

**COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY:
A CASE STUDY OF PARADYS VILLAGE IN THABA NCHU**

A MINI-DISSERTATION SUBMITTED BY:

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Author's Declaration

I hereby declare that this mini-dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the Master's Degree in Development Studies at the University of the Free State is my own independent work with the exception of references duly cited and has not been submitted to any other university.



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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to Almighty God who made it possible by granting me good health and the courage to go on because everything comes from Him. I also dedicate it to my family, especially my two daughters Keneilwe and Lorato Seate who believed in me and kept me going.

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ACHPR	African Charter on Human and People's Rights
ANC	African National Congress
DBSA	Development Bank of Southern Africa
DPLG	Department of Provincial and Local Government
DRTD	Declaration on the Right to Development
HDI	Historically Disadvantaged Individuals
IDP	Integrated Development Plan
LED	Local Economic Development
LG	Local Government
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MIG	Municipal Infrastructure Grant
MSA	Municipal Systems Act
MTSF	Medium Term Strategic Framework
NDP	National Development Plan
NGP	New Growth Path
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RDF	Rural Development Framework
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
RDS	Rural Development Strategy
REPOA	Research on Poverty Alleviation
RHIG	Rural Household Infrastructure Grant
RTD	Right to Development
SADC	Southern African Development Community
TBR	The Bill of Rights
UN	United Nations

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the provision of basic services to Paradys Village and how the community perceives service delivery by the Mangaung Metro in relation to basic services such as water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal. The thesis further investigated how the lack of or poor service delivery would affect communities in carrying on with their day-to-day lives. It investigated the type of services that Mangaung Metro provides to the rural communities and how they promote community participation to enhance their development. The participants for the study were selected from the Paradys community and from local community leaders and officials of Mangaung Metro, including Eskom.

The research findings revealed that service delivery in rural areas is still a great challenge, as even after twenty years of democracy there is still a backlog in this regard. There are households, for example, with no sanitation facilities and some families have to walk more than 500m to fetch water. The study also revealed that Mangaung Metro does not involve communities in issues affecting them – in fact they never engage with the community at any given time, and some participants even mentioned that they only see the municipal officials during election periods. The study revealed complete dissatisfaction on a number of service delivery issues, including that officials seldom inform them of service interruptions.

It is recommended that the municipality aligns itself with the principles of people-centred development and engages communities by involving them in the planning and implementation of projects that affect them. Furthermore, it should hold regular community meetings to promote participation in order to get to know the communities that it serves better by listening to them and prioritising their needs, informing them of the services available to them and endeavouring to understand how they perceive service provision. In so doing the people would feel as if they are part of their own development, where now they feel side-lined and ignored.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This chapter gives an overview on service delivery, which is perceived as essential to development and for improving the lives of communities, especially rural communities. This statement is in line with the vision of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP) Framework, which is to create "vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities and food security for all" (CRDP Framework, 2009). The Rural Development Programme focuses on improving economic, cultural and social infrastructure South Africa Year Book (2010/11:410)

The dawn of democracy in 1994 brought about the political transformation and institutional reforms that were vital for dealing with the socioeconomic and developmental challenges faced by South Africans. The White Paper on the transformation of the Public Service (1995) addressed the need to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of the public service and, moreover, the quality thereof. On the other hand, the White Paper on the transformation of Public Service Delivery (1997) outlined a service delivery framework of eight principles (Batho Pele Principles) for implementation across the public service, on how public services are provided, and specifically about improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the way in which services are delivered. The purpose of the White Paper was to provide a policy framework and a practical implementation strategy for the transformation of public service delivery.

In his State of the Nation Address (Briefing Paper 134) of February 2005, President Thabo Mbeki reiterated the following words: *"The government must act to ensure that we reduce the number of people dependant on social welfare, increasing the numbers that rely for their livelihood on normal participation in the economy. This is also especially relevant to the accomplishment of the goal of enhancing the dignity of every South African.... [Our] country has a continuing task to push back the frontiers of poverty, underdevelopment and marginalisation and expand access to a better life for all"*.

In essence, the statement above re-affirms the state's responsibility as enshrined in the Bill of Rights in Chapter 2 of the Constitution in promoting, protecting and

respecting democratic values and human dignity. This can only be achieved by provision of quality services to the community.

According to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996, Section 152 (1), it is acknowledged that local government is critical to the country's developmental processes and delivery of services to communities. South Africa's constitution mandates local authorities to ensure the provision of such services to local communities in a sustainable manner, to promote a safe and healthy environment and to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in local government affairs. Municipalities have a developmental duty towards communities through planning and giving priority to their needs by promoting their social and economic development. A study conducted by Krugell, Otto and van der Merwe (2009:2) sought to evaluate progress made by local municipalities on the delivery of basic services, and emphasised the developmental and service delivery role in meeting the basic needs of communities and improving their living conditions. However, even 20 years after the first democratic local government elections in 1996, service delivery is still lacking and causes discontentment in most rural areas.

This study is about the perceptions of rural communities of municipal service delivery and looks at the provision of basic services such as electricity, sanitation, water and refuse removal. In his theory of the hierarchy of human needs, Maslow categorises needs into stages such as physiological, safety, self-esteem and self-actualisation, the fulfilment of all of which renders a person whole, and the lack of which is detrimental (McGraw-Hill, 2009). This implies that the welfare of communities would never be attainable without the fulfilment of these basic human needs. There is a gap in community perceptions and expectations on service delivery as opposed to their needs and priorities, as a perception exists that government imposes initiatives on communities without their consultation (Fjeldstad, Katera & Ngalewa, 2008:1). A study conducted in Tanzania between 2003 and 2006 reveals that the improvements noted in service delivery in the six districts of Bangamoyo, Ilala, Iringa, Kilosa, Moshi and Mwanza were the central government's priorities and not necessarily those of the communities, as they were not reflected in the local councils' plans.

A study conducted by Khale (2012:67) reveals that there are factors which affect community perceptions with regard to service delivery. These vary between the degree to which queries are answered to the community's satisfaction, the quality of the services provided, failure to respond to the community's needs, failure to account for public monies, and failure to consult with members of the community. These factors imply inefficiency on the part of municipalities, which could be due to lack of skills by some municipal employees due to cadre deployment of unskilled people, or corruption in cases where service providers are appointed without following the proper procedures, to name just two examples.

1.2 Problem statement

Since the inception of democracy in 1994, the Government of National Unity promised South Africans "A better life for all" through accelerated service delivery in improving physical and social infrastructure, as well as through economic growth (Moller, 2007:296). Chapter 12 of the National Treasury report (2011) on "Delivering municipal services in rural areas" states that the Rural Development Strategy (1995) and the Rural Development Framework (1997) initiated the process of transforming rural areas into vibrant, equitable and sustainable communities (2009). Furthermore, Statistics South Africa's General Household Survey (2011) shows a correlation between life satisfaction and dissatisfaction for beneficiaries of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) houses versus those who still lack houses.

The former President, Thabo Mbeki in his State of the Nation Address of February 2003 noted the progress the country has made in terms of provision of social grants. However, in the same breath he highlighted the fact that government has a huge backlog in the delivery of basic services for communities, including housing and municipal infrastructure, hospitals and clinics, schools, roads, water, electricity etc.

In his State of the Nation Address in February 2005, President Thabo Mbeki stressed the need for urban renewal, rural development, and the development of social and economic infrastructure. These remarks awakened hope, and with hope came new expectations. However, even after a decade of freedom, some of these ideals have still not been achieved. The end of the first decade of freedom presented an ideal opportunity to take stock of the progress South Africa has made, as well as

the challenges still facing the country. In relation to the above statements, it is clear that even basic services have not reached all the country's citizens, hence service delivery is an issue with service delivery related protests in most parts of South Africa despite attempts to improve services to the marginalised communities. Fobosi (2013:1) states that the rural areas in Eastern Cape, for example, are characterised by poor infrastructure such as poor housing and poor access to health facilities, poor road infrastructure and lack of technology.

Poor service delivery in rural areas, or in any sphere, is contrary to the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Act 108 of 1996, Chapter 2, The Bill of Rights, with regard to human dignity. Census 2011 revealed that most rural households in the country use pit latrines and do not have access to safe drinking water (Statistics South Africa, 2012). An example is the Free State Province, the second smallest province in the country in terms of population, which has 823 316 households, 3.1% of which do not have toilet facilities (Census, 2011).

