank	deve lopm ent.
Provisioning of basic service	7.57	
Standard of life	6.54	
Empowerment of rural communities	5.15	
Agricultural practice	5.01	
Economic development	4.73	
Competent human resource	4.24	
Spatial planning and land use management	4.20	
Establishment of shopping centres	3.90	
Promotion of culture and traditions	3.65	

Table 7 Wilcoxon signed rank test comparing Basic service with other remaining indicators of rural development

Remaining indicators	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Standard of life	-3.153 ^b	*
Empowerment	-5.364 ^b	****
Agric practices	-5.026 ^b	****
LED	-5.169 ^b	****
Shopping	-5.937 ^b	****
Culture	-5.965 ^b	****
Human resource	-5.761 ^b	****
Spatial Planning	-5.958 ^b	****

For example, if rural road infrastructure is serviced and maintained, it can connect rural areas to urban centres and facilitates the mobility of goods and people within the area. It can also facilitate the provisioning of other services such as ambulances and policing. In addition, supply of water infrastructure has great potential for stimulating small and large scale agricultural activities. The availability of reliable electricity infrastructure in rural areas may help to promote local economic development. Duvall (2016) confirms that access to power catalyses economic development in rural areas and creates more jobs and new industries. Previous work carried out by Brynard (2011) highlights the importance of public service delivery in rural areas particularly for potentially vulnerable groups such as the elderly, unemployed and women. Since 2009, there had been ongoing community protests in the Vhembe District in relation to public service delivery (Beyers, 2017). Therefore, development to the traditional communities in the Vhembe District will be achieved when there is sustainable service delivery in their rural spaces.

Agricultural practice was another top rated indicator of rural development. Participants recognized the need of agricultural practice for rural development. Agricultural practice in the Vhembe District rural communities is no longer vibrant as in the past years (Mukwevho & Anim, 2014). Back then, traditional leaders were used to own large agricultural farms known as *dzunde* where traditional community members would go and cultivate. As it was revealed in the study, all focus groups which were comprised of adults (the generation that understand *Zunde*) cited agricultural practice as an indicator of rural development. Currently, rural community members are no longer willing to serve in traditional leaders' fields due to new democratic legal framework. Mpandeli and Maponya (2014) argues that agricultural activities in the Vhembe District has declined since the dawn of democracy. According to the report released by Agri-Park (2016) crop and livestock farming are the main sources of economic development in the Vhembe District. The results implied that traditional community in the Vhembe District were still dependent on agricultural practice for rural livelihood. However, the study conducted by Mpandeli & Maponya (2014) maintained that the majority of farmers in the Vhembe District were being excluded from participating in the formal market process, due to lack of transport; poor access to market information and lack of formal education. Since the end of apartheid regime, South Africa had established a number of agrarian reforms programme to improve agricultural practice in rural areas. Even though, there had never been an increase in production, livelihoods

and agricultural output in Vhembe rural communities (Mkhize, 2014). To succeed, South African agrarian land reform require radical change in implementation.

Spatial planning and land use management, relevant human resource and local economic development have received a moderate preference by participating groups. These results suggests that though the three indicators were not highly preferred yet, they should not be ignored when planning for development in the Vhembe rural communities. Spatial planning and land use management indicator was identified only by the focus groups which were located in medium and extreme level of rurality. Most of the traditional communities closer to town are staying within the municipality proclaimed area in which planning and land use management were prioritized. Thus, traditional communities who are located away from municipal proclaimed areas were looking forward to a development in the form of proper spatial planning and land use management. Many development analysts stress the importance of land use planning and management in developing rural spaces (Scott, 2006; Moharana & Hemant, 2015; Stevens, 2017). The Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act 16 of 2013 (SPLUMA) is a South African national law which applies to land planning and management. It was expected that SPLUMA would harmonize and promoted the involvement of traditional councils to improve their spatial planning and land use management culture. To date, it seems there are more challenges with implementing SPLUMA than anticipated solutions. The powers of traditional leaders are not clearly spelled out in the SPLUMA legislation. Consequently, traditional leaders argued that they were given a back seat role of only public participation and not those related to decision making with regard to planning in their areas of jurisdiction.

Though competent human resource variable received average ranking, it is noteworthy to observe that there were more focus groups from the Tsonga speaking communities (11 of 18) which defined rural development in terms of competent human resource that those from Venda speaking communities (7 of 18). It can be concluded that Tsonga as compared to Venda speaking communities might have less competent human resources such as doctors, educators, lawyer in their community. This might be attributed to the fact that they do not have growing towns around then as the Venda.

Establishment of shopping centres was one of the indicators for rural development which did not earned a significant appreciation by the participating focus groups. However, the findings were not supported by the previous research findings. Studies on the impact of shopping centres in

rural areas revealed that shopping centres and malls are critical elements of economic and social development to rural communities (Ligthelm, 2012; Heffner, 2015). The authors further claimed that malls and shopping centres provide employment and facilitate Provisioning of basic service to neighbouring rural communities. It was observed in the results that the majority of focus groups which identified establishment of shopping centres as an indicator of rural development were from medium and extreme level of rurality. Establishment of shopping centres was not a criterion for rural development to the communities who are located proximity to urban. The results further revealed that more male youth focus groups (4 of 13) than female youth focus group (1 of 13) cited establishment of shopping centres as an indicator of rural development. It can be concluded that more male youth than female youth are seeking for employment. Most of female youth who participated in the study might be receiving social grant. Therefore, employment is not a priority.

Standard of life was another development indicator which was ranked among the highest. According to O'Hagan (2000), the main objective of rural development is to improve the living standards of rural people. The results depicted the seriousness of Vhembe District rural communities in claiming their rights to quality life characterized by adequate food and nutrition, clothing, housing and access to primary health. The right to an adequate standard of living in South Africa is recognized as a human right in international human rights instruments as well as local constitution and various pieces of legislation.

Though the indicator 'empowerment of rural communities' was identified by few focus groups in the first phase of the study, it was ranked among the top in the second phase of the study. Empowerment of local people has over the years been regarded as crucial for the development of rural communities. Previous findings support that rural livelihoods are enhanced through effective participation of rural people and rural communities in the management of their own social, economic and environmental objectives by empowering people in rural areas, particularly women and youth (Moyo & Francis, 2010). Ngwanya (2010: 9) argues "development is not about the delivery of goods to a passive citizenry, it is about active involvement and growing empowerment." South Africa has established many developmental policies to support rural community empowerment. The policies include among others, Reconstruction and Development Programme of 1994 (RDP), and the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme of 2009 (CRDP). The policies are aimed at empowering communities for socio-economic development. Unfortunately, the policies have not yielded positive results in the Vhembe District (Meyer,

2014). Rural community empowerment can never be meaningful unless the institutionalised support mechanisms are in place. For example, there should be systems through which rural people are assisted with loan, information, market and training.

The study further revealed that there was no significant differences in the identification of indicators for development due to language of respondents (Tsonga and Venda speaking communities). This might have been influenced by the fact that both of these ethnic groups have many conditions in common, they share the same four local municipalities in the Vhembe District. The study conducted by Mashau (2012) confirmed that the Venda and Tsonga speaking communities share similar socio-economic conditions.

It was not surprising that the indicator 'Promotion of culture and traditions' was the least preferred of all the indicators for rural development. This indicator was not among the eight which were cited by participants during focus group discussions during the first phase of the study. It was only included in the list by the principal researcher in the second phase due to its recurrent in the literature. The results implied that promotion of 'culture and traditions' is not a priority in developing Vhembe rural communities. Unlike in other international countries such as Britain, Spain and Italy where promotion of the local identity is regarded as a cornerstone for rural development, South Africa does not seem to have prioritized this development indicator (Ramsey, 2015). Moreover, South African frameworks, policies and strategies for rural development reviewed for the study do not include promotion of culture in their definition of rural development.

4.5 Conclusion

The study provides definitions of rural development from a South African policy perspective which were construed in terms of the nine themes. The themes are, provisioning of basic service, standard of life, empowerment of rural communities, agricultural practice, economic development, competent human resource, spatial planning and land use management, establishment of shopping centres, promotion of culture and tradition. Provision of service delivery was the most preferred indicator of rural development as compared to promotion of culture and traditions which was the least preferred in the Vhembe rural communities. It was noted that South African policies reviewed for this study did not include promotion of cultural values as one of the ten identified themes defining rural development. Nonetheless, the

Vhembe traditional communities included promotion culture in their definition of rural development. Therefore, culture and traditions should be considered when formulating policies for rural development in South Africa. It was also revealed in the current study that Vhembe District rural communities did not include the theme about poverty and sustainability of environment in their definition of rural development as contained in the reviewed literature. The empirical results of this study confirmed that construction of shopping malls is not a priority in developing the Vhembe traditional communities. However, provisioning of basic services was found to be the most aspired indicator for rural development. Improved services delivery to rural communities of Vhembe District remain the main catalyst for economic and social development and therefore it should be given the priority when planning for development. The study also concludes that empowering rural communities is critical for rural development. It is therefore recommended that institutionalised support mechanisms be established so that rural people are empowered by being assisted with loan, information, market and training.

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CHAPTER 5: ROLES OF TRADITIONAL COUNCILS IN ACHIEVING RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN VHEMBE DISTRICT OF SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract

As in many other parts of sub-Saharan Africa, Traditional Councils (TCs) have always been central to the governance of rural communities. In South Africa, various pieces of legislations including the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 were enacted to redefine the roles of TC in promoting effective leadership and good governance in rural areas. The prescribed roles include, administration of land, administration of justice and facilitation of service delivery. However, even after 15 years since the establishment of the new legislations, Vhembe District rural communities were still faced with many challenges including service delivery protests, granting of the same piece of land to more than one person and evidence of xenophobic tensions and conflicts. Therefore, it was not known if the roles of traditional councils in achieving rural development were clear. The objective of the study was to explain the roles of Traditional Councils in developing the Vhembe rural communities. Focus group discussions, observations and preference ranking techniques were used to collect data from six TCs. Eleven (11) themes defining the roles of Traditional Councils in rural development were identified. The themes were service delivery, land administration, management of resources, social welfare, administration of justice, economic development, records keep, recruitment of investors, moral regeneration, culture and tradition and communication and dissemination of information. The Friedman test of the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was performed to calculate the mean ranks of each of the identified roles. Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P=0.00$) indicated that there was a remarkable significance difference between the most recognised role of TC (service delivery) and the other three (communication, culture and moral regeneration) which were identified as less important in the current study. Some of the roles suggested by the respondents and previous studies were not included in the South African legislations. It was evident in the study that various government policies that defines the roles of TCs did not provide specific duties traditional

councillors should be given within the listed fields or functional domains. Therefore, the study recommended for the establishment of a guideline defining the roles of TCs.

Key words: Traditional Council, rural development, degree of rurality, *Panchayats*

5.1 Introduction

In many parts of the world traditional administration structures continue to play specified roles in society and public administration (Lalrintluanga, 2011; Hartle, 2015; Chigwata, 2016). There is evidence in literature to conclude that the roles performed by TCs across the globe are somehow related to each other (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008; Charumbira, 2012). While countries like Russia and France had completely eradicated the system of traditional leadership in their governance structures, literature shows that TC system (*Panchayats*) in South Asian remains effective (Shah, 2013). The author adds that the *Panchayats* is practiced in countries such as India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Trinidad, Tobago, and Nepal. The *Panchayats* were established in terms of the constitutions in respective countries and have legislated functions such as administration of land, administration of justice, mobilizing resources for community benefit, regulating trade, and facilitating services such as water, agriculture, health, and social welfare.

Traditional leadership system in Ghana was once abolished. However, after standing firm to fight for their recognition, they were allocated new roles in local governance and development (Currey, 2000). Their four major roles are custodians of natural resources, fighting for social development of their people, dispute resolution in rural communities, and guardianship of traditional heritage as norms, values and principles (Taabazuing et.al, 2013). In many parts of Sub-Saharan Africa, the roles of TCs are defined and regulated by the constitutions and related legislations. There is evidence from literature to conclude that countries such as Botswana, South Africa, Namibia, Zimbabwe, share some of the roles of TCs as administration of land, administration of justice and social welfare in common (Agbese, 2004; Osakede & Ijimakinwa, 2015, Chigwata, 2016). However, in the countries mentioned above, the roles of TCs in democratic governance are inarticulately vague. Therefore, the roles and functions of TCs in rural development in Southern Africa require further investigation.

Studies in organizational management assert that establishing clear roles is fundamental to functionality of the organization (Feistritz & Jones, 2014; Lynn & Kalay, 2015). The common view is that if the roles of TCs are not clearly defined, traditional council members and municipal ward councillors are likely to conflict with each other and this may impede development in rural communities.

Traditional Councils in South Africa were re-established in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003. However, their roles in the democratic South Africa are complex and ambiguous (Mathonsi, 2017). Before the dawn of democracy, Traditional Councils in South Africa provided uncontested authority and leadership within their areas of jurisdiction (Hornsby, 2002). Still, recent studies claim that the authority and roles of TCs are greatly undermined by legislation and laws passed in the new dispensation (Mathonsi, 2017). Approximately three-quarters of the population in South Africa live in rural areas and are under the governance of Traditional Councils (Sikhweni, 2013). The government of South Africa had established various legal instruments to recognize and redefined the roles of TCs in rural in an attempt to develop rural areas. The instruments include, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, White paper on local government of 1998, White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003, Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 and the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005.

Traditional Councils are recognized in terms of section 212 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996. As much as the constitution values the existence of traditional councils, it does not clearly define the specific roles TCs should perform in rural development (Williams, 2009). In addition to clarity of roles, the Constitution does not confer the Traditional Councils with powers beyond the role of being custodians of tradition and culture. Hence, the omission created challenges when defining their roles and functions in the post-apartheid South Africa. The Local Government Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 provides for ex-officio participation of traditional leaders in municipal councils. Nonetheless, the study conducted by Shembe (2014) reveals that Traditional Councils are not represented in the highest decision making body of the municipalities. The author further states that, the Act did not guarantee traditional leaders voting rights in matters affecting their traditional communities.

As shown in Table 8, the White paper on Local Government of 1998 identifies five roles to be prescribed for TCs in their quest for rural development. The role are: Administration of land, promotion of culture and tradition, facilitation of service delivery, administration of justice and dissemination of information. However, the paper openly declares that traditional leaders have limited legislative and administrative powers. Consequently, Traditional Council members feel that their territory is being encroached (Mathonsi, 2017). Another challenge with this legislation is that TC members are expected make only recommendations on land allocations, yet they regard themselves as the custodian of the communal land. The White paper provided that TCs should contribute to the development of their communities. However, it was not clearly spelled out what and how TCs should participate in the development of their communities.

As illustrated in Table 8, the White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003 prescribes the most number of roles (8 of 11) for TCs as compared to other legislations. However, the roles are not clearly spelled out and there are no specific duties assigned to TC members. The objective of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 is to transform the institution of traditional leadership in line with the constitutional imperatives. Apart from listing only three functions as shown in Table 8, the framework Act does not suggest specific deliverables TCs should perform within the listed fields or functional domains.

The Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act of 1995 was enacted by the province of Limpopo as envisaged by the Constitution of the Republic and the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003. Like other legislations, the roles and functions of traditional leaders are not exclusively and clearly defined in this Act. As Khunou (2009) confirms, the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005 does not provide a clear definition of roles Traditional Councils should perform. Of all the South African legislations reviewed for this study, only the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act authorises TCs to collect tribal levies. In contrast, Section 30 of the Eastern Cape Traditional Leadership and Governance Act 4 of 2005 clearly states that “traditional council may not impose any levy on any member of the traditional community or on any section of the traditional community”. Inconsistencies of provincial legislations is a true reflection of lack of clarity in policies that define the roles of TCs in the country. Such ambiguity often results in role confusion and conflicts between the TCs and their local municipalities.

Table 8 South African Legislations that define the roles of TCs

The roles of TCs	The Constitution, Act 108 of 1996	Local Government Municipality Structure Acts 117 of 1998	White paper on Local Government of 1998	White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2003	Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003	Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005
Service delivery	X	✓	✓	X	X	X
Land administration	X	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Management of resources	X	X	X	✓	✓	X
Social welfare	X	X	X	✓	✓	X
Administration of justice	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Economic Development	X	✓	X	✓	X	X
Records keep	X	X	X	X	X	X
Recruitment of investors	X	X	X	X	X	X
Moral regeneration	X	X	X	X	X	X
Culture and tradition	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	X
Communication/dissemination of information	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Key: ✓ = the role is prescribed in the legislation

X = the role is not prescribed in the legislation

5.2 Methodology

5.2.1 Study design

An exploratory sequential mixed method design was adopted for this study. Qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis were integrated in order to achieve triangulation (Muller *et al.*, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Zheng, 2015). As shown in figure 7, the qualitative phase was used to explore different roles of TCs as perceived by communities in rural area. As Muller *et al.*, (2013) propose, the identified variables were used to prepare for the quantitative data collection tool. Therefore, the quantitative phase was developed based on the results of qualitative phase. In the second phase of the study, the identified roles were compared, measured and explained.

5.2.2 Study site and sampling procedure

As discussed in the previous chapter, the current study was conducted in Vhembe District of South Africa. The district consist of 43 traditional councils and 520 headmen councils (Tshitangoni, 2014). Multi-stage cluster sampling was used to select the TCs of Mphaphuli, Kutama and Mutele from the Venda speaking communities and Madonsi, Mhinga and Ribungwane from the Tsonga speaking communities. The respondents were sampled from different levels of rurality (low, medium and extreme) as proposed by Inagami et al. (2016). As shown in Table 2 and 3, the rurality landscape was determined by increase with distance from the central business district (CBD). The distances between the traditional council offices and their local municipality CBDs were obtained from Google maps. That was done to assess the influence of rurality landscape on the perceived roles of TCs.

In the first phase, five focus group discussions were conducted in each of the six sampled TC to collect qualitative data. Four participating groups were organised according to gender and age (adult male, adult female, youth male and youth female). The fifth group was comprised of the TC members and had mixed age and gender. The group was not split because the majority of TCs which participated in the study were mainly composed of adult males.

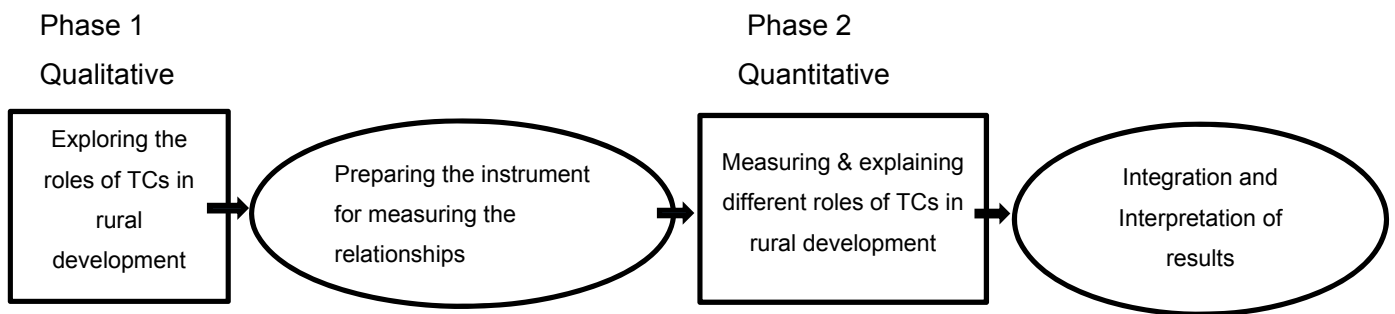


Figure 7 Research design. Adopted from Creswell (2012) and Muller et al., (2013): Modified to suit the study objective two.

In the second phase of the survey, the five groups that were organized for the first phase were further split. As stated in chapter three, some traditional councils were larger than others. Therefore the size of the TC was also considered such that the TC focus groups were more in some study areas than others. Thus, a total of 70 focus group discussions were conducted during the second phase of the study.

5.2.3 Data collection

In the first phase of the study, interviews were conducted with thirty (30) focus groups to discuss various roles of TCs in rural development. Semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. Preference ranking technique was employed in the second phase of the survey to collect quantitative data. Seventy (70) focus groups were organised to complete the structured questionnaire by organising the roles of TCs in order of preference.

5.2.4 Data analysis

Qualitative data were uploaded into Atlas.ti software version 7.5 for further processing. All the themes about defining the roles of TCs in rural development were labelled and coded accordingly. The software also assisted in categorising relationships among the identified roles. As presented in figure 8, the themes that emerged were considered the main roles of TCs in rural development. The figure corresponding the themes in the network diagram represents the number of focus groups that recognised particular theme defining rural development. For example, figure 8 shows that there were 24 focus groups that recognised administration of justice as an indicator of rural development.

Data collected during second phase of the survey were entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. Friedman test was performed to access the difference in the respondents' ranks where:

$$H_0 = \text{There is no difference in the respondents' ranks.}$$

This provided direction to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The confidence level was put at 95%. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was further administered with Bonferroni-adjustment of significance level to assess the differences among the identified roles of TCs.

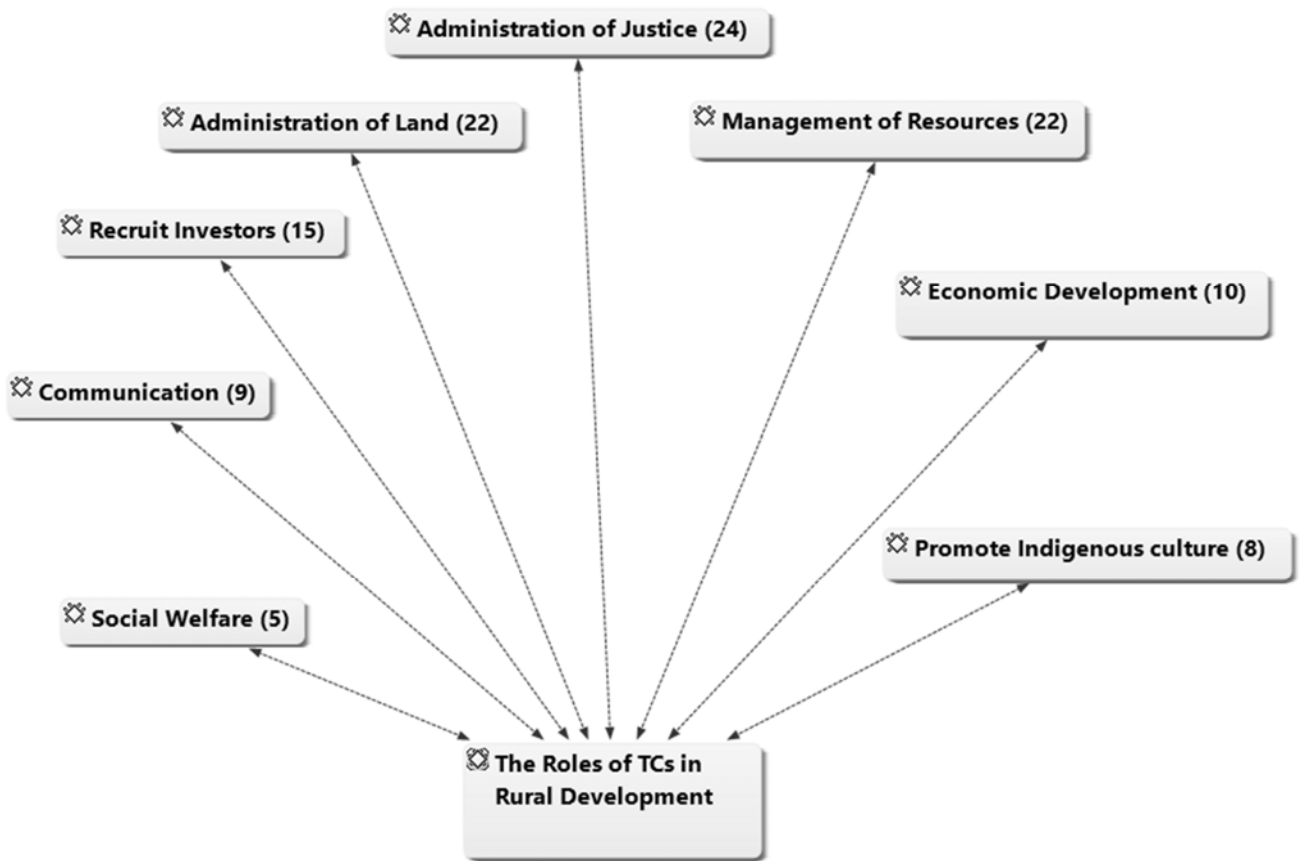


Figure 8 Visual representation of the themes defining the roles of TCs in rural development

Kendall coefficient of concordance was further administered to measure the extent to which the 70 participating focus groups had agreed or disagreed with the ranking. Previous studies recommended Kendall coefficient of concordance as a reliability analysis to determine the degree of agreement among raters when using preference ranking techniques (Gearhart *et al.*, 2013; Shweta *et al.*, 2015).

5.3 Results

5.3.1 Phase one: Exploring the perceived roles of TCs in Vhembe rural communities

As already alluded, five focus group interviews were conducted from each of the six participating Traditional Councils. Each of the participating focus groups were asked to identify the roles of TCs in their quest for developing rural areas. The participating groups classified the roles of TCs in rural development into eight specific themes as shown in Table 9. The identified themes were: Administration of justice, administration of land, management of resources, recruitment of investors, economic development, communication and dissemination of information, promotion of indigenous culture, and social welfare. Across the identified themes, the study did not find any remarkable difference on responses between the Venda and Tsonga speaking communities. The following sections give a summary of the identified roles:

Administration of justice

Administration of justice emerged as a prominent theme in most of the participating focus groups (24 of 30). There were more focus groups in extreme level of rurality (10 of 30) which identified administration of justice as one of the roles of TCs than those in low level of rurality (8 of 30). In addition, many respondents from extreme level of rurality stated that they did not have money for transport to town for court cases. The results also revealed that the role of TC in administration of justice was more preferred by focus groups which were comprised of women (11 Of 30) as compared to those comprised of men (5 of 30). One of the adult female respondent expressed the following:

“It is convenient to report your case to the Traditional Council than to western courts which are in town. You have to spend money for transport and some cases are

reminded thousand times before they are finalised. We do not have money for transport and time to spend sitting inside the court galleries. Who will cook for our children?"

Although some members questioned the expertise of TC members in legal matters, others suggested ways to improve traditional court systems. The suggested ways include co-opting and recruiting retired judges and legal practitioners from the villages to become TC members. It was noted during the discussions that none of the focus groups which participated in the study was aware of the proposed Traditional Courts Bill and its content.

Administration of land

It was unanimous among most of the participating focus groups (22 of 30) that the role of administration of land be dedicated to Traditional Councils. Respondents expressed that TCs should be accorded authority to exercise full control of traditional land without the interference of local municipalities. They accused local municipalities of charging high prices for residential sites and selling their grazing land to developers without giving anything back to the communities. It was observed that the role of TCs in administration of land was highly proffered by focus groups comprised of adults as compared to those of youth. Adult respondents emphasised that they enjoyed owning large areas of land under TCs than their urban counter part.

Management of natural resources

As illustrated in Table 9, management of resources was cited by a large number of focus groups (22 of 30) as one of the roles of TCs in developing rural communities. The study also revealed that almost all focus groups comprised of Traditional Council members regarded resource management as their responsibility. The respondents claimed that all natural resources which were available within a particular traditional area were under the custodian of TCs. The identified resources included land, water sources, air, soil, plants and animals. Some of the respondents argued that traditional leaders were given divine wisdom by ancestors to effectively manage and conserve natural resources. One of the Traditional Council members put it in this way:

“According to our culture some trees have potential of causing rain fall and sustaining fountains. Trees are not supposed to be just chopped down, they prevent soil erosion, provides nests to birds and supply medicine to our traditional healers”

Table 9 Frequencies of focus groups per identified roles of TCs

Roles of TCs	Low rurality	Medium rurality	Extreme rurality	Youth		Adult		Mixed group	Tsonga	Venda	Total
				Male	Female	Male	Female				
Administration of justice	5	9	10	3	5	5	6	5	11	13	24
Administration of land	5	8	9	3	5	4	6	4	12	10	22
Management of resources	4	8	10	2	4	5	5	6	11	11	22
Recruit investors	2	6	7	5	2	3	2	3	8	7	15
Economic development	1	5	4	5	0	3	1	1	4	6	10
Communication	0	2	7	4	2	1	0	2	5	4	9
Promote indigenous culture	0	3	5	0	1	2	5	1	4	4	8
Social welfare	0	1	4	0	1	0	3	1	2	3	5

The study further showed that more focus groups from extreme rurality (10 of 30) cited management of resource as one of the roles of TC than focus groups from low level of rurality (4 of 30). During focus group discussions, it was observed that respondents from extreme level of rurality demonstrated passion by spending longer time discussing about management and conservation of natural resources than those from low level of rurality.

Recruitment of investors

Half of the focus groups that participated in the study (15 of 30) expected TC to perform the role of recruitment of investors. As shown in Table 9, there were more focus groups in extreme level of rurality (6 of 10) that anticipated TCs to recruit investors into rural spaces than those in low level of rurality (2 of 10). Respondents argued that rural areas had a lot of potential for mining, forestry and farming. Therefore, TCs were expected to recruit national and international investors to come and develop rural areas. There were more males as compared to female respondents who aspired the participation of foreign investors in rural spaces. During the discussion, one of the male respondent argued:

“Traditional council members should go out to seek for investors. They must search for people who can come and develop our area. Look, we have stones but no machines to make concrete. If those with machines can come, they will be able to pay royalties that will benefit the poor in our communities.”

Economic development

Unlike the theme of administration of justice which was identified by almost all the participating groups, discussion about economic development was not that much robust as expected. Especially among female respondents. For example, only one of ten female focus groups had cited economic development as one of the roles TCs were expected to perform in rural development. Some male respondents criticised TCs for poor economic development in rural area. As shown in Table 9, the majority of focus group (9 of 10) that expected TCs to improve economic development were from extreme and medium level of rurality as compared to those from low level of rurality (1 of 10). Focus groups from low level of rurality expressed the need for TCs to intervene in the economic state of their rural areas. Respondents expressed their

dissatisfactions with regard to increased prices of food and transport where as their rural economy was not growing.

Communication and dissemination of information

A handful of focus groups (9 of 30) claimed that TCs were responsible for disseminating information for the benefit of rural communities. Respondents concurred that there were unique ways in which critical information such as death notice were to be announced. The results further indicated that there were more focus groups from extreme level of rurality that identified communication and dissemination of information as the role of TCs than those in low level of rurality. One of the adult respondent from extreme level of rurality expressed the following:

“We rely on the council for information. Even when there is death in the village we know how the bell is rung. We can tell if the bell is calling for imbizo or announcing death.”

During focus group discussions some youth respondents questioned the expertise of TC members in harnessing the latest technologies for improving their communication with members of traditional communities. They argued that the majority of TC members were very old and that they had low level of literacy. Thus, they were unable to utilise modern communication gadgets such as computers and cell phones for effective communication in rural spaces. The respondents added that the majority of TC members were not able to read and comprehend legal documents which were usually written in English language.

Promotion of indigenous culture

As shown in Table 9, few focus groups (8 of 30) recognised promotion of culture as a function of TCs in rural development. The results further revealed that all focus groups that cited promotion of indigenous culture as one of the roles of TCs in rural development were from medium and extreme level of rurality. During the discussions, it was evident that most of focus groups which comprised of women (6 of 30) demonstrated high regards of their cultural practices than those comprised of men (2 of 30). The study also revealed that there were more adults (7 of 30) who recognised the theme ‘promotion of indigenous culture’ than youth (1 of 30). Discussions with adult respondents demonstrated passion and appeal towards cultural renaissance. The groups

identified several subthemes which merit consideration when developing rural communities. The subthemes included language, food, marriage, music, dances and attire.

Social welfare

Of all the eight identified themes, social welfare was identified by the list number of focus groups (5 of 30) that participated in the study. The study revealed that there were more female (4 of 30) focus groups than male (1 of 30) focus groups which identified social welfare as a function of TCs in rural development. Several youth female focus groups discussed frustrations and difficulties they experienced when they had to wait for social grants payments during rainy weather. The study further showed that there were more focus groups from extreme rurality (4 of 30) that cited social welfare as one of the responsibilities of TCs in rural development than those in medium and low level of rurality combined (1 of 30). One of the female youth respondent from extreme level of rurality reacted in this way:

“We expect TCs to solve our problems related to social grants. They should build a pay-point hall for us. We are suffering during cold and rainy weather. They should also negotiate for an increase in grants per child. We who are in deep rural like Mutele area should be paid more than those in urban because things are expensive here.”

5.3.2 Phase Two: Preference ranking of the identified roles of TCs

As discussed above, Preference ranking technique was employed with the seventy (70) focus groups to complete the structured questionnaire. The respondents were requested to rank the eleven identified roles of TCs in order of preference. Of the eleven roles, eight were the identified themes drawn from the first phase of the survey. The themes were: Administration of justice, administration of land, management of resources, recruitment investors, economic development, communication and dissemination of information, promotion of indigenous culture, and social welfare. However, the three additional roles (facilitation of service delivery, records keeping and promotion of moral regeneration) were drawn from the secondary data. As elaborated in the background of the study, the three additional roles were highly recommended by previous researchers. As a result, they were included in the quantitative phase of the survey with the other eight (8).

The results of Friedman test analysis showed a Chi Square (χ^2) value of 50.225, with a significance level of 0.00, indicating that there was a differential rank ordered preference for the 11 roles of TCs. The mean value for the 11 roles were computed and were shown in Table 10. The analysis revealed that facilitating service delivery (7.34 mean rank) was the most ranked role of TCs in developing rural communities. Comparatively, the role of TCs in Communication and dissemination of information was ranked the least (4.74).

Non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test was computed to measure the differences among the most ranked roles of TCs (service delivery) with each of the other ten (10). Wilcoxon signed-rank test was calculated with Bonferroni correction applied. Bonferroni adjustment is a method for correcting the significance level when multiple comparisons are made (Chen & Feng, 2017). To compensate for type 1 error the significance value of $P = 0.05$ was divided by 11 (the number of ranked indicators) and a new significance value of 0.005 was obtained. Wilcoxon signed-rank test results confirmed that land administration and basic service delivery were the outstanding roles of TCs in developing Vhembe District rural communities.

As indicated in Table 11, the results of Wilcoxon signed-rank test indicated that there was a remarkable significance difference between service delivery and each of the three other roles of the TCs with P value of 0.00 in each. The three roles were communication and dissemination of information, culture and traditions and moral regeneration. Thus, they are regarded as less important in the developing the Vhembe rural communities. However, the analysis also indicated that there was no significance difference between basic service delivery and each of the seven identified role which were recruitment of investors, local economic development, land administration, administration of justice, management of resources, records keeping and social welfare.

As already alluded, Kendall coefficient of concordance was also administered to measure the extent to which the 70 participating focus groups had agreed or disagreed with the ranking. The results indicated that Kendall coefficient of concordance (W) is 0.71 and significant at 1 % probability level, indicating that there was strong agreement among the respondents with respect to the ranking order. The estimated coefficient of Friedman's Chi² test (χ^2) is 365.26 and significant at 1 % probability level, justifying that the ratings assigned to these services under investigation came from the same statistical population.

Table 10 Friedman rank test analysis of differences in perceived roles of TCs.

Roles of TCs	Mean Rank
Service delivery	7.34
Land administration	7.00
Management of resources	6.55
Social welfare	6.47
Administration of justice	6.36
Economic Development	6.26
Records keep	6.01
Recruitment of investors	5.56
Moral regeneration	4.87
Culture and tradition	4.84
Communication and dissemination of information	4.74

Table 11 Wilcoxon signed ranks test of the identified roles of TCs in rural development

Most ranked role	Other competing roles of TCs	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Service Delivery	Land administration	-.599 ^b	ns
Service Delivery	Management of resources	-1.633 ^b	ns
Service Delivery	Social welfare	-1.853 ^b	.ns
Service Delivery	Administration of justice	-1.757 ^b	.ns
Service Delivery	Economic Development	-2.086 ^b	ns
Service Delivery	Records keep	-2.648 ^b	ns
Service Delivery	Recruitment of investors	-3.188 ^b	.*
Service Delivery	Moral regeneration	-4.052 ^b	.****
Service Delivery	Culture and tradition	-3.971 ^b	****
Service Delivery	Communication and dissemination of information	-4.452 ^b	****

5.4 Discussion

The role of TCs in administration of justice was highly recommended by respondents in both the qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. It was concluded that the traditional communities in the Vhembe District were still considering and valuing traditional justice systems in conflict resolution. However, the legislative mandate of traditional institutions in South Africa to provide justice was not yet clear. The Traditional Court Bill published in Government Gazette No. 40487 of 9 December 2016 was still no yet finalised. According to Wojkowska (2006), traditional justice systems are often more accessible to poor and disadvantaged people and may have the potential to provide quick, cheap and culturally relevant remedies. In agreement with the findings of the current study Charumbira (2012) confirms that usually, the local population preferred to withdraw cases presided over by the western style courts in favour of the chiefs' courts. This demonstrate the importance and relevance of TCs in developing rural communities.

The majority of focus groups which recommended the role of TCs in administration of justice were from extreme level of rurality. The results suggests that traditional communities from low level of rurality did not prefer traditional justice system. This can be attributed to the fact that TCs located in low level of rurality were closer to towns where they could easily access the service of civil courts. On the other hand, traditional communities located in extreme level of rurality would prefer traditional justice system. Similarly, Soyapi (2014) in his study concluded that rural people desire justice system which is close to their place of residence. The majority of focus groups that preferred the role on TCs in administration of justice were comprised of female. The findings were inconsistent with the previous results that the majority of women prefers civil courts to traditional justice system (Robinson, 2008; Nseabasi, 2015).The inconsistency could be accounted by the fact that some of the TCs in Vhembe District were transforming and that women were being included though the quota was still very low. It was also observed that some respondents in the current study questioned the expertise of TC members in legal matters. The current study recommends for the recruitment and co-option of retiree who have expertise in legal issues.

The role of TCs in facilitating public service delivery was only included during the second phase because it was repeatedly mentioned in the secondary data. Though it was not cited in the exploratory phase of the study, respondents ranked it the highest in the second phase. It

seemed the municipalities in the Vhembe District was failing to deliver services to rural communities and that TCs were expected to help in that regard. Tshitangoni & Francis (2017) confirmed that Vhembe District rural communities were riddled with increasingly service delivery protests. The results were consistent with the arguments raised by other previous findings that TCs are ideally placed in the grass roots level to facilitate service delivery to rural communities (Cowthra, 1999; Duplessis & Scheepers, 1999). Thus, Selepe (2009) in his study suggested an urgent need to involve traditional leadership structures to assist in clearing the municipal service delivery backlog. Poor and vulnerable households need basic services such as electricity, water, sanitation, health and education to enable development in their rural spaces. Therefore, TCs should dedicate themselves in helping the municipalities to provide the much needed basic services in rural communities.

The role of TCs in land administration was also among the top rated functions. The findings suggest that traditional communities in the Vhembe District still recognise TCs as custodian of communal land. However, in South Africa, the Spatial Planning and Land Use Management Act, 2013 (SPLUMA) which came into effect in 2015 clearly excluded traditional leaders from making land development or land use management decisions. Thus, many TCs believed SPLUMA excluded them from their core function of land administration, which is central to their role as a traditional authorities, leading to simmering discontent (Williams, 2015). In addition, the Communal Land Rights Act 11 of 2004 (CLARA) was ambiguous on the roles of TCs in land use planning and management. Weakness of these frameworks regulating land management in South Africa has potential to fuel the conflict between traditional councils and municipalities.

The study findings showed management of natural resources as another valued role of TCs in achieving rural development. Traditional Councils are important in mobilising resources and regulating their use with a view to maintaining a long-term sustainability. The findings were consistent with the conclusion drawn by Mowo *et al.* (2013), who claims that sustainable use of natural and state-owned resources is conditioned by the strength of local institutions to involve the user of that resource in its rational management. As Findlay & Twine (2018) noted, TCs were no longer enforcing regulations and measures to control natural resource harvesting as they were used to do in the past. The oversight had led to the extensive resource degradation in rural areas. It was evident in the study that there were more respondents from extreme level of rurality that recommended TCs to manage resources than those from low level of rurality. The results suggest that there were more natural resources in extreme level of rurality than they

were in low level of rurality. In affirmation, Langat *et al.*, (2016) concluded that the bulk of natural resources were located in deep rural areas. Usually, it is expected for extreme level of rurality to have fewer people than low level of rurality. Thus, sustainable management of natural resources becomes possible.

The role of TCs in recruiting investors received moderate rating in both qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. However, this role was not included in the legislations and other forms of literature reviewed for the study (Table 12). It was also noted that recruitment of investors was highly recommended by respondents from extreme level of rurality. The results depict that there might be higher unemployment rate in the traditional communities found in extreme level of rurality than those found in low level of rurality. The results were consistent with the study conducted by Govender *et al* (2017) who concluded that there was high unemployment rate in rural districts of South Africa than their urban counter parts. There were more males as compared to females respondents who aspired the participation of foreign investors in rural spaces. The findings suggest that rural males were more desiring for employment than females. It could be that the majority of males in rural areas were not receiving child grants as women. This assumption is supported by Ferreira (2017) who confirmed that the majority of child grant beneficiaries in South Africa (96%) are women.

There were more respondents from extreme level of rurality that valued the role of TCs in communication and dissemination of information for rural development. This could have been influenced by the fact that rural communities which were located close to towns were likely to experience better access to internets, televisions and newspapers that those in extreme level of rurality. Thus, it might not be necessary for TCs to disseminate information which was already accessed by the community. Rey-Moreno *et al.* (2016) confirms that telecommunication infrastructure in rural communities is extremely poor or simply non-existent in extreme rural communities. Du Plessis (1999) concludes that traditional authorities have the ability to ensure communication and dissemination of information in communities that are living in deep rural.

The role of TCs in promoting culture and traditions was among the lowest rated functions of TCs in both qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. Yet, it was repeatedly emphasised in the legislations (see Table 12 on summary of perceived and legislated roles of TCs). The results suggest that Vhembe traditional communities do not give preference to their culture.

Table 12 Summary of legislated and perceived roles of TCs in rural development

Roles of TCs	Legislated In RSA	Perceived	Other published sources
Service delivery	✓	X	✓
Land administration	✓	✓	✓
Management of resources	✓	✓	✓
Social welfare	✓	✓	✓
Administration of justice	✓	✓	✓
Economic Development	✓	✓	✓
Records keep	X	X	✓
Recruitment of investors	X	✓	X
Moral regeneration	X	X	✓
Culture and tradition	✓	✓	✓
Communication/dissemination of information	✓	✓	✓

Key: ✓ = the role is prescribed in the legislation
in the legislation

X = the role is not prescribed

The findings were in line with the study carried out by Nawa *et al.* (2016) who concluded that South Africans have lost aspiration to uphold and value their cultural practices, customs and values. However, this view requires further investigation since there is not enough evidence to validate the claim.

5.5 Conclusion

The study explained the roles of Traditional Councils as perceived by Vhembe rural communities. In addition to the perceived roles, the study provided a summary of role for TCs as prescribed by South African legislations and other published material. Eleven roles of TCs in rural development were identified and explained. The roles were, service delivery, land administration, management of resources, social welfare, administration of justice, economic development, records keep, and recruitment of investors, moral regeneration, culture and tradition and communication and dissemination of information. It was explained that the roles of TCs in facilitating service delivery and land administration were highly recommended by the Vhembe traditional communities. The study further distilled that some perceived roles were not legislated. The study also revealed that the roles of TC in records keeping, recruiting of investors, and moral regeneration which were not among the legislated. Gender and the degree of rurality were found to have impact on the perception of roles for TCs in rural development. It is therefore recommended that the two should be considered when revising the roles of TCs in rural development. The roles prescribed for TCs were broadly outlined, and that there is a need to clearly outline what TCs should exactly do in developing their rural communities. Furthermore, it was also noted with a concern that there were no implementation guidelines provided to spell out exactly what and how TCs should perform their roles. The current study recommends that policy framework related to traditional leadership be revised to give TCs powers and authority in order to execute their roles in rural communities. It is further recommended that clear guidelines explaining the roles of TCs be established and translated in local languages.