More focus is now being placed on developing communities especially in rural areas, but in spite of all the efforts in this regard, there are still service delivery protests, with communities often vandalising existing structures (Allan & Heese, 2011). What then could be causing all this? Does it mean the communities are not satisfied with the type of services rendered? Does it mean they were not involved or consulted in the establishment or initiation of projects intended for their benefit? It is time to determine the perceptions of the end-users/beneficiaries and to ascertain the reasons for their frustrations.

A study conducted by Karamoko (2011:1) depicts a causal relationship between service delivery protests and municipal service provision. It can be deduced that; lack of service provision could result in service delivery protests. The study also demonstrates the disparity in perceptions of service delivery between urban and rural nodes, though the perceptions of quality were similar in both urban and rural settings. He further states that there is a need to clarify roles among the different spheres of government. Lack of clarity results in power struggles, with the result that communities ultimately suffer (Karamoko, 2011:7-8). This study will therefore focus on the following two specific research questions:

- What are the perceptions of Paradys community in terms of service delivery by the Mangaung Metro?
- What service quality gaps exist in the municipal services delivered by the Mangaung Metro?

The citizen's experiences and perceptions of services are important for identifying their needs and priorities, and for designing and implementation of effective and efficient service models Fjeldstad et al. 2008:1. This is in line with the government's objective of "A better life for all". In addition, the study will attempt to ascertain the following:

- To find out whether or not the claim that not enough resources are provided by the local government for service delivery in rural communities is valid based on the study findings;
- To find out whether or not the claim that there is poor or lack of service provision to rural communities is valid based on the findings of the study.

1.3 Rationale for the study

The study was conducted to assess the perceptions of rural communities of municipal service delivery of basic services. The dawn of democracy saw an end to the Apartheid Regime, which left high levels of poverty and inequalities for the majority of the country's citizens. The new government made an undertaking to build the nation and redress these past inequalities by increasing access to resources, infrastructure and social services for both rural and urban communities. Various strategies and programmes were put in place. For example, the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was established for the provision of universal access to basic services, and which promised decent houses, access to clean water, sanitation and electricity, as well as jobs for all. In recent years, however, South Africa has been plagued by spurts of service delivery protests and these have gradually increased in numbers as the years' progress. This situation prompted the following thoughts: To what extent are municipalities reaching out to rural communities? And are the services rendered by municipalities meeting the expectations of rural communities?

1.4 Aim

The main aim of the proposed study is to assess community perceptions regarding the provision of basic municipal services in the rural area of Paradys village in Thaba Nchu.

1.5 Objectives

The study's specific research objectives are:

- To assess the perceptions of the community on the provision of basic municipal service delivery, namely: sanitation, water, electricity, refuse removal and housing
- To determine how communities are affected by poor service delivery
- To determine how they think service provision could be improved
- To determine the involvement of communities by the municipality in the planning of any such community projects

1.6 Conceptualisation

Conceptualisation can be defined as a process of categorising and labelling information. Conceptualisation is an important component of the research process and enables readers to understand the context in which words are being used. The following are some of the concepts/terms that feature in this study:

- **Basic services:** are those critical services that address basic needs that an individual cannot survive without, and which are aimed at improving the lives of people, such as water, sanitation, electricity and waste removal.
- **Development:** Can be described as a process of improvement which occurs in phases until a desired objective is reached. Other authors describe it as a people-centred process of change, the ultimate success of which depends on people's capacity to manage the process through a variety of critical steps and phases within the limits of an institutional value framework.
- **Empowerment:** This entails the sharing of power with people, giving them power to make decisions on matters that affect their lives.

- **Livelihoods:** Refers to more than just earning an income and is about quality of life, security and dignity, all of which are also important (Chambers & Conway, 1991). The UNDP describes sustainable livelihoods as a systemic and adaptive approach that links issues of poverty reduction, sustainability and empowerment processes (e.g., participation, gender empowerment and good governance) (UNDP, 2015).
- **Rural development:** This is about enabling rural people to take control of their destiny, thereby dealing effectively with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources. It is a participatory process through which rural people learn over time, through their own experience and initiatives, how to adapt their indigenous knowledge to their changing world.
- **Participation:** Aims to enable people to exercise and claim their rights to actively and meaningfully participate in service delivery and civil society advocacy.
- **Service delivery:** Can be described as the implementation of laws and actual provision of services that are controlled by government (Crous, 2004).

1.7 Structure of the report

This mini-thesis is divided into 5 chapters:

Chapter 1: Gives the background, problem statement, rationale, aims, objectives and conceptual framework.

Chapter 2: The literature review looks at the existing literature on service delivery, community perceptions in South Africa, the SADC and International community, development as a framework underpinning service delivery, the public participation principle, challenges facing municipalities and responsibilities of local municipalities.

Chapter 3: Deals with the research methodology, the study design, population and sampling, target population, study site where the study took place, the research questions and research instruments that would be employed, data collection process and how data would be analysed, how validity and reliability was ensured, and also looked at ethical considerations and limitations to the study.

Chapter 4: Presents the research findings and summarises the results.

Chapter 5: Discussions and conclusions – discusses and analyses the research findings and provides interpretation of the results. It gives an overview of the study, outlines future research opportunities, and ends with the conclusion and recommendations based on the research conducted.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Introduction

This chapter looks at the existing literature on service delivery, what other scholars say about community perceptions of service delivery, and how service delivery is perceived as core to development and improving the lives of communities, especially rural communities. This statement is in line with the vision of the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP), which is to create "vibrant, equitable and sustainable rural communities" (CRDP Framework, 2009).

Service delivery is described as the implementation of laws and actual provision of services that are controlled by government (Crous, 2004). These government programmes should contribute towards enhancing the quality of life for all citizens as entrenched in Chapter 7 of the Constitution, Section 152 and 153, which state that local government must ensure provision of services to communities and promote their social and economic development. The article goes further to state that public services will be evaluated by the effectiveness of the services they render to address the basic needs of the community.

Service delivery is also referred to as specialist services supported by service agreements, contracts or grants, as is the case with services provided by municipalities to communities (Crous, 2004). Harande (2009) highlighted the fact that Nigeria has been independent for the past 45 years with good policies on the development of rural areas, however rural areas are still not developed and the quality of life and living conditions of the people are instead deteriorating. This calls for further investigation. It is important to learn what other scholars have discovered about the views of communities with regard to municipal service provision.

It would be interesting to determine the views/perceptions of communities regarding the services they receive. Several studies have been conducted on service delivery (Fobosi, 2010; Harande, 2009; Goldman & Reynolds, 2008; Hemson, Meyer & Maphunye, 2004), including and especially in rural areas, but nothing has been said about how the intended beneficiaries interpret the services rendered. Fjeldstad et al. (2008) conducted a comparative study on Tanzanian citizens' perceptions of service delivery by local government authorities between the 2003 and 2006. The results

show that the progress in this regard varied according to sector and location, which implies that the resources were not equally distributed. In order to correct this inequality, the resources should be directed towards priority areas Fjeldstad et al. (2008). The study concludes by highlighting the significance of taking community needs and priorities into account, and involving communities in the designing and implementation of initiatives affecting their well-being. The following sections would look at service delivery from an international, regional and local perspective.

2.2. Service delivery from an international perspective

A study conducted by Westreicher (2009) for the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (Special Report, 145) refers to the poorest communities or less developed countries as "Fragile States", which are home to 500 million (+-7%) of the world's population. Conditions in five nations were analysed, namely: Yemen, Nepal, Guatemala, Cote d'Ivoire and Eritrea. The main services the study focussed on were health, education, drinking water and sanitation, which are basic services universally. In addition, the lack of these services is associated with poverty and gender inequality, with bad governance identified as a factor that worsens the situation. The report (Special 145 Report, 2009) suggested that remedial action should be taken to improve governance and creating opportunities for community participation, both of which are significant for improving service delivery. Furthermore, the study emphasised a correlation between fragile and conflict-affected states, and suggested that violent conflict arises when state functions and human rights obligations are not fulfilled. In summary: "All interventions should be conflict-sensitive, should contribute to non-violent conflict management and peace building" (Special 145 Report, 2009). The statement relates well with what is happening in South Africa, where citizens accuse government of poor service delivery, even taking their frustrations out on foreigners. This culminated in the recent xenophobic attacks that started in KwaZulu-Natal province (Bekker, 2015), whereby government had to call upon law enforcement agents to maintain law and order.

These insights suggest that governments everywhere must involve their citizens in decision-making on issues affecting their development through practising a participatory development approach. This affirms what was noted in Chapter 1 of the

study, whereby communities in South Africa felt that the government is imposing projects or initiatives on them. The solution to improve service delivery and enhance development of rural or fragile communities is to instead practise a bottom-up approach that promotes community participation and involvement. The next section will discuss the importance of public participation in improving service delivery.

2.3 Service delivery in the Southern African Development Community (SADC)

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) is faced with a series of developmental challenges, in particular for adolescents and vulnerable children. A concern has emerged due to the deprivation of basic services for children and the youth in the region, wherein children could not access schooling because they could not enrol or they dropped-out of school, with the result that they remain unskilled and cannot find a decent job in the labour market. Food insecurity is another challenge faced by the youth. The main contributory factors in this regard are poverty and HIV/AIDS which were worsened by the global recession, with many children ending up on the streets and open to exploitation (Minimum Package of Services, SADC, 2011). This state of affairs has rendered the region unable to achieve the Millennium Development Goal (MDG) 2, whose target is to: "Ensure that, by 2015 children everywhere, boys and girls alike, will be able to complete a full course of primary schooling". Failure to fulfil this mission will impact on their survival and future livelihood (MDGs, 2000).

As a result, the SADC region took a stand to provide comprehensive and holistic services by developing a "Minimum Package of Services" for Orphans and Vulnerable Children and Youth (OVCY), which focused on provision of services for this particular group. The minimum service standards addressed aspects such as education and skills development, health care and sanitation, provision of safe drinking water, child and youth protection, social protection in relation to economic development and poverty reduction (SADC, 2011). Initiatives were put in place to create jobs, as according to the World Bank Report (2010), two thirds of the population in the region lived below the poverty line of US\$1.25 per day. The circumstances warranted a turn of events to improve the lives of the people in the region (SADC Minimum Package of Services, 2011). In this case, the study does not

necessarily capture the views of the community, but highlights the effects and impact that poor service delivery has on the lives of people, in particular the OVCY.

Another study conducted by the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) on Governance and Social Policy in the SADC Region: An issue analysis, highlighted the aggravated socio-economic challenges facing the region because of poor service delivery. These include poverty, underdevelopment, HIV/AIDS, high unemployment and crime. The purpose of the study was to identify any weaknesses that are hindering the region from eradicating poverty and finding solutions to these persistent challenges (DBSA, 2009). The issues identified were similar to those of the previous study.

2.4 The community perception of service delivery; the South African perspective

In South Africa rural areas are characterised by poor service provision or total lack thereof, yet the problem is also predominant in informal settlements in the metros. In a study conducted by Allan and Heese, (2011:1), the authors attempted to understand the reasons for the service delivery protests that sporadically manifest in certain areas of South Africa and who is to blame for this. Such incidents prompt one to question why communities would continue with these protests when the government is investing so much money towards improvement of people's living conditions? While the causes are not clearly defined, the study speculated that perhaps a lack of communication and lack of access to information are at least partly responsible.

A study conducted in the Eastern Cape Province, which is regarded as South Africa's most impoverished province and is also characterised by underdeveloped infrastructure and unemployment (Fobosi, 2013:1), aimed to determine whether access to safe drinking water and sanitation is a human right. The province has a population of about 6 562 053 (Census 2011) with 4 100 000 people living in rural areas. The study revealed a lack of basic services such as sanitation, safe drinking water, road infrastructure and electricity, but most crucial was the scarcity of water, a feature that inhibits development in any area as water is a source of life (Fobosi, 2013). This situation defeats the objective of rural development, which is about

enabling rural people to take control of their destiny by effectively and efficiently dealing with rural poverty through the optimal use and management of natural resources, such as land-based resources (CRDP Framework, 2009). The Eastern Cape Province depends on agriculture for social infrastructure and the province's economy, yet the situation is so bad that people cannot even establish backyard gardens because of water scarcity.

Fobosi's study concluded that access to safe drinking water is a human right that unfortunately remains unfulfilled not only in the Eastern Cape Province, but nationally as well. This goes against the ruling party's promise of "A better life for all" (Fobosi, 2013).

Another study conducted by Goldman and Reynolds (2008:8) in 6 municipalities (Mangaung, Naledi, Tzaneen, Sol Plaatjie, Belabela and Maluti-a-Phofung – "Lessons from the South African Experience" – reveal that communities perceive there is improvement in provision of services post 2000, but while the quantity of houses has increased, the quality is going down. Furthermore, while there is also greater access to water, the quality thereof cannot be guaranteed and there are areas where communities still use pit latrines as well as the bucket system.

Some 33% of respondents rated performance of local municipalities in rural nodes as good as compared to urban nodes, however 35% rated the performance as bad and 32% could not give their opinion (Goldman & Reynolds, 2008:10 -11).

According to the Census 2011 fact sheet, the results revealed that during the years of 1996, 2001 and 2011 respectively, the position with regard to access to piped water was 54,9%, 63,2% and 77,8% respectively, access to electricity was 32,7%, 28,3% and 75%, households with no toilet facilities and using the bucket system amounted to 6.4%, 5,7% and 2,3%, and those with no toilets amounted to 29,6%, 31,3% and 17,7% respectively (Census, 2011). These results should have served as a wake-up call for the government to expedite provision of basic services in some parts of the country, as the lack thereof is a serious gross violation of human rights.

Chapter 15 of the National Development Plan (NDP, 2011) puts emphasis on developing the capabilities of historically disadvantaged individuals and taking advantage of the many opportunities that democracy, openness and the economy

afford. It further states that education, training and skills development are critical as they create the opportunity to learn, progress, earn an income and make a living.

The provision of basic municipal services depends on whether they have been identified as priority services by the community or are perceived as such by the intended beneficiaries. As mentioned earlier, service provision has not been accepted or perceived by all as satisfactory, and is dependent on what people perceive as being their priority Fjeldstad et al. (2008). Most municipalities are struggling to meet their obligations to the communities due to lack of equity in the distribution of resources, especially those municipalities in the former homelands. The Eastern Cape is amongst the provinces with the highest levels of poverty, unemployment and underdeveloped infrastructure, and is followed by the Free State, especially the eastern part. Both these areas were once under the former Bantustan system.

Under the Apartheid Regime there were four independent homelands: Transkei, Bophuthatswana, Venda and Ciskei, and six self-governing territories, namely Gazankulu, Kangwane, KwaNdebele, KwaZulu, Lebowa and Qwa-qwa. Despite the fact that the homelands were incorporated into the new South Africa in 1994, the reality is that they remain under-served (Kon & Lackan, 2008). This reality exists even twenty years after South Africa became a democratic state (Fobosi, 2013).

The Global Forum on Local Development (GFLD), in their article "Local government and service delivery" (January, 2011), reiterates that the provision of basic services such as health, education, roads, sanitation, water, electricity etc. are integral in alleviating poverty, unemployment and inequity, thereby improving the livelihoods of individuals and communities and promoting self-sustainability. The improvement in service delivery is critical in achieving most of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), in this case MDGs 1, 2 and 7, which all the countries are expected to have attained by 2015 through the consensus reached during the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000 (Millennium Development Goals Country Report, 2011).

Global Insight (2009) cited the fact that the challenges of poverty and unemployment are exacerbated by lack of access to basic services such as housing, water,

sanitation and electricity, the accessibility of which could enhance and unleash people's potential, bringing about job creation and improved livelihoods.

Another study conducted by Nnadozie (2013:83) looked at the impact of service delivery and the access to basic services in post-apartheid South Africa. The study measured two variables, namely access to water and access to formal housing. Democracy is assumed to have brought about a turn-around in the socio-economic and political landscape of the country, as people became eligible to vote, had freedom of movement and freedom of choice. The Government of National Unity was established and brought about the development of policies that aimed at correcting the injustices of the past. The previous regime left most rural and urban communities ravaged by poverty, inequality and dire lack of infrastructure (physical and social). As mentioned earlier, this gave rise to the famous statement: "A better life for all South Africans" (Moller, 2007).

The study revealed the disparities between racial groups in terms of socio-economic status in relation to literacy, unemployment, access to housing and water. The study concluded that inequality in accessing basic services remains a challenge (Nnadozie, 2013).