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CHAPTER 6: ATTRIBUTES OF FUNCTIONAL TRADITIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCILS IN SOUTH AFRICA

Abstract

Studies conducted in various provinces of South Africa show that in communities where Traditional Councils (TCs) exist they are respected and still provide services such as land administration, administration of justice, social welfare, arts and culture, among others. Considering the roles of TCs and the state of affairs in the Vhembe District rural communities, these institutions of traditional leadership seem dysfunctional. Moreover, there exist no guidelines providing functionality criteria for TCs in their quest for rural development. The current study was carried out to determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa. An exploratory sequential mixed method design was used in six sampled communities of the Vhembe District. Leadership and governance, resources, organisational structure, development programmes and social cohesion were the main five attributes for effectively functional TCs identified in the study. The Friedman test of the IBM Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 was computed to establish the mean ranks of each of the identified attributes. The study revealed that effective leadership and good governance (mean rank 3.71) was the most attribute contributing to the functionality of TCs in Vhembe rural communities with social cohesion (mean rank 2.03) being the least identified. The results of Wilcoxon signed-rank test ($P < 0.05$) confirmed social cohesion to be the least preferred attribute. The results further indicated that the attribute of organisational structure was highly recommended by males as compared to females. However, the attribute of social cohesion was not recognised by any of the participating focus groups from extreme level of rurality. To become functional, the study recommended Traditional Councillors to be equipped with leadership and governance skills. It is further recommended that the attributes identified in the current study be used to develop functionality index for measuring the performance of TCs in rural development.

Key words: Attributes for functionality, degree of rurality, functionality index, social cohesion

6.1 Introduction

Organisational development scholars such as Nanthagopan and Darwish have long been interested in determinants of functionality for institutions of governance at the grassroots level (Nanthagopan, 2011; Darwish & Potočnik, 2016). In addition to the proposition of the aforementioned scholars, the report issued by the Economic Commission for Africa (2007) on traditional governance called for the needs to assess the institution of Traditional Councils and an effective system for tracking their progress. In response to the call, the current study identified attributes that determine the effectiveness of TC in developing rural communities.

Acharya (2016) in his study on determinants of community governance for effective basic service delivery highlights 12 attributes for effectively functional social organisations. These are; inclusive participation, people empowerment, transparency and accountability, enabling environment, practice of local democracy, service effectiveness, service integrity, social capital development, institution building, community mobilization, planning, implementation, and monitoring, coordination, linkage, and partnership. The most recurrent determinants of functionality reviewed in the literature were; the organisational structure, leadership and governance, resources, development programmes and social cohesion.

Previous findings on traditional leadership reveal a diversified structural patterns of organisational structure of TCs in various countries. However, organisational structure of TCs (Panchayats) in countries like India and Parkistan are structured in a similar pattern (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). This is contrary to the pattern in which organisational structures of TCs in Sub-Saharan countries like South Africa, Zimbabwe and Botswana are organized (Chigwata, 2016; Mathonsi, 2017). The Panchayat in India and Pakistan have a three tiers system. These are Gram Panchayat at the village level, Panchayat Samiti at the block level and Zila Panchayat at the district level (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). The institutions of traditional leadership in Zimbabwe also comprise chiefs, headmen and village heads in order of hierarchy (Chigwata, 2016). Village heads are physically closest to the people, followed by headmen and chiefs respectively. In South Africa, the headman council is at the village level, led by the headman, followed by the principal traditional council which is composed of several villages led by a Chief. The kingship council is the highest level of government in rural communities, and is led by the paramount chief. This kind of calibration promotes delegation for effective functioning of TCs.

Previous studies reveal that Traditional Councils members in India, Pakistan, Zimbabwe and Botswana are elected into office for the period of five years (Chigwata, 2016; Dodo, 2013). Similarly, both the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 (TLGFA) and the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005 of South Africa approve members to occupy office for the period of five years. However, the report issued by Centre for Law and Society revealed that since the establishment of the framework in 2003, none of the TCs in South Africa had conducted a successful election (Centre for Law and Society, 2013). Such observation suggests that TCs in the Vhembe District had been in office for the period of more than five years without conducting elections. Findings from previous research indicated that both the nature and the process of organisational structures can either inhibit or promote performance (Correa, 2007).

According to the Demographic Profile Report of African countries, rural women make up over a quarter of the world population (United Nations, 2016). Women play a pivotal role in agriculture. Indeed agriculture is a *sine qua non* for rural development. However, women are usually excluded from being members of Traditional Council (Carillo, 2007). It is also reported that seventy percent (70 %) of the rural population in Africa is comprised of young people under the age of 30 (United Nations, 2016). The report further expressed the concern that most of the institutions of traditional leadership in Africa are without youth. To accommodate the previously marginalised groups, the quota for women participation in the structures of TCs is enforced by legislations in some African countries. Unfortunately, Literature reviewed for this study does not show any commitment by states to encourage youth participation in the TCs. Marginalization and under representation of youth and women in institutions of local leadership is a global worrying matter which requires urgent attention.

In South Africa, the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 provides for a minimum women's quota of 30 percent. In addition, the Framework Act requires 60 percent of the members of the traditional council to be selected by the senior traditional leader and the other 40 percent to be democratically elected. Government gazette issued by the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs provided two formulas for determining the number of members in the Traditional Council (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2015). As illustrated in Table 13 and 14, the first formula for determining the number of members is based on the number of recognized headmen or headwomen.

Table 13 The formula for calculating the number of members in the TCs (based on number of recognized headmen/ headwomen)

Number of headmen/ headwomen	Number of selected members (60%)	Number of elected members (40%)	Total number of traditional councillors
7 or less	11	7	18
8 to 14	15	9	24
15 to 24	20	12	32
25 to 50	25	17	42
51 and more	30	20	50

Table 14 The formula for calculating the number of members in the TCs (based on estimated size of population)

Population size	Number of selected members (60)	Number of elected members (40)	Total number of traditional councillors
0 to 15 000	11	7	18
15 001 to 30 000	15	9	24
30 001 to 50 000	20	12	32
50 001 to 80 000	25	17	42
80 001 and more	30	20	50

The second formula is based on estimated size of the population of traditional community. The gazette proposes the minimum number of TC members of 18 and the maximum number of 50. Traditional Councils of reviewed countries such as Zimbabwe, Nigeria, Ghana and Botswana did not specify the number of members to sit in the councils. However, The Haryana Panchayati Raj Act of India prescribes the minimum number of the members of traditional councils to be 10 and the maximum number of 30. The Act further recommends the consideration of population size when deciding on the number of traditional council members (Haryana Act No.11 of 1994).

Although countries such as India, Nigeria and Namibia use various models to allocate budget to TCs, it was evident in the previous studies that most of TCs do not receive fixed financial allocation to manage and administer their traditional communities in spite of the roles and responsibilities that were described for them (Anyadike, 2014; Ahmed *et al.*, 2015). The Economic Commission for Africa (2007) reported that limitation and lack of resource base hinder the service delivery role of Traditional Councils. The report recommended states to assist in mobilizing necessary resources to improve the state of affairs in TCs. The most common identified material resources relevant and much needed by TCs include, offices, furniture, telephones, computers, electricity, photocopying machines, stationary and vehicles (Dutta, 2013; Anyadike, 2014). The Economic Commission for Africa (2007) recommended that central governments should provide appropriate operating facilities such as human, office equipment and financial resources to improve functionality of TCs in Africa. Without necessary resource Traditional Councils may not perform their role satisfactorily.

While literature provided many factors influencing the functionality of TCs; Kardosa and Maior (2012), believe that good governance has always been recognized to be a critical tool for advancing sustainable development in rural communities. Good governance is conceptualized here to mean the capacity of TCs to discharge their mandates in an effective, transparent, accountable, responsible, and ethical manner. Effective leadership and good governance promote rule of law at all levels and allows efficient management of human, natural, economic and financial resources for equitable and sustainable development (De la Harpe, 2008; Dayanandan, 2013). At the core of effective leadership are the proper skills and principles applicable to TCs for rural development. The most common essential skills for effective functional TCs identified in the literature include establishing a compelling vision, communication skills, management skills and team dynamics skills (Shah, 2011; Sotunde, 2012;

Sohmen, 2013; Ahmad *et al.*, 2015). It is therefore necessary to empower Traditional Council members with necessary leadership and governance skills that are appropriate for rural development.

The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (2011) defines social cohesion as a dynamic process that works towards the well-being of all the members, fights exclusion and marginalisation, creates a sense of belonging, promotes trust and offers members the opportunity of upward social mobility. Janmaat (2011) summarizes the definition of Social cohesion as the glue that holds society together. South African Department of Arts and Culture defines social cohesion as the degree of social integration and inclusion in communities and society at large, and the extent to which mutual solidarity finds expression among individuals and communities (Department of Arts and Culture, 2013). Social cohesion in the context of the current study refers to the extent to which TCs plan for and strive to promote social integration and inclusion in their rural communities. One of the major responsibilities of TCs is to ensure that the traditional communities are socially cohesive. Therefore, social cohesion was distinguished as one of the major attribute of functional TCs along with organisational structure, effective leadership and good governance, development programs and resources. According to the Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act 6 of 2005, TCs are mandated to promote nation building, harmony and peace amongst people in rural areas. On the other hand, Traditional Leadership and Governance framework Act 41 of 2003 states that the institution of traditional leadership should promote nation building and bring peace and stability amongst people. Against this background, it is therefore clear that TCs are faced with huge responsibilities of reinforcing social cohesion, unity and peace among the people in rural communities. Previous studies recommended various approaches to enhance social cohesion in traditional communities. Gregson *et al.* (2013), in their study concludes that community networks such as savings clubs for income-generating projects, burial societies (community insurance schemes for funeral expenses), youth groups, sports clubs, and political parties have potential of enhancing social cohesion. Factors such as faith-based organisations, community radio stations and public participation were also identified as critical role players in enhancing social cohesion (Swart, 2010; Maina, 2013; Fonner, 2014). However, the extent to which they influence the functionality of TCs may differ according to culture, traditions and customs.

Developing programmes for rural development was another attribute for functional TC discussed in the study. It is generally believed that rural development cannot take place by

chance. However, it is most likely to happen when community leaders engage in establishing viable programs that are relevant to their rural spaces (Emeka, 2012). Apart from participating in the development programmes of the federal states or Municipalities, the office of Traditional Council should be able to adopt, establish or own up development programs that respond to their local needs. The policy of Panchayat *Zila* of India prescribes several programmes for rural development. The programmes include; general administration, finance, public work, agriculture, health, education, social welfare, information technology, water supply and animal husbandry (Hardgrave & Kochanek, 2008). In South Africa, the development programs prescribed for TCs are spelled out in the White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance of 2002. The paper recommends TCs to establish programs in arts and culture, land and agriculture, health and welfare, security and justice, environment and tourism, communication and information, natural resource management and economic development. However, the paper has left out some of the critical programmes for developing rural communities. For example, the issues of water, energy and education are not included in the identified programmes.

6.2 Methodology

6.2.1 Study design

An exploratory sequential mixed method design was adopted for this study. As already explained in the previous sections, the design integrates qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Creswell, 2014). The purpose of an exploratory sequential mixed methods design in the study was to explore the attributes of effectively functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa and then later explain relationships among the identified attributes. As shown in figure 9, the qualitative phase was used to help develop or inform the quantitative study. The design was adopted for this study because the attributes of the functionality were not yet known during the first phase of the survey. Therefore, the quantitative phase was developed based on the results of qualitative study.

6.2.2 Study site and sampling procedure

The current study was conducted in Vhembe District of South Africa. The district consist of 43 traditional councils and 520 headmen councils (Tshitangoni, 2014). Multi-stage cluster sampling

was used to select the TCs of Mphaphuli, Kutama and Mutele from the Venda speaking communities and Madonsi, Mhinga and Ribungwane from the Tsonga speaking communities.

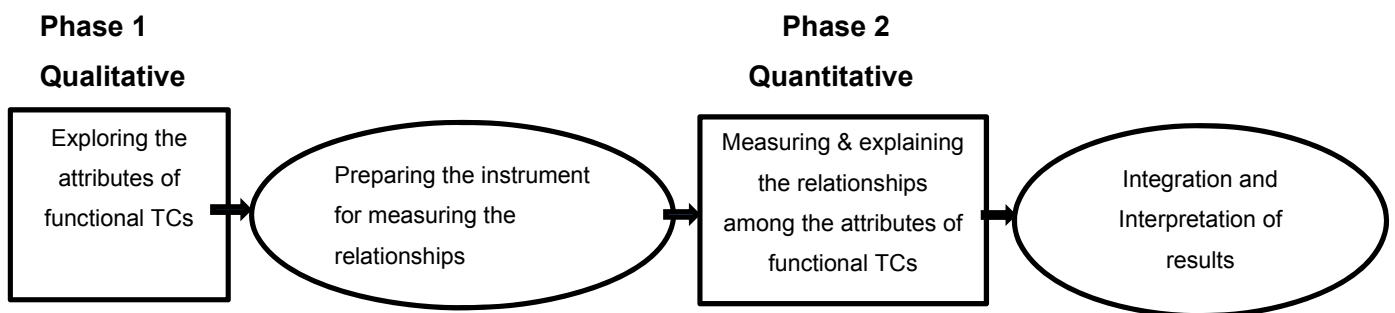


Figure 9 Research design. Adopted from Creswell (2012) and Muller et al., (2013): Modified to suit the study objective one.

The respondents were sampled from different levels of rurality (low, medium and extreme) as proposed by Inagami et al. (2016). As shown in Table 2, the rurality landscape was determined by increase with distance from the central business district (CBD). The distances between the traditional council offices and their local municipality CBDs were obtained from Google maps. That was done to assess the influence of rurality landscape on the perceived attributes of functionality.

In the first phase, five focus group discussions were conducted in each of the six sampled TCs to collect qualitative data. Four participating groups were organised according to gender and age (adult male, adult female, youth male and youth female). The fifth group was comprised of the TC members and had mixed age and gender. The group was not split because the majority of TCs which participated in the study were mainly composed of adult males.

In the second phase of the survey, the five groups that were organized for the first phase were further split. As stated in chapter three, some traditional councils were larger than others. Therefore the size of the TC was also considered such that the TC focus groups were more in some study areas than others. Thus, a total of 70 focus group discussions were conducted during the second phase of the study.

6.2.3 Data collection

In the first phase of the study, interviews were conducted with thirty (30) focus groups to identify both the main and sub-attributes of effectively functional TCs. Semi-structured interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. Preference ranking technique was employed in the second phase of the survey to collect quantitative data. Seventy (70) focus groups were organised to complete the structured questionnaire by placing the identified attributes and sub-attributes of TCs in order of preference.