The above statements cite the significance of the provision of services, yet poor service delivery remains a constant challenge in our communities, especially rural communities. Given the lessons learnt from these previous studies, it is imperative to determine the views of the intended beneficiaries of government services. A study conducted by Moletsane, de Klerk and Bevan (2014) to determine community expectations and perceptions of municipal service delivery revealed customer dissatisfaction of municipal service delivery in five areas of service quality dimensions, namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. The results revealed service quality gaps between expectations and perceptions of the particular community, meaning that the service quality provided did not meet the communities' expectations. A new aspect also surfaced in that the front office personnel did not have the necessary skills to engage with customers as well as being incompetent; this highlights the need for training on both customer care and the necessary skills and knowledge to perform such duties efficiently. An additional aspect highlighted by Moletsane et al. (2014:282) is that service quality is essential

for the success of service organisations, in this instance the municipality. Another study conducted in Southern Thailand by Mokhlis, Aleesa and Mamat (2011:123) on Municipal Service Quality and Satisfaction indicated that the challenge facing service organisations is the provision of quality services, which is critical as a driving force for better citizen satisfaction. The study examined citizen perceptions of municipal service quality using the five service quality dimensions mentioned above by Moletsane et al., namely: tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, empathy and assurance. The municipal officials had to focus on these service quality dimensions to predict citizen satisfaction and optimise service delivery at all times (Mokhlis et al. 2011:286).

2.5 Development as a framework underpinning service delivery

Development is a central driving force in bringing about change in people's lives; however, this can only be realised through the enhancement of service delivery. In the introduction it was mentioned that service delivery is core to the improvement of people's quality of life, which depends on access to basic services such as education, health care, safe drinking water and sanitation (The United Nations (UN) report, Briefing Note Number, 8 July 2009). The UN states that the goal of development is to improve the well-being of the population, ensuring people's freedom and increasing their economic security (UN, 2009). Individual development is measured by life expectancy and adult literacy and incorporates the individual's well-being, health status, economic status and political freedom (UN, 2009).

The above aspects are also entrenched in Chapter 2 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 in the Bill of Rights Section 7 (1), which affirms the values of human dignity, equality and freedom. In emphasising the latter statement, development is a fundamental human right. The UNDP in South Africa reported that "South Africa is committed to fulfilling its constitutional obligations to deliver socio-economic rights within the context of its national plan of action, Vision 2014, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)".

According to the UNDP a tremendous progress was noted in the past 15 years; hunger has been halved, poverty brought down by half and more kids attend school (UNDP 2015:2). To build on these success, the United Nations Conference on

Sustainable Development (Rio+20) in 2012 agreed on a new set of global goals, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) creating a path of sustainable development worldwide beyond 2015 (UNDP 2015: 3). The feature of the seventeen (17) SDGs was; the goals are universal and will represent different challenges and aspirations of respective countries. They are action-oriented, precise and easy to communicate however taking into account the uniqueness of countries. The SDGs most applicable to the study are; SDG 1: No poverty; ending poverty in all its forms everywhere, SDG 2: Zero hunger; end hunger and achieve food security, SDG 3: Good health and well-being, SDG 4: Quality education; ensure inclusive and equitable quality education, SDG 6: Clean water and sanitation, ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all. These goal seem ambitious but with proper planning and inclusivity, also reviewing what didn't work well in the past 15 years, countries could do better to improve the conditions of nations and provide sustainable solutions.

The National Development Plan (NDP) has highlighted the need to develop and upgrade the capabilities of especially the previously disadvantaged to promote inclusive growth and development of communities by creating jobs, developing infrastructure and transforming urban and rural spaces (NDP 2011:5). Rendering effective and equitable delivery of public services is one of South Africa's indicators of progress towards the achievement of the MDGs (UN. 2015). In 2012

The study's main aim is to assess community perceptions about the provision of basic municipal services in a selected rural area, to determine if their right to development is being taken into consideration.

The General Assembly Resolution 34/46 of 1979 stated that: "The Right to Development (RTD) is a human right and the equality of opportunity for development is as much a prerogative as of individuals within nations". The right to development should hence receive as much attention as human rights do, since government has an obligation to develop communities. This right to development is based on the following principles:

1. The realisation of human potential in harmony with the community as the central purpose of development

2. Human beings being the subjects and not the objects of development
3. Development requiring the satisfaction of both material and non-material basic needs
4. Respect for human rights being fundamental to the development process
5. The need for every person to participate fully in shaping his or her own reality
6. Equality and non-discrimination as an essential prerequisite for development
7. Achievement of a degree of individual and collective self-reliance as an integral part of the development process (UN, 2013:91-93).

To complement the above are public participation principles that are people-centred and mandatory to developing communities. According to Harande (2009:1), "Any nation that neglects the development and empowerment of the rural communities should not expect meaningful development." This statement is indicative that development of communities cannot be overemphasised.

2.6 Principles of Public Participation

Public participation means that government and municipalities should first understand that development is about people and involves all stakeholders, including communities, in the planning and development of the Integrated Development Plans (IDPs) to ensure public involvement and promote participation. According to Theron et al. (2005), the Manila Declaration (1989) formulated the following principles as basic to people-centred development:

1. Sovereignty resides with the people, the real actors of positive change. This means the people who can bring about change are the community members themselves through their experience and inputs because they are the ones who know what would work and not work for them.
2. The legitimate role of government is to enable the people to set and pursue their own agenda. This re-emphasises what is said above, to involve people to input and decide what it is that they want.
3. To exercise their sovereignty and assume responsibility for the development of themselves and their communities, the people must control their own resources, have access to relevant information and have the means to hold

government officials accountable. This can be addressed through practicing the Batho Pele Principles, informing people of the assets and resources available to them, and allowing access to capacity building and empowerment in terms of their rights as citizens.

4. Those who would assist people with their development must recognise that it is they who are participating in support of the people's agenda and not the other way round. This means that even if communities get support of any kind, including financial, they (communities) have ownership and decision-making powers on how they want things to run.

The Special 145 Report by Westreicher (2009) acknowledges that support for demand-oriented services contributes to the empowerment of citizens; this ensures that the communities are provided with the kind of services they require, and can hold the government accountable if it fails to deliver accordingly. It should however be noted that municipalities have their own challenges that make it impossible to deliver on their mandate due to lack of skilled workers and resources. Another significant aspect is the service quality that affects customer satisfaction; as has been stated earlier, municipalities are crucial in enhancing development of communities. In his analysis of the Politics-Administrative interface and its impact on delivery of municipal services, Ndudula stated that local government is the cornerstone of service delivery because municipalities are closer to the people whose expectations are to see improvement and growth in their quality of life (Ndudula, 2013:5). Ndudula further highlighted, that "Tensions between politicians and administrators result in the municipal services being compromised because politicians and administrators intrude on each other's roles and responsibilities resulting to stagnant service delivery" (Ndudula, 2013:4). The statement above referred to an instance in Mquma Local Municipality in the Eastern Cape. According to Chapter 7 of the Constitution; Section 152 (1) (c) states that one of the Municipal roles and responsibilities is the promotion of social and economic development, however if there are in-fights between institutions tasked with ensuring improvement of the living conditions of communities there will be little or no economic activities taking place.

2.7 Challenges facing municipalities

Municipalities are faced with a range of challenges that negatively impact on provision of basic services, hence little or no impact has been made in some of the rural areas. These challenges depend on whether it is a Metro or rural municipality, especially in the former homelands. The following challenges have been identified: limited infrastructure such as housing, roads, sanitation, information and technology; limited budget to address service delivery backlog and lack of human capacity. In most instances one finds that people who are assigned to managerial posts do not have the necessary skills, hence municipalities are known for mismanagement of funds and lack of administrative capacity, hence poor service delivery (Goldman & Reynolds, 2008:14). Nyalunga (2006:15) added that the creation of larger areas of jurisdiction through the demarcation of new municipal boundaries also puts more strain on the already over-stretched resources. Thabo Mofutsanyane District has five local municipalities, most of the resources are channelled to the district as compared to other districts. The Maluti-A-Phofung local municipality has been identified as one of the priority areas for acceleration of service delivery through the Comprehensive Rural Development Programme (CRDP).

Goldman and Reynolds in their article, "Rural Local Government in South Africa", highlight that few stakeholders participate in Integrated Development Plans (IDPs). In essence the IDPs are meant to create coherent and integrated planning between district and local municipalities including other stakeholders such as the civil organisations. However, the study identified as a weakness that most stakeholders do not participate actively during planning (IDP) because there are no incentives. Furthermore, IDPs are facilitated by consultants and the process is so complex that it does not add value for other stakeholders (Goldman & Reynolds, 2008:15). The Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) describes the IDP as a plan for municipal areas with short-term, medium-term and long-term objectives. This is legislated by the Municipal Systems Act (MSA) 2000 as one of the key tools used by local government to fulfil its developmental role. The IDP process gives rise to decisions about municipal budget, land management and promotes Local Economic Development (LED). It also fosters a culture of cooperative governance that enhances the expedition of service delivery to those in need. However, the lack of economic activities in certain areas, especially rural areas, makes it difficult to

generate rates and taxes, hence many municipalities are severely indebted. This reiterates what Ndudula cited in the previous section, whereby he indicated that municipalities are at the forefront of service delivery but are being hampered by political-encroachment into administrative issues, thereby killing the dream of improving the lives of all South Africans.

The other issue that is not often discussed is 'Cadre deployment'. An article by the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) highlighted the fact that the ANC Deployment Strategy places loyalty ahead of merit (as in qualifications, competence and experience). The HSRC Researcher cited during a seminar, that; incompetent people are often deployed in public positions, with far more competent people having slim chances of being appointed if they are not politically connected. This has led to poor public service, as incompetent and unqualified people are unable to deliver services efficiently and effectively (Mail & Guardian, 2012.07.12). An evident example of this is the report of the Auditor-General on the Audit Outcomes 2013/14, which indicated that no municipality received a clean audit in the Free State Province, with R3.54 billion that could not be accounted for due to unauthorised, irregular, fruitless or wasteful expenditure. The report depicts the reasons for this as: 1. Key officials lacking appropriate competencies (CFOs); 2. Management not taking pro-active action with respect to warning signs; and 3. No action taken for poor performance. The HSRC summarises the report by stating that competency and ethical standards are critical for an effective public service.

2.8 Responsibilities of local municipalities

Local Government/Municipalities have been tasked with the developmental responsibilities as outlined in Chapter 7 of The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Act 108 of 1996 Section 152 and 153 stipulates municipal duties as prioritising the primary needs of communities by ensuring that they are involved during the planning and budgeting processes. The communities are expected to take part in the formation of the IDPs, ensuring that their needs are prioritised and that the provision of services to communities is sustainable in order to promote a safe and healthy environment.

In view of the above, municipalities have a tremendous task towards building sustainable rural communities, especially considering the conditions of our rural communities regarding service provision. However, municipalities are under pressure because of limited resources and this impedes service provision. The intergovernmental subsidies and Municipal Infrastructure Grants which help to cover certain capital and operating expenditure, but often leave the municipality with a revenue shortfall. Furthermore, the local tax base in rural areas is often insufficient to make up for the shortfall (Goldman & Reynolds, 2008:7-8).

From the studies already conducted, most scholars highlight the impact/challenges of the lack of access to services, why there are more service delivery challenges in some areas than others, and the consequences of the lack of such services. A study conducted by Fjeldstad et al. (2008) in Tanzania alluded to the consequences of community non-involvement in decision-making. The study emphasised the importance of consulting with communities to determine their needs and priorities. The other important aspect is to promote the community development principle of a people-centred approach, whereby initiatives are focused to address the needs of beneficiaries, implying that the views of the client or community members should be taken into consideration, especially with issues that involve their well-being.

2.9 Chapter summary

This chapter covered the existing literature relevant to community perceptions of service delivery across the globe, including South Africa and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Region. It looked at the challenges facing municipalities with regard to lack of resources and capacity, and also the responsibilities of municipalities and aspects regarded as significant towards nation building and community development. The significance of involving communities in decision-making on issues affecting their development cannot be overemphasised, but most important is understanding that development is a human right and that it is first and foremost about people. The challenges of service delivery are similar everywhere including the priority needs of clean drinking water, sanitation, health and housing. Studies conducted by Moletsane et al. (2014:282) and Mokhele et al. (2011:124) reveal that there is an obvious difference between customer expectations and perceptions regarding the quality of the municipal services delivered. This implies that municipalities must have strategies in place that will address these

service quality dimensions; namely tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy, the fulfilment of which brings about customer satisfaction. The chapter also revealed how interference of political heads in administrative issues could be disastrous: it is imperative that government reviews its deployment policy that has proved to be a failure by appointing incompetent cadres instead of suitably qualified and experienced individuals.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the different research methods used to carry out a research study. The purpose of this study is to determine the views of a rural community on municipal service delivery. Bryman (2012:46) defines a research method as a technique for collecting data that involves tools such as questionnaires (structured and un-structured) or participant observation. Mouton (2001) reiterates the words of Bryman, explaining research methodology as focusing on the research process and the type of tools and procedures to be used (Mouton, 2001:56).

The approach used for conducting this research study will be a survey method. Mouton (2001:152) describes surveys as studies that are quantitative in nature and aim at providing a broad overview of a representative sample of a large population. The study sample comprises of 104 (25%) participants drawn from a population of 416. According to de Vos et al. (2011:224), a larger sample enables researchers to draw more representative and more accurate conclusions and to make more precise predictions than a smaller sample. A survey was employed as a preferred method and two sampling methods were used: simple random sampling and purposive sampling.

3.2 Study design

According to Bryman (2012:46), a research design provides a framework for data collection and expresses causal connection between variables, while a research method is a technique for collecting data through self-administered questionnaires or participant observation. De Vos et al. further explain that a research design involves decisions on which topic is to be studied, among what population, with what research methods and for what purpose. In summary, it is a process that looks into the steps to be followed to achieve the outcomes of the anticipated study (de Vos et al., 2011:143). Bless, Higson-Smith and Kagee support this view by stating that research design relates to the testing of a hypothesis and specifies adequate operations to be performed in order to test a specific hypothesis under given conditions (Bless et al., 2006:71). In this case, a hypothesis has been formulated that the service delivery challenge of basic municipal services is caused by poor public consultation.

Therefore, what steps should be followed to demonstrate that this particular hypothesis is true? There are several research designs highlighted by Bryman (2012:58-59), namely: experimental, cross-sectional, longitudinal, case study and comparative designs. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on the cross-sectional research design, which is often called a survey design. Bryman (2012:60) describes survey research as comprising a cross-sectional design in which data is collected using questionnaires or structured interviews (Bryman, 2012:60). A survey was employed as a preferred method for administering the structured interviews since a large sample was to be used.

3.3 Population and sampling

Bryman (2012:714) defines population as a universe of units from which a sample is to be selected, while a sample is defined as a sub-unit of the population that is selected for research purposes (Bryman, 2012:715).

The nature of this study requires that a broad range of participants be sampled to achieve accurate results and conclusions (de Vos et al., 2011:224). According to the Census 2011, Paradys has a population size of 416, with 217 women and 199 men respectively. The main participants (beneficiaries) would be as representative as possible of the population under study. The sample was drawn from the Population Register, a list compiled of every household and kept by the Headman in the village. Another option would have been to use the formal register available from the Independent Electoral Commission (IEC), of which – according to them – there were 240 people who were registered on the Voter Register for Paradys. However, the IEC list excludes certain adults and therefore does not give a true reflection of the adult population. Bryman's (2012:198) asserted that the bigger the sample the more representative it is.

Two sampling methods were employed: simple random sampling, whereby each unit of the population has a probability to be included in the sample (Bryman, 2012:190); and purposive sampling, which Bryman (2012:418) defines as a non-probability form of sampling whereby the participants sampled are relevant to the research questions that are being posed, as was the case with the questions that were designed for the officials of Mangaung Metro (MM) regarding provision of services to communities. A sample of 104 respondents (25%) was randomly selected as representative of the

total population; from the list of residents provided, every fourth person was selected as 04, 08, 12, 16 etc.