6.2.4 Data analysis

Qualitative data were uploaded into Atlas.ti software version 7.5 for further processing. All the themes about the attributes of functionality were labelled and coded accordingly. The software

also assisted in categorising relationships among the identified attributes. As presented in figure 8, the themes that emerged during analysis were classified into main and sub-attributes of functionality. The figures corresponding to the attributes of functional TCs in the network diagram represent the number of focus groups an attribute was mentioned during data collection exercise. For example, in figure 10, the attribute of Leadership and governance was mentioned by 28 of the 30 focus groups which participated in the study.

Data collected during second phase of the survey were entered into the IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25 for analysis. Friedman test was performed to assess the difference in the respondents' ranks where:

$$H_0 = \text{There is no difference in the respondents' ranks.}$$

This provided direction to accept or reject the null hypothesis. The confidence level was put at 95%. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was further administered with Bonferroni-adjustment of significance level to assess the differences among the attributes of functional TCs. Kendall coefficient of concordance was further administered to measure the extent to which the 70 participating focus groups had agreed or disagreed with the ranking. Previous studies recommended Kendall coefficient of concordance as a reliability analysis to determine the degree of agreement among raters when using preference ranking techniques (Gearhart *et. al*, 2013; Shweta *et. al*, 2015).

6.3 Results

6.3.1 Exploration of the attributes of effectively functional TCs.

As already alluded in the previous sections, thirty (30) focus group discussions were conducted to determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs. Participants in the current study identified five themes as determinants of effectively functional TCs in rural development. The themes were: Social and developmental programmes, leadership and governance, organisational structure, resources and social cohesion. To provide more information, each of the identified themes was further organised into sub-themes.

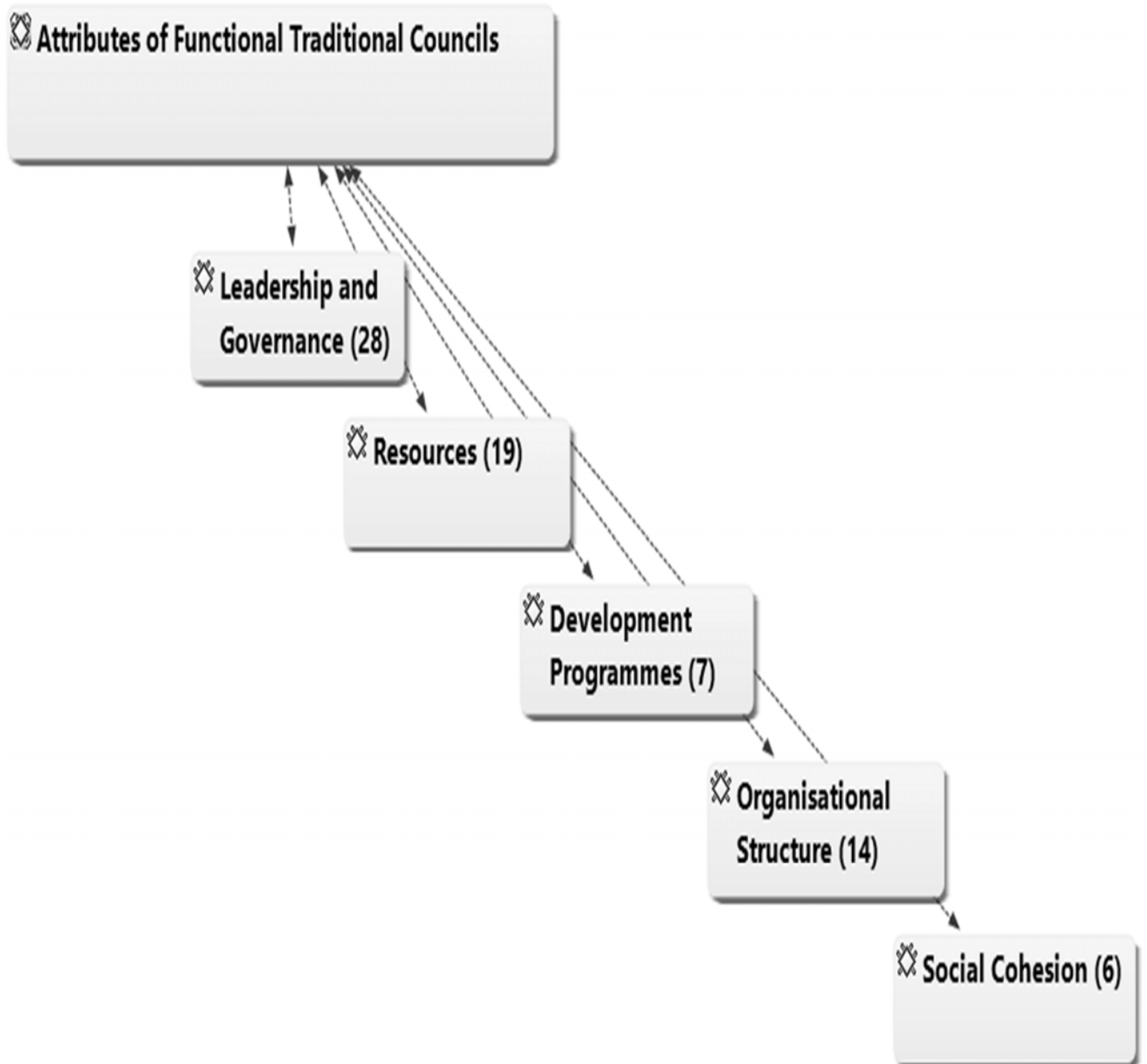


Figure 10 Visual representation of the attributes of functional TCs

Leadership and governance

It was unanimous among the participating focus groups (28 of 30) that leadership and governance contribute immensely to the functioning of TCs. Participants argued that challenges relating to leadership and governance of TCs are the ones impeding development in rural communities. As indicated in Table 15, the results of the study revealed that the attribute of leadership and governance was identified by all focus groups from extreme and medium level of rurality. Seven sub-themes were identified as pillars of good governance and effective leadership in rural communities. The sub-themes were communication, rule of law, management, vision, problem solving, team dynamic, and code of ethics. It was revealed during the discussions that most of TCs which participated in the study did not have established vision and mission statements. Most of adult participants criticized principal traditional leaders for intentionally withholding public information. One of the traditional council members reacted in this way:

“The problem is with the principal traditional leaders. They do not share information with council members. They do not give us report back after attending district or provincial meetings. We don’t know what they are hiding. We only meet once in three months. How can a council be functional if it doesn’t schedule for meetings? There is no communication here.”

Participants further emphasised the importance of establishing and enforcing bylaws in rural communities. Almost all focus groups comprising of traditional council members raised a concern of neglected tribal police in Vhembe traditional councils. The participants appealed the South African government to employ more tribal police who would help to fight against crimes, protect natural resources and maintain peace and order in rural areas. Establishing vision and effective management and ability to work in teams were also cited as critical skills TCs require for rural development.

Resources

The majority of participants (19 of 30) agreed that both availability and lack of resources contribute to the functionality of TCs in rural development. As shown in Table 15, most of focus

groups that cited resources as a factor of functionality were from extreme (7 of 10) and Medium (8 of 10) levels of rurality as compared to those from the low (4 of 10) level of rurality.

Table 15 Frequencies of focus groups for the attributes of functional TCs

Development Indicators	Low rurality	Medium rurality	Extreme rurality	Youth		Adult		TCs	Tsonga	Venda	Total
				Male	Female	Male	Female	Mixed			
Leadership and Governance	8	10	10	6	6	5	5	6	13	15	28
Resources	4	8	7	3	3	4	3	6	9	10	19
Organisational structure	5	6	3	5	2	1	1	5	7	7	14
Social and dev programmes	0	3	4	2	1	1	1	2	4	3	7
Social cohesion	4	2	0	1	1	1	1	2	4	2	6

Different types of resources that are required by TCs in rural development were discussed as sub-themes. The types included finance, material, information and human resource. Financial resource was the most commonly cited resource among the others. Discussions about finance evoked many issues relating to budget allocated for TCs. One of the participants commented:

“For TCs to be functional, they need money. They cannot be able to provide services in rural areas without a budget. In the past they were allowed to charge levies but now they are no longer allowed. Members should be paid for participating in council meetings as in local municipalities.”

It was evident during discussions that focus groups comprised of youth conceded in their demand for information resource. Participants believed that modern technology equipment in traditional council offices were vital for rural development. Of the six visited traditional council offices, it was observed that one TC which was located in extreme rural did not have any of electronic information resource such as computer, printer or copier. Other material resources such as offices, vehicles and furniture were also cited as significant asserts towards functionality. Although human resource was identified as another sub-attribute of functional TCs, it was only mentioned in one focus group.

Organisational structure

Approximately half of the participating focus groups (14 of 30) claimed that the structural composition of TCs in Vhembe District contributed to the successes and failures in the development of rural communities. Although organisational structure was not the most cited attribute, it was extensively and robustly discussed. During the discussions, respondents identified four sub-attributes of organizational structure which were organized into sub-themes. The sub-attributes were gender, age group, number of members and term of office. As indicated in Table 15, the majority of focus groups that identified organizational structure as a factor of functionality were comprised of youth (7 of 12) as compared to adult (2 of 12) participants. There was agreement among the respondents that women participation in TCs was vital for rural development. However, respondents were divided as to whether youth should form part of TCs or totally be excluded. Youth were concerned that they were not represented in the Traditional Council. They argued that they were always left out in decision making processes affecting their communities. On the other hand, most of the focus groups which were composed

of adult respondents claimed that TCs were for adult matured citizens. They indicated that one of the roles of TCs is to adjudicate in disputes and that according to their culture, youth were not supposed be present while their parents were being tried by traditional courts. During focus group discussions, one of the adult member of TC stated:

Only adults who are 25 years of age and above are elected to become members of TCs. We do not allow youth. According to our culture, youth do not participate in dispute resolution debate involving their parents, it is a taboo. It is only in western courts where youth become judges over cases involving their grandparents.

Respondents both adults and youth across all the levels of rurality believed that TCs should be comprised of a large number of delegates from all possible stakeholders in the villages. They contended that a small number may easily connive with one another for corrupt practices. Respondents emphasised that all sectors of public enterprises should be represented in the council. Discussions about the term of office in TCs generated varied responses across all the focus groups. Very few respondents believed that the term of office for traditional council members should be indefinite. However, the majority disputed that the term of office should be five years, in line with the local municipality framework.

Social and development programmes

Few focus groups (7 of 30) were of the opinion that functionality of TCs is achieved when they are able to establish and manage viable programmes for the purposes of social and economic development in rural areas. It was clear from the results of the study that there was no focus group in low level of rurality that cited social and developmental programmes as a factor of functionality (see Table 15). During focus group discussions, a total of twelve developmental programmes were identified and organised as subthemes. The programmes were education, water, health and welfare, safety and security, electricity, agriculture, local economic development, land administration, sports and culture, disaster management, justice, and resource management. Generally, the programmes related to education, water and health were the most cited during focus group discussions. Respondents consistently suggested that TCs should schedule days to visit schools and clinics for the purpose of monitoring the provisioning of health and education services in rural areas. It was evident during the discussions that respondents from extreme level of rurality had passion of agricultural. They maintained that

functionality could not be realised when farming was still neglected by the traditional authorities. Although other developmental programmes, such as disaster management, justice, resource management and electricity were also mentioned, these were each only cited once.

Social cohesion

As shown in Table 15, social cohesion was identified by the least number of focus groups (6 of 30) that participated in the study. It was also clear in the results of the study that respondents from extreme rurality did not consider the attribute of social cohesion as a factor of functionality. Despite the fact that the attribute of social cohesion was only mentioned in few focus groups, the respondents suggested seven ways in which TCs might promote social cohesion in rural areas. The suggested sub-attributes were burial societies, saving clubs, faith based organisations, community radios, political parties, sports club, and community special days. Discussions about saving clubs in promoting social cohesion was appreciated by many of the respondents of which the majority were female. It was also noted that focus groups which were comprised of youth were not interested in the debate concerning burial societies. However, they could not hide their fascination and excitement when discussing the role of sport in social cohesion.

6.3.2 Preference ranking of the main attributes of effectively functional TCs

The results of Friedman test analysis indicated a Chi Square (χ^2) value of 42.743, with a significance level of 0.00, indicating that indeed there was a differential rank ordered preference for the main five attributes of effectively functional TCs. The analysis showed that Effective leadership and good governance was the most preferred attribute with the highest mean rank of 3.71 as compared to social cohesion which had the lowest mean rank of 2.03. The remaining attributes resources, development programmes and organizational structure received the mean ranks of 3.26; 3.06; and 2.94 respectively. The results were complementary to the qualitative survey findings of the study were 'leadership and governance' was also identified by the majority of participating focus groups (28 of 30).

A post hoc comparison of the rank ordered preferences for the five attributes of functional TCs was conducted using non-parametric Wilcoxon signed-rank test. The test was administered to calculate the difference between each of the combinations of pairs for the five attributes of

functional TCs. Wilcoxon signed-rank test was calculated with Bonferroni correction applied. Bonferroni adjustment is a method for correcting the significance level when multiple comparisons are made (Chen & Feng, 2017). To compensate for type 1 error the significance value of $P = 0.05$ was divided by 5 (the number identified attributes) and a new significance value of 0.01 was obtained.

Wilcoxon signed-rank test was conducted to measure the differences between each of the combinations of pairs for the five attributes of functional TCs. The results indicated that there was no significance difference in six of the ten combinations of pairs of the attributes. As illustrated in Table 16, the combination pairs that showed no significance difference were organizational structure and resource ($P = 0.166$), leadership and resources ($P = 0.062$), developmental programs and resources ($P = 0.498$), leadership and organizational structure ($P = 0.02$), developmental programs and structure ($P = 0.64$), developmental programs and leadership ($P = 0.013$). However, the results indicated a remarkable significance difference on the remaining four combination pairs of attributes. The attributes were social cohesion and resources, social cohesion and structure, social cohesion and leadership, social cohesion and developmental programs. It was clear in the analysis that social cohesion was the only variable that accounted to the remarkable significance difference in the combination pairs as illustrated in Table 16. This observation indicates that there was a significance difference in the ranking order between social cohesion and the other attributes with high mean values such as development programs and resources.

Kendall coefficient of concordance (W) was also conducted to measure the degree of agreement among the 70 focus groups who participated in the study. The results showed a coefficient value of 0.153, indicating that there was a disagreement among the raters in the way the main attributes of functional TCs were ranked. The differences in agreement among the raters could be accounted by the fact that sampling was drawn from population of diverse demographic parameters. Key variables that were considered in sampling include age, gender, ethnicity, level of rurality and membership into TC. All these variations influenced respondents' perceptions of the five attributes of functional TCs. For example, focus groups composed of male respondents' preferred organisational structure to be included as an attribute of functional TCs than those composed of female respondents.

6.3.3 Preference ranking of the sub-attributes of effectively functional TCs

As already alluded, respondents were also requested to rank the sub-attributes for each of the main five explained above. As presented in Table 17, there were 12 sub-attributes of development programs, seven of leadership and governance, six of organisational structure, four of resource and seven of social cohesion. The results revealed that communication (4.58), finance (3.91) education (9.96), gender (3.76) and burial societies (5.19) were the most ranked sub-attributes in each of the identified main attributes of functional TCs.