3.3.1 Target population

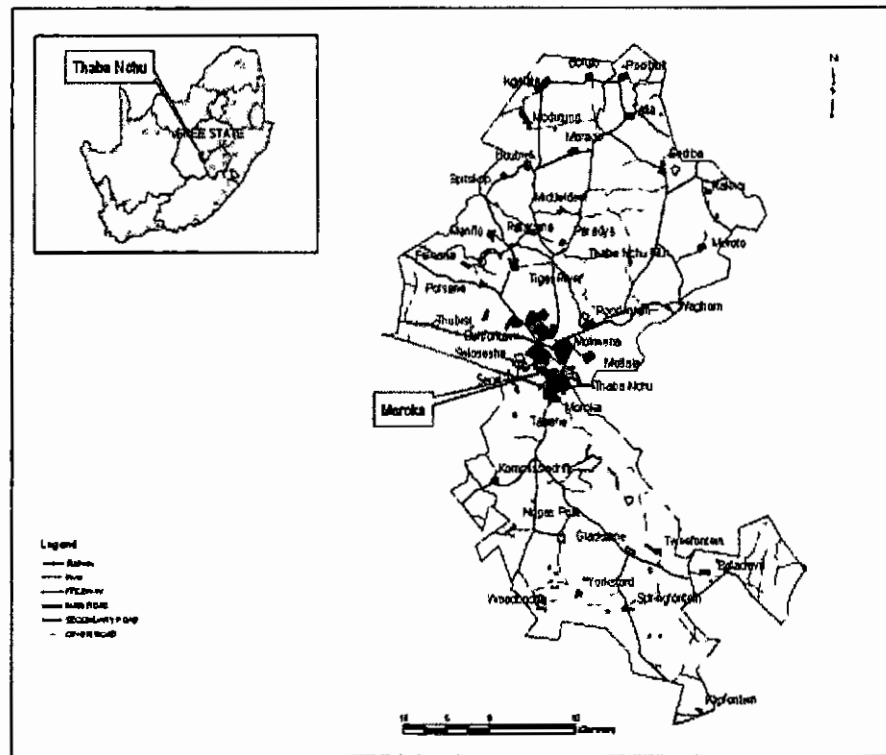
The population was comprised of community leaders, such as people who are accountable to the community (the ward councillor, school principal, lay priest, community representative and ward committee member), to determine how each perceive the provision of municipal services through their respective portfolios. In addition, from the general community, adults (men and women) and youth, both in and out of school, were assessed on how they perceive municipal service delivery and how the lack of or poor services affect their day-to-day life. Lastly, the officials of MM, comprising senior management and operational staff, were included to determine their role and involvement in service delivery to rural communities.

The sample population comprised the following:

- Beneficiaries and community members of Paradys (A sample of 104)
- Community leaders in Paradys (A sample of 5)
- Mangaung Metro officials (A sample of 4).

3.4 Study site

The study was carried out in Paradys Village situated about 18km north of Thaba Nchu. This is the closest village to Thaba Nchu out of the 42 that fall under the municipality. Paradys has a population of 416 (Census 2011). Currently there are no formal research studies conducted on Paradys. Below is a map of Thaba Nchu and surrounding villages including Paradys.



Thaba Nchu and surrounding villages

Thaba Nchu is a small town in the Free State, South Africa located 60km east of Bloemfontein; its population is largely made up of Tswana and Sotho people. The town was settled in 1830 and officially established in 1873. The town grew larger following the 1913 Natives Act that established Thaba Nchu as a homeland for the Tswana people. During the Apartheid era it fell into the area set aside for the Bantustan of Bophuthatswana, nominally ruled by the then President Lucas Mangope. It was a trading centre at the time and remained one of the biggest tourist attractions in the Free State (Barolong Boo Seleka, 2015).

It is clear through observation that most households practice subsistence farming, but because of drought and lack of resources there is no crop production happening in the area.

There is one primary school, Fenyang Primary School, that is utilised as a voting station during elections, otherwise there is only a shack on the outskirts of the village where the community members gather for their meetings. This shack is also used as a station for the Mobile Clinic, the South Africa Social Security Agency (SASSA), and a community-based organisation (CBO), The Heralds, which looks after orphans and vulnerable children (OVCs), providing aftercare, assisting the children with their homework and preparing meals and lunch boxes.

3.5 The research questions

The researcher read materials on community perceptions regarding municipal service delivery from a national, regional and international perspective, and how the lack of or poor service delivery affects individuals in terms of their day-to-day duties and ultimately their livelihoods. In addition, other material on development as a fundamental human right and how poor service delivery impacts on people's development was also researched. Some of the questions that were derived from this research sought information on whether MM involves rural communities in their planning.

3.6 The research instrument

The structured questionnaire (written in English) was designed for collecting data, with open and closed-ended questions for giving respondents sufficient latitude to express themselves.

The questionnaire had two sections. Section 1 analysed demographic information: gender, age, employment status, household income, literacy level and length of stay in the respective community. Section 2 investigated the community's expectations and perceptions on the municipal service delivery, including if the community was aware of any development activities taking place in their area. The questionnaire had a covering page that outlined the objectives of the research study, including general information which stated that participation is anonymous and voluntary and that their identity will not be disclosed.

3.7 Data collection process

In the first week, the researcher made some logistical arrangements, setting appointments for consultative meetings with the community leadership of Paradys Village and the MM Municipal Manager in Thaba Nchu. The purpose of the respective meetings was intended for seeking permission to conduct the study in Paradys as well as for interviewing the municipal officials. The permission was granted and on the third day the researcher had a briefing meeting with the community just to address and prepare them for the forthcoming research process. To facilitate the process of data collection and as a form of skills transfer and development, the researcher requested the assistance of two field workers who had passed Grade 12. They were then trained on the questionnaire itself in order for them to understand, interpret and translate the questions into Tswana so as to make sense of it and allow the anticipated response. The field workers were trained for two days on how to administer the questionnaires. On the third day they then conducted interviews under the researcher's supervision. Every morning they reconvened to meet with the researcher to check on progress and discuss any issues or challenges related to the execution of the task at hand. The two field workers were given a stipend of R500 each at the end of the research project as a token of appreciation and also in acknowledgement of the high unemployment rate in the province. The community buy-in into the study was greater because of the local young people recruited as field workers.

The researcher administered questionnaires to the community leaders and municipal officials, amongst others. The data collection was conducted between 05 and 13 October 2015.

3.8 Data analysis and presentation

Mouton (2001:108) indicates that data analysis involves "breaking up" the data into manageable themes, patterns, trends and relationships, and further states that the aim thereof is to understand the various data elements. De Vos et al, (2011:249), on the other hand, state that quantitative data analysis can be regarded as the technique by which researchers convert data to a numerical form to make it interpretable, in order that the relations of research problems can be studied and tested and thereby enable the drawing of conclusions. Interpretation of the data

provided answers to the research questions. The data analysis was done using figures and the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), a software package for statistical analysis. Data was analysed using cross-tabulations, frequencies and percentages, graphical presentations, chi-square tests, categorical data analysis and summary tables.

3.9 Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was pre-tested to ensure that the interpretation of questions would carry the intended message. A sample of respondents who were not going to participate in the study was chosen (two youth members and three adults). They responded well to the questions without difficulties, and this certified the validity and reliability of the tool to be used.

3.10 Ethical considerations

Mouton (2001) refers to the ethics of science as concerned with differentiating between what is right and what is wrong during the conduct of research. To regulate the behaviour of researchers, a set of ethical research principles has been developed to ensure that researchers conform to the acceptable norms and values and that the rights of participants are protected (Mouton, 2001:238-239). For the purpose of this study, the following ethical principles were considered:

Anonymity and Confidentiality: Every individual has a right to privacy, hence the researcher emphasised to the assistant researchers (field workers) the importance of handling all information with utmost care. The respondents were reassured that their information would be kept confidential and that what would be discussed during the interviews would remain between them to ensure their privacy and anonymity. All participants were assigned a number or code.

Informed consent: Bless et al. (2006:142) state that "Participants have a right to know what the research is about and how it will affect them", meaning individuals are given all the details about the study so that can decide whether they want to participate or not. All research participants were briefed about the study and their participation was informed.

Voluntary participation: de Vos et al. (2011:116) state that all subjects should participate voluntarily in any study. Participants cannot be coerced into taking part in research as this would infringe their rights and thus negatively affect the nature and outcome of the research. All individuals have rights that everyone has an obligation to respect, including researchers.

3.11 Limitations

The sample size was too big, with the result that the researcher had to seek the assistance of field workers to administer the questionnaires. These questionnaires were in English and the researcher took time to train the field workers to reach a certain level of understanding in order to interpret and translate the questions to effect the desired response, though this turned out to be time-consuming and cumbersome. For future studies the researcher might have to secure adequate funding well in advance in order to appoint the necessary skilled researchers.

The researcher did not obtain much cooperation from other government officials, who kept on postponing or not honouring the appointments, which was frustrating. At the end the researcher managed to interview only two officials. This is an attitude problem that is difficult to address, but, with time spent engaging officials such that they might understand that the study is not meant to penalise or judge them, and instead might help them to plan better and close any gaps, perhaps greater cooperation will be acquired.