6.4 Discussion

In the current study, providing effective leadership and good governance was identified as the most attribute determining functionality of TCs in rural development. The results are in agreement with the findings of Muogbo (2013) who argues that for organisation to achieve its objectives, fulfil its mission, visions and goals, effective leadership, attitudinal change and good governance is of a paramount importance. Improved leadership and Governance capacity is critical for addressing economic and social challenges facing communities in Vhembe rural areas. It is generally believed that ethics, transparency, and accountability are the prerequisite values of good governance and sustainable development. Similarly, Enwereonye (2015) notes the statement of the former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan that “good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development”.

The majority of participants were concerned that there were no shared vision and mission statements established by TCs for developing rural communities. This might have contributed to the dysfunctionality of the councils. Establishing and sharing compelling vision and Mission statements have been overwhelmingly accepted as an indispensable exercise towards functionality of organisations (Miller, 2013; Bora *et al.*, 2017). Of the seven sub-attribute of leadership and governance discussed in the study, communication was cited as the most determinant factor of functionality. The results are in agreement with the findings of Rasila and Mudau (2014) who identify effective communication as a strategic tool for rural development. Development in rural areas calls for exchange of information. Therefore, improved communication systems in rural areas might impact positively on the functionality of TC in their quest for rural development.

Table 16 Wilcoxon Signed Ranks Test of the attributes of functional TCs

Combinations of pairs of the five attributes of functional TCs		Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Organisational structure	Resources	-1.384 ^b	ns
Leadership and governance	Resources	-1.870 ^c	ns
Development programs	Resources	-.678 ^b	ns
Social cohesion	Resources	-4.172 ^b	****
Leadership and governance	Organisational structure	-3.128 ^c	*
Development programs	Organisational structure	-.466 ^c	*
Social cohesion	Organisational structure	-3.496 ^b	****
Development programs	Leadership and governance	-2.483 ^b	ns
Social cohesion	Leadership and governance	-5.230 ^b	****
Social cohesion	Development programs	-3.891 ^b	****

Table 1 7 Friedman rank test analysis of the sub-components of the attributes of functional TCs

Leadership & Governance	Mean Rank	Resources	Mean Rank	Social & programs	Dev	Mean Rank	Organisational structure	Mean Rank	Social cohesion	Mean Rank
Communication	4.58	Finance	3.91	Education		9.96	Gender	3.76	Burial societies	5.19
Rule of law	4.36	Material	2.33	Water		8.65	Age group	3.54	Saving clubs	4.21
Management	4.35	Information	2.28	Health and welfare		8.64	Number of members	3.51	Faith-based organisations	4.18
Vision	4.28	Human resource	2.20	Safety and security		7.33	Term of office	3.46	Community radio	3.81
Problem solving	3.70			Electricity		6.24			Political parties	3.79
Team dynamic	3.39			Agriculture		6.12			Sports clubs	3.69
Code of ethics	3.36			LED		6.06			Community special days	3.13
				Land administration		5.30				
				Sports and culture		5.24				
				Disaster management		4.86				
				Justice		4.80				
				Resource management		4.80				

Apart from effective leadership and good governance, availability of resources was also perceived as a significant enabling factor for TCs in rural development. As Dutta (2013) and Anyadike (2014) posit, resources such as offices, telephones, computers, electricity, photocopy machines, stationary, office furniture and vehicles are indispensable to the functioning of TCs in their quest for developing rural communities. Therefore, the results suggest that equipping the TCs with the much needed resources might improve their functionality. Traditional councils from extreme level of rurality were more concerned about lack of resources in propelling rural development than those located in low level of rurality. It was also observed that TCs from extreme rurality were less equipped in terms of resources than those from low level of rurality. The results are in agreement with the findings of Paxton (2015) which reveals that public governing structures in deep rural were neglected and poorly resourced as compared to those in sub-urban which were privileged and highly resourced. Traditional councils from low level of rurality might also be benefitting from the support of local businesses. Respondents in the current study identified financial resource as the most critical sub-attribute required by TCs for rural development. After the dawn of democracy in South Africa, TCs were no longer allowed to levy taxes. This might have contributed to poor state of finances in the Vhembe TCs. Due to the fact that TCs do not have budget to pay for their members who sit in their council meetings as is the case with local governments, they might feel neglected and disrespected. In line with international reports such as Economic Commission for Africa (2007), the current study recommends the state to assist TCs in mobilising necessary resources to enable them to operate and empower their communities for rural development.

As alluded before, the attribute of organisational structure was extensively and robustly deliberated during focus group discussions. It can be concluded that proper organisational structure is indispensable to effective leadership and good governance. This is in line with the report released by the which provides that effective leadership and good governance do not happen by chance, but by putting in place functional structures with competent and ethical leaders. The sub-attribute of gender representation was cited to be the most important aspect in the organisational structure of TCs. It was also observed that TCs in the Vhembe District were male dominated. The reason for poor participation of women in the structures of leadership in rural communities might be the fact that Africa women have their particular role in traditional leadership not necessarily that of presiding over meetings. For example, in the Venda culture, women are the ones who identify the successor to chieftaincy. However, the majority of respondents aspired for equal participation of men and women in TCs. In the same vein, scholars in traditional leadership concur that equal participation of men and women in the

institutions of traditional leadership strengthens democracy and improve service delivery (Prakash, 2003; Carillo, 2007). The Traditional Leadership Framework Act 41 of 2003 prescribes that at least one third of the Traditional council members should be women. Women form the majority of rural population and it is justifiable to include them in the decision making structures. In this study the author argues that equal participation of men and women in decision-making structure is important in achieving the goals of sustainable development.

The term of office of traditional council members was another sub-attribute which warrant consideration when establishing TCs for rural development. Most of traditional council members who participated in the focus group discussions argued that over staying of members in the office was the root cause of dysfunctional TCs. If the term of office is indefinite, Council members may not be motivated to improve their working culture. The Traditional Leadership Framework Act 41 of 2003 prescribes that council members should occupy the office for a period of five years with effect from September 2011. However, no elections of traditional council members were conducted in the Vhembe District ever since the democratic government came into power in 1994. Controversially, the senior traditional leader who is also a chairperson of the council is accorded a special treatment of presiding over the council as long as he/she lives. This questionable practice is against the major tenants of democratic governance and the provisioning of the Act itself. Hence, some respondents were not happy about the arrangement.

The appropriate number of members in the traditional council was also discussed in the study. The majority of respondents who participated in the study agreed that a council should be comprised of a large number. As discussed earlier, literature concerning the ideal number of members for the Traditional Council is still scratchy. However, the Panchayat of India is comprised of number of members who are between ten and thirty (Haryana Act No.11 of 1994). According to the government gazette, the number of members comprising Traditional Councils in South Africa should be between 18 and 50 (Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs, 2015). Thus, it can concluded that a council should be more representative than the committee. Large number of council members might be justifiable considering that it might allow variety of stakeholders to be represented.

Discussions about representation of age groups in TCs generated varied responses. Youth were concerned that they were not represented in Traditional Councils. On the other hand, adult respondents contended that TCs were meant for senior members of the community. However, Hoffman & Jamala (2012) opine that when youth do not participate in decision making

structures, they participate in violence against ruling regimes. Youth are the ones who participate in violent protests. Therefore involving youth in decision making processes may reduce the number and the intense of protests that are rampaging rural communities in the Vhembe District.

The majority of respondents who aspired the establishment of viable social and developmental programmes in developing rural areas were from extreme level of rurality. The findings suggest that rural communities in extreme level of rurality experience more challenges in implementing and sustaining developmental programs than those in low level of rurality. This is in line with Fauziah (2016) who maintains that due to scattered population and poor road conditions, it is always difficult to establish and sustainable social developmental programmes in rural spaces. The sub-attribute of education received the highest rank in social and developmental programme. The results suggest that people in rural communities prioritise education more than all other identified social and developmental programmes. However, the findings were not supported by other previous studies. It was revealed that parents in rural areas often have low level of literacy, and may attach a lower value to schooling (Acedo, 2002; Akyeampong & Stephens, 2002). Vhembe seems to be an exceptional case because the district is always hailed as the best of Limpopo province in grade 12 results each year (Senyatsi, 2018). The programmes relating to water and health were also ranked the highest. The findings suggest that beside education, water and health programmes should be given priority in developing Vhembe rural communities.

Unlike the attribute of leadership and governance which was the most appreciated in the study, social cohesion received the least recognition by respondents in both qualitative and quantitative phases of the study. It was also clear from the results of this study that respondents from extreme level of rurality did not consider the attribute of social cohesion as a factor of functionality. Due to poor network and the state of poverty, it is expected that people in extreme level of rurality have more time to socialise with each other than with their electronic gadget. This assumption is supported by study conducted by Huda *et al.*, (2017) who affirm that electronic or screen entertainment were found to be commonly practiced by communities who reside close to cities than in deep rural. The study further revealed that most of youth were in favour of sports as a means of achieving social cohesion. However, the practice of burial societies and saving clubs were more appealing to women than men. The results suggest that the preferences of different social groups should be considered when promoting social cohesion in rural communities.

6.5 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs. The study discussed five main attributes that determine functionality of TCs in rural development. The attributes are; leadership and governance culture, organisational structure, social and developmental programmes, resources and social cohesion. Apart from discussing the sub-attributes in each of the main determinants of functionality, the study also recognised effective leadership and good governance as the most attribute contributing to the functionality of TCs in rural development. It was further revealed that effective leadership and good governance was dependent on the composition of the established TC structure. Therefore, the study concludes that creating functional structures which provide effective leadership and good governance have the greatest bearing towards the functionality of TCs. Availability of resources as well as establishing relevant programmes were also identified as enabling factors for the functioning of TCs in rural development. The study also recognised the value of consulting communities in establishing and prioritising programs for developing their own rural areas. Though social cohesion was found to have little impact towards the functionality of TC, it should not be totally removed from the equation defining the functionality of TCs in rural development. To become functional, the study recommends Traditional Councillors to be equipped with leadership and governance skills. It is further recommended that TCs be assisted with adequate resources such as finances, offices and vehicles to enable them to develop their rural communities. It was revealed that TCs located in deep rural were poorly resourced as compared to those in sub-urban which were privileged and highly resourced. Therefore, priorities in terms of allocation of resources and other support should be given to TCs in extreme rural as compared to those in urban and semi-rural.

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CHAPTER 7: SYNTHESIS OF THE STUDY ON THE FUNCTIONALITY OF TRADITIONAL COUNCILS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN VHEMBE DISTRICT, SOUTH AFRICA

7.1 Introduction

The current study was conducted to develop the functionality index for the purpose of improving the performance of Traditional Councils in rural development. This chapter provides a summary of the results as well as the process followed during the course of conducting the study. In doing so, the chapter further outlines the major topics of the overall report of the inquiry. The topics include, methodological Imperatives, summary of the study findings and the experiences acquired by the research team during the study. The novelty of the current study and its major contributions to the body of knowledge are outlined in terms of the seven identified criteria. The process of developing the functionality index which is final product of the study is detailed in this chapter. The synthesis chapter also presents the recommendations for policy, rural development practice and future studies.

7.2 Methodological Imperatives

The current study was carried out in the Vhembe District, South Africa. There are 43 TCs in the Vhembe District. 28 TCs belong to the Venda speaking communities whereas 15 TCs are for Tsonga speaking communities. Seven rural communities which are not categorised as Traditional Councils in terms of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act 41 of 2003 were not part of the study. Multi-stage cluster sampling was adopted for the study. In this technique, large clusters of population are sub-divided into smaller clusters in various stages for the purpose of reducing the sample further (Nafiu, 2012). It was initially planned to consider the size of a TC as one of the variables when sampling. However, the classification of TCs into small, medium and large according to the document obtained from the Vhembe District office was inaccurate. Traditional Councils were stratified into Venda and Tsonga traditional communities. Each stratum was further stratified according to the three levels of rurality (low, medium and extreme) as proposed by Inagami *et al.* (2016). As discussed in chapter three, the rurality landscape was determined by increase with distance from the central business district (CBD). A total of six TCs were sampled for the purpose of the study. Apart from the differences in tribes and the rurality landscape of TCs, willingness to participate in the survey also informed the sampling decision. Hence, one Traditional Council which was sampled for the study was replaced because the leaders were not willing to participate.

Various data collection techniques and tools were used in the study. The tools includes focus group discussions, interviewing and participatory preference ranking. This form of triangulation helped to facilitate validation of data through cross verification from two or more sources (Rothbauer, 2008). Preference ranking techniques were employed in the study because of their ability to allow respondents to identify and analyze alternative dimensions that are relevant to improving the functionality of TCs (Chatterjee & Chakraborty, 2014; Zardari *et al.*, 2015). Participatory tools such as pairwise comparison matrix and direct ranking matrix used in the study were easy to administer in traditional communities which were comprised of different demographic groups where the majority had low level of literacy. Pairwise comparisons matrix was developed to rank the primary five components that are critical to functionality of TC. According to Zardari *et al.* (2015), pairwise comparison involves the comparison of each criterion against every other criterion in pairs. In this study pairwise comparison matrix enabled respondents to give thorough consideration of all elements of functionality (Chatterjee & Chakraborty, 2014; Pan *et al.*, 2014). It was used in objective three because the variables were only five. The direct ranking tool was used for objective one and two. In objective one, the respondents were requested to rank the nine indicators of rural development in order of preference. In objective two, respondents were requested to rank the 11 roles of TCs. The direct rating technique allows respondents to simply assign numerical value to represent the importance of each criterion (Zardari *et al.*, 2015). The number of variables that required ranking were many in objective one and two. Therefore, it would be inconveniencing to use pairwise comparison matrix in multiple entities. Pan *et al.* 2014 confirms that the complexity of using pairwise comparisons matrix can be quite high for large sets of variables.