The road to Paradys is a gravel road that is very uncomfortable and dangerous to drive on, especially on rainy days. This is a challenge that MM needs to include in their long-term planning.

The study only focused on water, sanitation, electricity and refuse removal, though during the interviews a number of additional issues surfaced such as housing, roads, recreational facilities and the fact that the school in Paradys (Fenyang Primary School) only goes up to Grade 6, which poses a challenge. After passing Grade 6 pupils have to travel to Sediti Senior Secondary School, which is in Morago Trust about 30km away. Again, the study was only limited to Paradys Village, one village out of 42 under the MM, which might affect the findings since these cannot be generalised as this is not representative of all the villages. Any future research needs

to widen the scope to look at other social determinants and include more villages to ensure better representation, though this will require additional funding.

3.12 Chapter summary

This chapter outlined the research design as well as the sampling methods used for the target populations that participated in the study, a briefing about the study site, the data collection methods and process, as well as explaining the qualitative and quantitative methods of data analysis. In addition, the limitations of the study were highlighted along with the ethical considerations that will be adhered to. The next chapter will outline the research findings.

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This purpose of this chapter is to report and interpret the study findings, which are based on the data collected from the interviews and questionnaires from the study participants. These involved community members and community leaders of Paradys Village as well as the officials from Mungaung Metro (MM). Aids such as graphs and tables were used to present the findings clearly and logically. The results of the study are divided into sections for in-depth discussions.

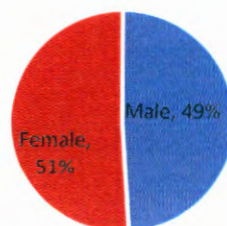
4.2 Discussion of results

The results will be discussed in three parts: Section 1 will analyse the demographic characteristics of the community members; Section 2(a) will analyse their expectations and perceptions; and Section 2(b) will analyse the responses of the MM officials.

4.2.1 Gender

Figure 1: Gender distribution of participants

Figure 1: Gender



The respondents were classified by gender and the results reflected an even spread, with only a small margin of difference between the male and female respondents (51% female and 49% male). The current unemployment situation implies that most males would be found at home.

4.2.2 Age breakdown

Figure 2: Age breakdown of participants in the study

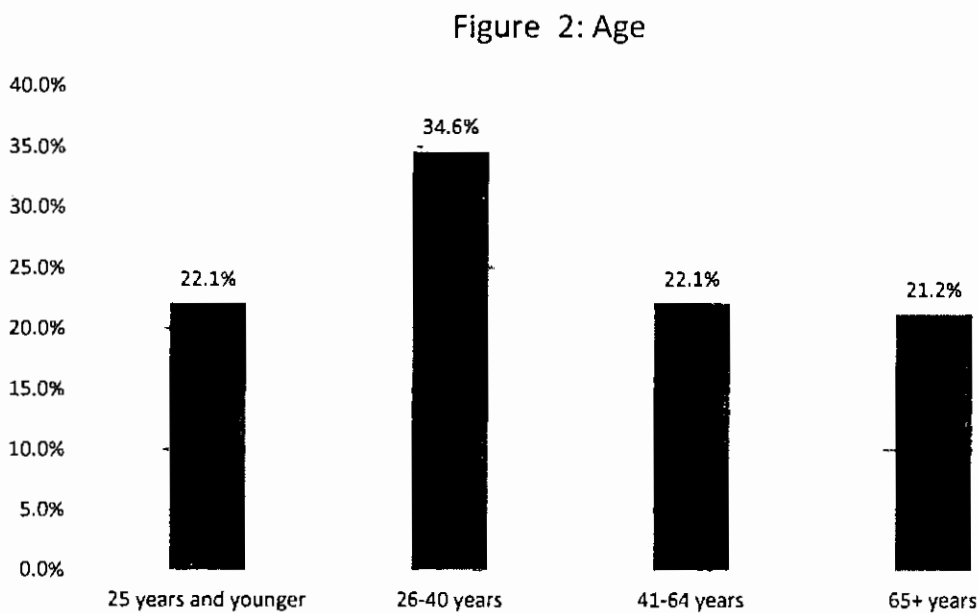


Figure 2 above indicates the age breakdown of the study participants. The participants were asked to indicate their ages, which ranged between 25 years and younger and 65+. The respondents aged 25 years and younger constituted 22.1%, those in the 26–40-year bracket 34.6%, those aged 41–64 years 22.1%, and those aged 65+ constituted 21.2%. The majority of respondents were between the ages 26–40 years. This is the reproductive and productive age and is reflective of a typical rural setting, whereby most people would be home due to the poor socio-economic state of our country, with no work opportunities available especially for rural communities and no agricultural activities due to lack of water.

4.2.3 Selected demographic variables

Table 1: Selected demographic variables

Variable	N	%
Length of stay in community		
1 year and less	1	1.0
2-3 years	5	4.8
4-5 years	6	5.8
6-9 years	11	10.6
10 years and above	81	77.9
Employment Status		
Employed	12	11.5
Unemployed	57	54.8
Self-employed	6	5.8
Scholar	13	12.5
Pensioner	16	15.4
Highest Educational level		
No formal education	1	1.0
Primary	26	25.0
Secondary	70	67.3
Diploma	2	1.9
Graduate	4	3.8
Total monthly household income		
<R500	28	26.9
R501-R1100	24	23.1
R1200-R2400	36	34.6
R2401-R4999	11	10.6
R5000-R9999	3	2.9
R10 000 and above	2	1.9

Table 1 presents data on the following selected demographic variables: the length of stay in Paradys Village, employment status, highest educational level and total monthly household income. The following sections below discuss these variables in-depth.

Duration living in the community (Paradys)

Participants were requested to indicate their length of stay in order to acquire more reliable and accurate information. The vast majority of the respondents (77.9%) indicated that they had stayed for more than ten years in Paradys and only 1% had stayed for a year or less.

Employment Status

Only 11.5% were employed, with 54.8% unemployed and 5.8% self-employed. This information was necessary to determine the level of employment in the community. The results revealed a high level of unemployment, which has led to an impoverished state and lack of development of the community. This is typical of a rural setting.

Level of education

About 1% of participants had no formal education, 25% had only primary education, two-thirds (67.3%) had obtained a secondary education, 1.9% had attained a diploma qualification at a college, and 3.8% had attained a Bachelor's degree. The results show that of the 67.3% of the youth who have passed Matric, the vast majority could not go to tertiary institutes to further their studies due to financial constraints and neither could they get employment due to the lack of job opportunities in the community.

Total monthly household income

The table further reveals that slightly more than a quarter (26.9%) of the respondents are from households with a cumulative monthly income of R500 or less, 34.6% have a cumulative monthly income not higher than R2 400 (amongst whom were pensioners who received social grants), and only 2.9% and 1.9% respectively had a cumulative income of R5 000 to R10 000 and above. This is typical of a rural community where many people are unemployed. Paradys village is a farming area and there is land available for farming and crop production. Yet no farming is practiced because of lack of resources and support such as implements such as tractor and assistance with fencing.

4.3 Expectations and perceptions of the quality of services provided by Mangaung Metro

This section of the report reflects the community's expectations and perceptions regarding the quality of services provided by the municipality, including the frequency and response time of MM to calls for urgent support. The study sought to understand the participants' expectations and perceptions based on their experience as beneficiaries of services rendered by MM, and how these affect their day-to-day life.

4.3.1 Awareness of developments in the community

Figure 3: Awareness of development in community

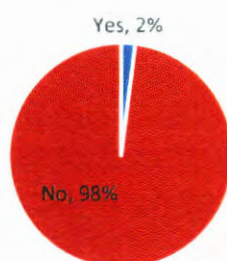


Figure 3: Awareness of developments in the community

Figure 3 above represents the answers of the respondents when asked if they were aware of any developmental activities taking place in their community. The results indicate that only 2% of the participants were aware of developments in Paradys, with the majority of participants (98%) being unaware of any developments in their village as there were none that were taking place at the time. The 2% referred to a bridge construction that started few months ago and had stopped and basically they were not even informed about it. During the time of the study there were no activities taking place.