In the current study, an exploratory sequential mixed method design was employed. The design integrates qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis (Muller *et al.*, 2013; Creswell, 2014; Zheng, 2015). As shown in figure 3, the qualitative phase was used to help develop or inform the quantitative study. As Muller *et al.* (2013) and Zheng (2015) propose, the identified variables were used to prepare for the quantitative data collection tool. Therefore, the quantitative phase was developed based on the results of qualitative phase. The themes that were identified in the first phase of the study were later compared, measured and explained. The combination of quantitative and qualitative methods has presented a more enhanced insight into the functionality of TCs than using one of the methods independently (Hong & Espelage, 2011; Creswell, 2012; Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). The most advantageous characteristics of conducting mixed methods research in the current study was the success of

triangulation. Hence, the it was possible to compare the data sets from variety of sources such as focus group discussions, questionnaires and archived data to ensure better understanding of the functionality of Traditional Councils as compared to using either quantitative or qualitative (Flick, 2014). Qualitative data were collected from 30 focus groups. Data were recorded using note books and voice recorders. Transcribed verbatim were entered into Atlas. ti version 7.5. A deductive analysis approach was used to generate themes, because the goal was to explore pre-determined concepts of TCs functionality from the perspectives of the participants (Patton, 2015). Quantitative data were collected from 70 focus groups. Data were entered into SPSS version 25 for analysis. Friedman (non-parametric) test was performed for the three objectives of the study to determine if there were difference in the respondents' ranks. The rationale for using Friedman analysis was to retain all the variables which were identified in the first phase of the study for the purpose of developing a functionality index. Wilcoxon signed-rank was further calculated with Bonferroni-adjusted of significance level to assess the degree of differences between the ranks. Furthermore, the Kendall coefficient of concordance was also calculated to assess the degree of agreement among participants who ranked the variables. Major lessons and experiences which are methodological related were documented for future studies. In each of the methodological challenge experienced, mitigation strategies were put in place to salvage the situation (see Table 18)

7.3 Summary of the Study Findings

The current study was conducted to develop an index for measuring the functionality of TCs in their quest for rural development. To achieve the aim, four objectives were formulated. The first study was conducted in order to clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of Vhembe District, South Africa. Thereafter, the roles of TCs in developing the Vhembe rural communities were explored. Attributes of effectively functional TCs were determined before a functionality index for TCs was developed. The results of the study per objectives as well as recommendations are summarized in Table 19.

7.4 Synthesis of the Study

As already alluded before, the main aim of the study was to develop a functionality index for measuring the performance of TCs as agents of rural development. Chapter one presents the problem and context for enquiries into the functionality of Traditional Councils.

Table 18 Lessons and experiences derived from methodology

What was the issue?	How did it affect the study?	What were the mitigating strategies?
The TC Withdraw from the study	Sampling was reduced	Another site in the same category was identified and included in the sample
Language barrier(during pre-test)	Interviewing in English with an interpreter was prolonging the process.	All the interview guides were translated into local languages.
Pairwise comparison matrix was used for all the questions.	Respondents were becoming impatient because it was taking long time to complete the questionnaire In many cases the scores were having ties which makes it difficult to assign the weight of the variables	Pairwise comparison matrix was used for objective three with only five variables. Direct ranking tool (which requires less duration than pairwise comparison) was used for objective one and two with nine and eleven variables respectively.
Focus groups which were comprised of elderly people needed more time to discuss and to complete the questionnaires than youth groups Focus	Youth would demand refreshment while other groups were still busy.	Ground rules were established before the meetings to allow refreshments to be served at a particular time when all would be completed with the discussions. Arrangement was made to keep food at another venue which.
In appropriate dress codes of research assistants in a Venda speaking traditional community.	Female research assistant was once denied access to the data collection venue due to the fact that she was wearing a trousers and it delayed the pilot test exercise.	The research team tendered an apology and negotiated her entry which was later granted. Research assistants were further trained before the actual data collection process.
The document which classifies TCs into small, medium and large obtained from the Vhembe District was inaccurate and could not help in conducting sampling as anticipated.	Variables which were planned to consider for stratified sampling were reduced.	The number of headmen and headwomen in a traditional council was used to determine the size.
Variables of functionality identified by community members were all important and the majority were legislated and did not deserve to be factored out using Principal Component Analysis Method (PCA).	PCA was later abandoned in analysis.	Friedman test which allows ranking of the identified variables was employed for analysis.

Table 19 Summary of the study results on the functionality of Traditional Councils as agents of rural development in Vhembe District, South Africa

Objectives	Key findings	Recommendations
1. To clarify the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of Vhembe District, South Africa	Rural development was defined in terms of nine themes. Provision of basic service delivery was the most preferred theme in the definition of rural development. Construction of shopping malls was not a priority in developing the Vhembe traditional communities	Provisioning of basic service delivery should be prioritized when planning for development in the Vhembe District. Further studies to be conducted on the impact of shopping malls in rural development.
2. To explain the roles of Traditional Councils in developing the Vhembe rural communities.	Eleven roles of TCs in rural development were identified and explained. The roles of TCs in facilitating service delivery and land administration were the most preferred. Gender and degree of rurality had influence on the perception of roles for TCs in rural development. The roles prescribed for TCs in rural development were broadly outlined and ambiguous. The roles of TC in records keeping, recruiting of investors, and moral regeneration were not included in the South African legislations.	Traditional council members to be equipped with skills and resources to perform the roles. Particularly, in facilitating service delivery and land administration. Gender and degree of rurality be considered when revising the roles of TCs in rural development. Guidelines explaining the roles of TCs in rural development to be established. The roles to be translated in local languages since the majority of TC members are elderly people who have low level of literacy. The roles of TC in records keeping, recruiting of investors, and moral regeneration to be included in the policy.
3. To determine the major attributes of effectively functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa.	Five attributes for determining the functionality of TCs in rural development were identified. Effective leadership and good governance was recognized as the most attribute contributing to the functionality of TCs in rural development. The organizational structure of TC was critical in providing Effective leadership and good governance. Availability of resources as well as establishing relevant programmes were also identified as enabling factors for the functioning of TCs in rural development	To become functional, the study recommends Traditional Councillors to be equipped with leadership and governance skills. Structures, systems and strategies to be put in place in order to enforce compliance with regard to the structural composition of TCs in accordance with the TLGFA. TCs be assisted with adequate resources such as finances, offices and vehicles to enable them to develop their rural communities.

Chapter two provides a summary of reviewed scholarly articles, books, policies and other relevant materials in relation to the functionality of traditional councils. In this chapter, a critical evaluation of the roles and attributes of TCs in rural development is outlined. A detailed discussion of the methodology employed in the investigation is presented in chapter three of the study. Chapter four discusses the meaning of rural development as perceived by rural communities in some parts of the Vhembe District, South Africa. In this chapter, traditional community members were able to define the type of development they would like to see in their rural communities. As shown in figure 11, the definition of rural development provides a foundation upon which the identified roles are anchored. Chapter five presents a summary of roles of Traditional Councils in rural development. Chapter six determines the attributes of effectively functional TCs. Figure 11 presents the relationship among the objectives for development (Meaning), the roles and attributes that determines if development has taken place.

7.5 Developing the Functionality Index

The R software for statistical computing version 3.0 was used for analysis. The Logistic regression model (logit model) was then employed to explain the change in the log odds of the functionality of Traditional Councils (FTC) for every unit increase in the ranking of the predictor variables (Resources, Organisational Structure, Development Programs, Social Cohesion, Leadership and Governance). The proposed model explain the effect of functionality on the basis of changes in ranks which has a potential of changing the log odds of functionality of TCs. The model is of the form:

$$Y_i = \mu + \beta_1 R + \beta_2 S + \beta_3 DP + \beta_4 SC + \beta_5 LG + \epsilon$$

There is a significant change in log odds with regard to change from one rank to the other in the attributes of Social Cohesion and leadership in all the ranks. Development program has significant change in log odds only from rank 3 to 4. This observation entails that the move from low rank to high ranking in the above mentioned attributes will positively influence the functionality of TCs. Meaning that an improve in Social Cohesion is necessary for the functionality of TCs. Conversely. The move from low rank to high rank of attributes whose coefficients are not significant will not influence functionality of TCs in any way. The attributes include Organisational Structure and Resources. The results entails that further increase in resources and working on the structure may not necessarily improve the functionality of TCs.

The results of the analysis give a picture of how the log odds of FTC changes with a change in ranking of the explanatory variables. As depicted in table 20 the attribute of Leadership and Governance reveals that having an institution with ranked number 4 versus an institution with Leadership and Governance rank of 3, the log odds of FTC changes by 0.187 (converted to three decimal places). Similarly, having an institution with Leadership and Governance level ranked number 5 versus an institution with the rank of 3 on the same attribute, it changes the log odd of functionality of FTC by 0.197.

The effect of Development Programmes on the FTC is described as follows. An institution with the rank of 4 versus a ranking order of 3 change the log odds of FTC by 0.186. Correspondingly, an institution with Development Programmes ranked at 5 versus a ranking of 3, the log odds of TCF changes by 0.178. The changes in log odds of an Organization Structure of an institution ranked at 4 as compared to that of 3 is -1.030. However, if we compare an institution ranked at 5 with the one ranked at 3 the log odds changes by 0.014.

In Social Cohesion the respondents selected all the rank options. Hence we have the estimates from 2 to 5. Similarly, an institution with the rank of 2 as compared to the rank of 1, the log odds of FTC will change by 0.909. Like in Leadership and organizational structure, respondents did not select rank option 1 and 2 in the attribute of resources. Therefore rank 3 was used as an anchor of the model. Institution with Resource ranked at 4 will change the log odds by 0,003 while the institution ranked 5 will change the log odds by 0.35 as compared to the same rank of 3. This shows an insignificance change in the log odds of FTC.

From the binomial logistic model we can estimate the strengths of each of the attributes towards the functionality of TC. The strength is shown as follows:

$$Y_{ijkim} = (- 0.37) + 0.03 (R) + (0.01) S + 0.17(DP) + 1.01 (SC) + 0.20 (LG) + e$$

Table20 Summary of the results of the Generalised Linear Model (GLM)

Parameters		Estimate	Std. Error	t value	Pr(> t)	
(Intercept)		-0.3725	0.2022	-1.8421	0.0708	
Leadership & Governance	4	0.1868	0.0588	3.1745	0.0024	**
Leadership & Governance	5	0.1974	0.0641	3.0798	0.0032	**
Development Programmes	4	0.1857	0.0654	2.8371	0.0063	**
Development Programmes	5	0.1779	0.0922	1.9300	0.0587	
Organisational Structure	4	-0.0298	0.0539	-0.5518	0.5833	
Organisational Structure	5	0.0143	0.0847	0.1692	0.8663	
Social Cohesion	2	0.9094	0.2132	4.2659	0.0001	***
Social Cohesion	3	1.0420	0.1967	5.2981	0.0000	***
Social Cohesion	4	1.0587	0.1948	5.4343	0.0000	***
Social Cohesion	5	1.0109	0.2271	4.4509	0.0000	***
Resources	4	0.0026	0.0577	0.0452	0.9641	
Resources	5	0.0347	0.0700	0.4962	0.6217	

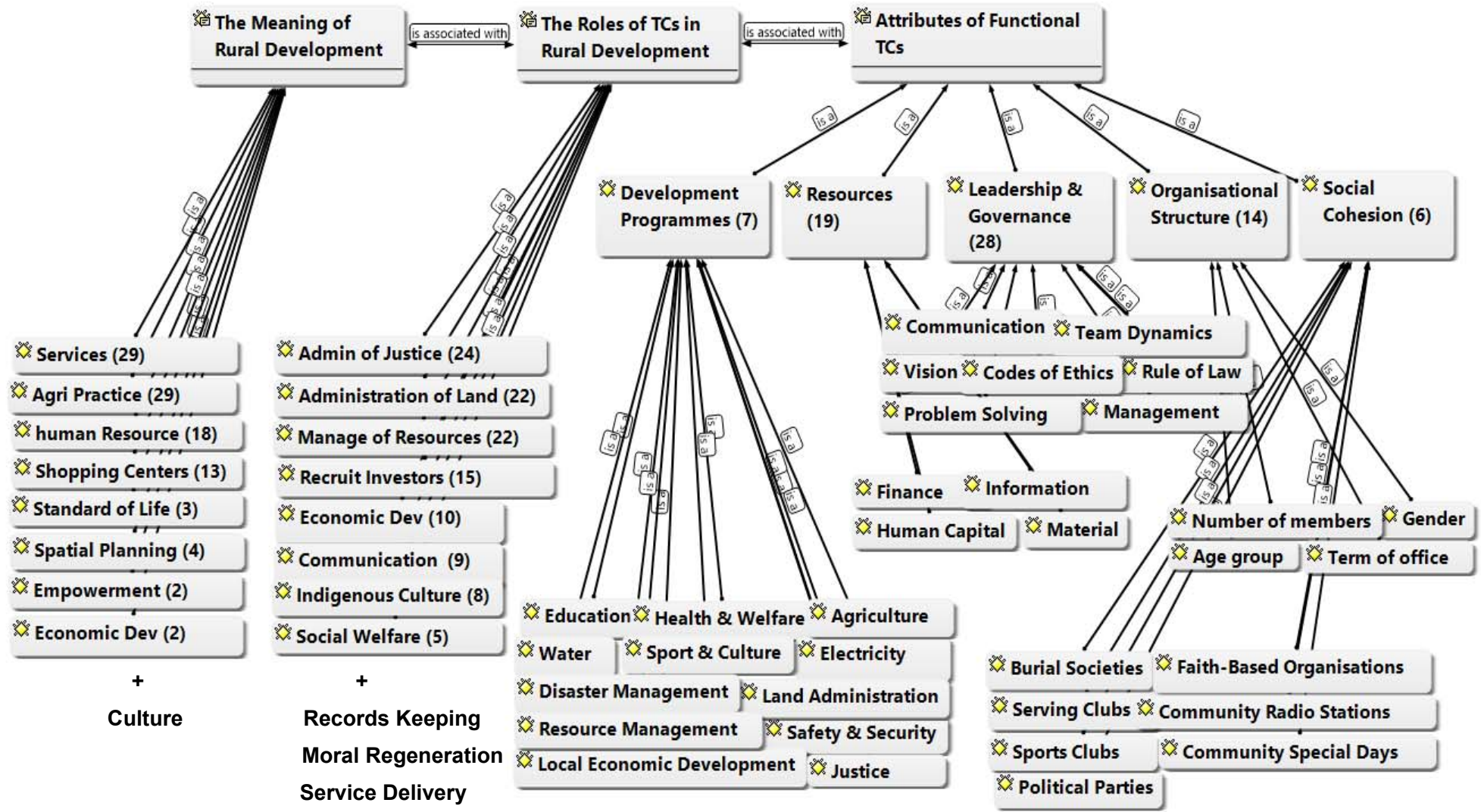


Figure 11 The meaning, roles and attributes of functionality of Traditional Council

7.6 The Experiences of the Research Team during the Study: A Lesson for Future Studies

Despite the joy of meeting new people, conducting fieldwork comes with disappointments. Like any other research undertaking the current study was without setback. However, the research team managed to negotiate their way through all the odds. The two episodes discussed below are worth sharing for the purpose of future studies in the field of traditional leadership.

7.6.1 Unexpected additional trips to study sites

During the preparatory stage of the study, each of the six participating TLs were allocated four trips. The trips were for the purposes of community entry, first phase data collection, second phase data collection and report back meetings. However, during the actual roll-out plan, there were many unforeseen trips that were undertaken for various reasons. In one of the study sites the research team was told to come and present the study proposal to all the members of the TC before the study could be conducted. Such demand was not communicated with the research team while conducting community entry.

In another study site the principal traditional leaders had passed away on the day the study was supposed to be conducted. Even though the leadership of the council had given the research team the permission to proceed with data collection process, the research team felt that the responses would be compromised. Therefore, another date was rescheduled for the purpose of proceeding with the data collection process. In two of the study sites the meetings were cancelled on the day they were supposed to be conducted. Though it was on different dates, the reason for cancellation was the same. We were told that the council members were going to attend a meeting which was not yet known at the time the agreement was made. In addition to extending the period of the study, unexpected additional trips to the study sites had negative implications to budgeting. The cost of transport and refreshments which were already prepared were nearly doubled. An additional budget is recommended for studies that deals with traditional leadership councillors.

7.6.2 Unwillingness to participate

One of the sites originally sampled for the study was later cancelled and replaced by another. In that site, two meetings were conducted with the principal traditional leader and the office administrators during community entry. We all agreed on the first date of data collection. However, another man called the principal researcher indicating that the agreement of coming to conduct the study was revised and that we should no longer come to the study site before we receive a call from him. We waited for three weeks without receiving any call. Considering that he was no longer calling, we started calling him and he kept telling us that we should be patient. After another two weeks, the man was no longer responding to our calls. The principal researcher visited the site and he could not be assisted. Again, this experience implicated negatively on both time and finances.

7.6.3 Confusing the research team with politicians and government officials

The majority of participants were expecting researchers to solve their socio-economic challenges. It was a standing principle that when visiting the study sites for the first time, the chairperson of the TC would first introduce the research team to the respondents before breakaway sessions. In many occasions, the members would raise hands to complain about service delivery. In one of the study sites, a member of the community complained that visitors are not keeping the promises. He lamented:

“We are tired of people who are used to request us to identify our needs and at the end of the day they do not deliver according to their promise. We are suffering here. We do not have jobs. Our roads are very bad. Bring us tractors so that we grow food. Otherwise we are not going to vote for you. ”

The purpose of the study was articulated well in advanced. In addition to the clarity of the purpose, the consent forms which explained all the details of the research undertaking was signed by the respondents. Yet, there is a need to teach communities about the roles and importance of conducting research studies and the roles of researchers and research institutions.

7.7 Contribution of the Current Study to the Body of Knowledge

The debate about evaluating the quality of doctoral work dates back to the 19th century (Clarke & Lunt 2014). Ever since, scholars have been proposing different models of assessing doctoral thesis. The popular of which was introduced by Ernest Boyer in 1990. In his model of scholarship, Boyer identifies four different categories of scholarship. The categories include, the scholarship of discovery that encourages original research; the scholarship of integration that involves synthesis of information across disciplines, the scholarship of application or engagement that goes beyond the service duties of a faculty member to those within or outside the learning institution and scholarship of teaching and learning (Boyer, 1990). Boyer's four model of scholarship is of interest to scholars across academia (McNabb & Pawlyshyn, 2014; Paynter, 2014; Ntounis & Parker, 2017). McNabb & Pawlyshyn (2014) modified Boyer's four model by including the fifth. According to the authors the category of digital scholarship was missing in Boyer's four models. The digital scholarship was first introduced by Ramsey (2011) to encourage the use of digital evidence, methods of inquiry, research, publication and preservation to achieve scholarly and research goals.

Apart from Boyer's contribution, other scholars also suggest additional ways in which PhD thesis and scientific articles can contribute to the body of knowledge. For example, Rubin (1992) and Golding *et al.* (2014) discuss the criterion of coherence. According to the authors, coherent writing has focus, flow, and a logical and explicit structure that integrates and connects the various parts of the thesis and gives clear bearings for the reader. Other scholars advocate the use of multidimensional methods as a criterion for assessing doctoral work (Chidi, 2013; Ntounis & Parker, 2017). The authors argue that employing variety of methodologies, and at times discovering new methods to scientific inquiry is a significant contribution to the body of knowledge. Therefore, the seven criteria discussed above were adopted to evaluate the contribution of the current study to the body of knowledge.

The scholarship of discovery was fulfilled in that the functionality index for assessing the performance of TCs was developed in the study. The major attributes of effectively functional TCs in the Vhembe District of South Africa were determined. The scholarship of integration or collaboration was fulfilled in the study by reviewing the literature across the disciplines. The Department of Environmental sciences was consulted with regard to geographic information system for the purpose of understanding the study areas. The department of Mathematics and natural sciences was also consulted for the purpose of calculating the indices of functionality.

The scholarship of Application or Engagement (Ntounis & Parker, 2017) is evident in the study. The principal researchers is involved in the training of traditional leadership councilors in some of the study sites as requested by the authorities. The knowledge product developed in the current study will be used by the District council to measure the performance of TC in their quest for rural development. The scholarship of Teaching and learning (McNabb & Pawlyshyn, 2014) was fulfilled when the study was reviewed by other fellow candidates and the team of promoters for the purpose of enrichment. The study results were shared with different relevant stakeholders to be evaluated.

In review of Boyers model, McNabb & Pawlyshyn (2014) added the scholarship of Digital technology. In realizing the scholarship of Digital technology, the study used various software for the purpose of data analysis. Digital publishing of study results is also considered. Rubin (1992 and Golding et al., 2014) suggested the scholarship of Coherence of the thesis. Figure 11 of the current study presents the connections of the three major objectives discussed in the study. It clearly indicates how the study objectives inform each other. The scholarship of multidimensional methods was also demonstrated in the current study (Cuthill, M. 2010; Chidi, 2013; Ntounis & Parker, 2017). Mixed method including a variety of tools, techniques and tools were employed to achieve triangulation of the study results. Several statistics were performed in data analysis.

7.8 Recommendations

Traditional Councils had always been playing a critical role in spite of them being not given full recognition by current democratic regimes. The current study noted the urgency and imperativeness for both the government and researchers to start considering the recommendations from the current findings and previous literature the functionality of TCs in their quest for rural development. On the basis of the aforementioned arguments, the current study recommended the following:

7.8.1 Recommendations for policy, rural development and practice

- 1) Policy framework related to traditional leadership should be revised to give TCs powers and authority. This recommendation is in two folds. Firstly, as much as local

governments were allocated role with legislated powers, Traditional Councils should equally be empowered. Current polices suggested that TCs are there to assist political councillors in local government functions and in some instances they are denied powers to vote on matters that affecting their communities.

- 2) The current study recommends for the translation of relevant policy and other related documents in the languages of traditional councillors and an establishment of an effective communication system. This will help Traditional Council members to receive information in time and be able to articulate the message without interpreters.

- 3) The Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs to develop compliance machinery with respect to the composition of the TCs and related provisions of the TLGFA and other legislations. Establishment of policies was not enough if there are no compliance machinery put in place.

- 4) It is recommended that the Department of Cooperative Governance prioritise Traditional Councils which are located in extreme rurality in terms of resources allocation. Like in the Department of education where school in extreme rurality are allocated more resources than schools in low rurality, The current study recommends TCs in the extreme rurality to be allocated more resources than those in low rurality.
- 5) The current study recommends for policy review to amend the inconsistency clauses in the legislative framework. For instance, The Limpopo Traditional Leadership and Institutions Act of 2005 recommends that TCs might levy taxes. However, the Constitution provides that only elected legislative bodies can impose taxes.

7.8.2 Recommendations for future studies

- 1) Should youth be allowed to participate in the structures of Traditional Councils?
- 2) What roles should TCs play in moral regeneration?
- 3) The roles of faith-based organisation in promoting social cohesion in the Vhembe rural communities.
- 4) A comparative study of the TC structure for the Panchayats of India and the Traditional Councils of South Africa.
- 5) The significance of community radio stations in social cohesion for the 21st century generation.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1: ETHICAL CLEARANCE CERTIFICATE

**RESEARCH AND INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR**

**NAME OF RESEARCHER/INVESTIGATOR:
Mr NR Mudimeli**

**Student No:
9423138**

**PROJECT TITLE: Functionality of traditional
leadership councils as agents of rural
development in Vhembe District, South
Africa.**

PROJECT NO: SARDF/16/IRD/12/1910

SUPERVISORS/ CO-RESEARCHERS/ CO-INVESTIGATORS

NAME	INSTITUTION & DEPARTMENT	ROLE
Prof. J. Francis	University of Venda	Supervisor
Dr MM. Tshologane	University of Venda	Co-supervisor
Mr NR Mudimeli	University of Venda	Investigator - student

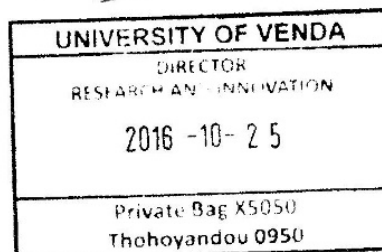
**ISSUED BY:
UNIVERSITY OF VENDA, RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Date Considered: October 2016

Decision by Ethical Clearance Committee Granted

Signature of Chairperson of the Committee:

Name of the Chairperson of the Committee: Prof. G.E. Ekosse



University of Venda

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"A quality driven financially sustainable, rural-based Comprehensive University"

APPENDIX 2: LETTER TO THE PARTICIPANTS



University of Venda

**SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE
INSTITUTE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
INFORMATION SHEET**

My Name is Ronald Mudimeli, a PhD candidate at the University of Venda. Together with my two assistants, we are conducting a study on the “**Functionality of Traditional Councils as agents of rural development in Vhembe District, South Africa**”. There are no risks or discomforts that are anticipated from your participation in the study. However, you are free to withdraw your consent and discontinue participation in this project at any time without prejudice or penalty. The researcher will make use of voice recording device, camera, note books and questionnaires for the purpose of data capturing and storage. Nonetheless, the information gathered during this study will remain confidential. Once collected, data will be placed in a locked cabinet. Only the researchers will have access to the study data and information. Participants’ names and their identifying details will never be revealed in any publication of the results of this study. Only codes rather than names will be used in the discussion. The results of the research will be published in the form of research papers and may be published in academic journals or presented at professional meetings. Results may also be published in book form and other publication platforms. Community forums will be conducted in order to share the results with all the participants and other related stakeholders. In addition, policy recommendations will be disseminated to relevant institutions through a policy brief.

Therefore, we are asking you for an interview in order to go through a questionnaire that inquires about your perceptions concerning the functionality of Traditional Councils as agents of rural development in Vhembe District, South Africa. The interview will take about 45-60 minutes. The discussion is solemnly for the purpose of the study and will not in any way serve other purposes that will jeopardise the life, peace and dignity of the respondent.

The principal investigator's contact details are as follow: Tel: 015 962 9047 and e-mail: ronaldmudimeli@gmail.com. Should you have any complaints about ethical aspects of this study or feel that you have been harmed in any way by participating in this study, please feel free to contact the University of Venda ethics committee at 015 962 8000.

APPENDIX 3: CONSENT FORM



University of Venda

**SCHOOL OF AGRICULTURE
INSTITUTE FOR RURAL DEVELOPMENT
CONSENT FORM**

Research ethics standards require the researcher to secure the participant consent prior data collection. May you kindly complete the declaration below as an indication of your permission to voluntarily participate in the study.

Ihereby agree to participate in this research project. I have been fully informed about the purpose and the conditions of the study. I understand that I am participating freely and without being forced in any way to do so. I also understand that I can stop participating at any point should I feel to discontinue and that this decision will not in any way affect me negatively. Therefore, I hereby freely give my consent to voluntarily take part in the study.

The conditions of my participation contained in the information sheet were explained to me in a language that I understand, and I have not been forced in any way to take part in this research undertaking. Therefore, I am hereby providing consent to audio-record my interview and the use of my photographs for the purpose of this study.

.....
Signature of participant **Date:**.....

.....
Signature of Interviewer **Date:**.....

APPENDIX 4: FOCUS GROUP GUIDE

(PHASE ONE DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT)

Objective 1: To establish the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of the Vhembe District, South Africa.

Questions: 1.1. What do you understand by the concept 'rural development'?
 1.2. What constitutes a developed rural community?
 1.3. What are the characteristics of rural undeveloped areas?

Objective 2: To establish the meaning of rural development as perceived by communities in some parts of the Vhembe District, South Africa.

2.1. What roles should TCs play in achieving rural development?

Objective 3: To derive the attributes of effectively functioning Traditional Councils.

Questions: 3.1. What are the attributes of effectively functional TCs?
 3.2. What are the characteristics of dysfunctional TCs?

APPENDIX 5: PAIRWISE COMPARISON MATRIX

Name of TC Group: Date

ATTRIBUTES OF FUNCTIONAL TCS

1. Use the following Pairwise Comparison Matrixes to compare the given items two at a time and then decide on the one you think is more important for the functioning of TCS.

1	ATTRIBUTES OF FUNCTIONAL TCS	1 Resources	2 Organisational Structure	3 Leadership & Governance	4 Development programs	5 Social Cohesion	SCORE	RANK
1	Resources							
2	Organisational Structure							
3	Leadership & Governance							
4	Development programs							
5	Social Cohesion							

APPENDIX 6: DIRECT RANKING TOOL

Name of TCGroup:.....Date.....

- A. Please rank the following attributes based on their importance towards the functionality of Traditional Councils with 1 being the most important and the largest number being the least important.

1.1	RESOURCES	RANK
1	Finance	
2	Human resource	
3	Material	
4	Information	

1.2	ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE	RANK
1	Term of office	
2	Number of members	
3	Gender Representation	
4	Age group representation	

1.3	LEADERSHIP & GOVERNANCE	RANK
1	Shared vision	
2	Team dynamics	
3	Management	
4	Rule of law	
5	Problem solving	
6	Communication	
7	Code of ethics	

1.4	SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS	RANK
1	Education	
2	Sports, arts and culture	
3	Safety and security	
4	Health and social welfare	
5	Agriculture	
6	Local economic development	
7	Electricity	
8	Water	
9	Disaster management	
10	Land administration	
11	Administration of justice	
12	Management of resources	

1.5	SOCIAL COHESION	RANK
1	Burial societies	
2	Savings clubs	
3	Sports clubs	
4	Political parties	
5	Community radio stations	
6	Faith-based organisations	
7	Community special days	

B. Please rank the following phrases defining rural development in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 9 the least important.

1	Improving the standard of life in rural communities	
2	Provisioning of services such as water, electricity, health and education to rural people	
3	Empowering rural people to improve their own space and living standard	
4	Sustainable and productive agricultural practices in rural spaces	
5	Active participation of local people in economic development projects	
6	Establishment of shopping centres in rural spaces	
7	Promotion of Culture and Traditions	
8	Retention of Competent human resources in rural service institutions such as schools and health centres	
9	planning and land use management to facilitate developmental activities	

C. The roles of TCs in achieving rural development

1. Please rank the following roles of TCs in order of importance with 1 being the most important and 9 being the least important role.

1	Recruit investors into rural space	
2	Facilitate service delivery	
3	Recommend, monitor and support economic development programmes	
4	Administration of land	
5	Administration of justice	
6	Transmit information between the rural communities and other stakeholders	
7	Management of resources	
8	Keep records of community profile	
9	Improve social welfare of rural people	
10	Promote indigenous culture, customs and traditions	
11	Encourage moral regeneration	