4.3.2 Basic municipal services available

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate which of the basic municipal services were available to them in the table below:

Table 2: Basic municipal services available in Paradys

	Yes N (%)	No N (%)	Don't know N (%)
1. Water	28 (26.9)	73 (70.2)	3 (2.9)
2. Sanitation	52 (50.0)	52 (50.0)	
3. Electricity	75 (72.1)	29 (27.9)	
4. Refuse removal	2 (1.9)	101 (97.1)	1 (1.0)

Table 2 above reveals the following findings: 26.9% of respondents indicated that they have access to water, whilst 70.2% indicated they do not have access to water and 2.9% said they do not know. Half of the respondents indicated that they have access to sanitation, whereas the other half said they do not have access to sanitation services. About two-thirds (72.1%) of respondents reported that they have access to electricity, while 27.9% don't have access. With regard to refuse removal, only 1.9% indicated they have access to refuse removal, with 97.1% not having access to refuse removal and 1.0% saying they do not know. In general, it is clear that there is very poor service delivery in Paradys village.

4.3.2.1 Access to safe drinking water

The questionnaire requested participants to indicate whether every household in Paradys has tap water, the walking distance to a water source from their place of residence, whether water is available at all times, if the municipality informs the community when there are water interruptions, and if the municipality provides alternative water sources during these interruptions. Of the 104 responses, n=1 (1.0%) strongly agreed that every household has tap water, n=12 (11.5%) disagreed

and n=91 (78.5%) strongly disagreed. With regard to the walking distance, n=65 (62.5%) strongly agreed that they access water within a distance of 200m, n=26 (25.0%) agreed and n=13 (12.5%) strongly disagreed, indicating a walking distance ranging between 500m and 1km. Regarding availability of water at all times, n=26 (25.0%) strongly agreed, n=1 (1.0%) agreed, n=1 (1.0%) disagreed and n=76 (73.1%) strongly disagreed.

With regard to the municipality informing the community when there are anticipated water interruptions, n=2 (1.9%) strongly agreed that the municipality informs the community, n=14 (13.5%) agreed and n=88 (84.6%) strongly disagreed. Regarding provision of alternative water sources during interruptions, n=4 (3.8%) strongly agreed, n=52 (50.0%) agreed, n=10 (9.6%) said they do not know and n=38 (36.5%) strongly disagreed that alternative water sources were provided.

From the results, it is evident that the community in Paradys, as in other parts of South Africa, have serious challenges in accessing water for consumption as well as for their livestock, and that the municipality is not doing much about the situation, hence the community reported that they had taken the matter to the media at some point. There is definitely unequal service delivery, some community members indicated that the alternative water supply never reaches their households.

4.3.2.2 Access to sanitation

The questionnaire sought to understand if participants had access to sanitation and, further, to investigate the type of toilet facilities available and whether households share toilets. Out of 104 respondents, the results reveal that only n=1 (1.0%) indicated they have a flush toilet with a sewerage system, n=102 (98.1%) indicated they do not have flushing toilets, n=60 (57.7%) indicated they use a pit toilet with ventilation, and n=44 (42.3%) use pit toilets without ventilation.

The results show a serious backlog of basic services by the municipality that requires a radical approach in correcting the situation and bringing change to the lives of the people of Paradys.

4.3.2.3 Refuse removal

The questionnaire required respondents to indicate whether the municipality removes garbage on a weekly basis. Of the 104 respondents, the results reveal that n=2 (2.0%) agreed that the municipality removes garbage, while n=102 (98%) disagreed. With regard to whether community members receive training on waste management, n=51 (49%) indicated that they receive training and n=53 (51.0%) disagreed.

4.3.2.4 Source of energy

The questionnaire asked respondents to indicate the sources of energy available to them. The study findings reveal that 38% of the respondents have access to electricity, while 66% of respondents were using either paraffin, wood or animal dung. This highlights the dire situation in rural communities with regard to energy requirements.

4.3.3 Perceptions on the provision of services by Mangaung Metro

Question 13 of the questionnaire asked the survey participants to indicate, on a Likert scale, the most appropriate response on a scale of 1 to 5 to the following questions, with 1 representing strongly agree and 5 strongly disagree. The respondents were asked about their perceptions regarding the provision of services by MM: if MM informs them of service interruptions, if members are informed of services available to them, if community members are involved during planning (as in when municipalities are compiling their Integrated Development Plans (IDPs), and if they are given the opportunity to make decisions on issues affecting them. The table below outlines their responses.

Table 3: Does Mangaung Metro inform the community timeously of service interruptions?

	Number of people	Percent
Strongly agree	1	1.0
Agree	1	1.0
Don't know	11	10.6
Strongly disagree	90	86.5
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

The questionnaire sought to investigate if MM informs the community timeously of service interruptions such as water and electricity. The results indicated that only 1% strongly agreed, 1% somewhat agreed, 10.6% gave a neutral response and 86.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. These findings imply minimal engagement between MM and the community.

Table 4: Creation of access to information through various media

	Number of people	Percent
Agree	2	1.9
Don't know	11	10.6
Strongly disagree	90	86.5
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

In order to determine their knowledge and exposure to information about new developments and trends, respondents were asked if they had access to pamphlets and brochures. The response in Table 4 revealed that only 1.9% agreed that they did, 10.6% indicated they do not know and 86.5% disagreed. The responses further qualify that provision of services to rural communities is compromised.

Table 5: Prompt provision of services as promised

	Number of people	Percent
Strongly agree	13	12.5
Agree	31	29.8
Strongly disagree	54	51.9
Total	98	94.2
Missing System	6	5.8
Total	104	100.0

It is critical to gauge the response time to calls of urgent need of services provision by respective communities. The results in Table 5 indicated that 12.5% of respondents agreed that MM provides services timeously, 29.8% somewhat agreed and 51.9% strongly disagreed. However, the responses give an impression that somehow the municipality does respond, irrespective of the time it takes to do so.

Table 6: Awareness creation about services available to the community

	Number of people	Percent
Strongly agree	1	1.0
Agree	17	16.3
Don't know	11	10.6
Strongly disagree	74	71.2
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

It is important that communities are given information about services they are entitled to receive and which are available to them. Respondents were asked if MM informs them about such services. The results revealed that only 1% strongly agree, 16.3% somewhat agree, 10.6% indicated they do not know and 71.2% strongly disagreed that the municipality informs them of any available services. The observation is again that MM is not doing well in this regard, hence the disagreement by the majority.

Table 7: Do Mangaung Metro personnel understand the needs of the community?

	Number of people	Percent
Strongly agree	39	37.5
Agree	14	13.5
Disagree	1	1.0
Strongly disagree	49	47.1
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

Respondents were asked to indicate if, in their opinion, MM understands the needs of their community. The responses varied, with 37.5% strongly agreeing that MM understands their needs, 13.5% somewhat agreeing, only 1% disagreeing and 47.1% strongly disagreeing. There is a margin of +/- 10% between those who strongly disagree and those who strongly agree; it can therefore be deduced that somehow MM does engage with the community to listen to their needs.

Table 8: Does Mangaung Metro hold social events that bring the community together?

	Number of people	Percent
Disagree	11	10.6
Strongly disagree	92	88.5
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

Table 8 above sought to determine whether MM facilitated events that bring the community together, such as sports events and celebration of special days (Human Rights, Youth Day, Women's Day etc.). The responses revealed that 10.6% disagreed and 88.5% strongly disagreed with the statement. It is interesting to note that there is absolutely no effort to promote social cohesion, which is an important element of community development.

Table 9: Does Mangaung Metro hold regular community meetings?

	Number of people	Percent
Agree	4	3.8
Don't know	11	10.6
Disagree	25	24.0
Strongly disagree	63	60.6
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

In order to assess the level of engagement of MM with the community, participants were asked if MM holds regular community meetings. The results indicated that only 3.8% agreed with the statement, 10.6% indicated they do not know, 24% disagreed and 60.6% strongly disagreed. This is in line with the previous responses which implied that MM hardly engage with communities.

Table 10: Does Mangaung Metro involve the community during planning of community projects?

	Number of people	Percent
Strongly agree	2	1.9
Don't know	26	25.0
Disagree	13	12.5
Strongly disagree	62	59.6
Total	103	99.0
Missing System	1	1.0
Total	104	100.0

In an effort to evaluate the level of involvement of community members during planning of community projects, the respondents were asked if MM involves them in the planning of initiatives affecting their development and wellbeing. The results indicated that only 1.9% agreed that they are involved. Looking at the number of respondents, this figure could be due to some of the community leaders who occasionally attend council meetings and who account for 0.9% of the total

population. A total of 25% indicated that they do not know, 12.5% disagreed and 59.6% strongly disagreed, indicating that the municipality never involves them; they normally see projects being implemented without their knowledge and involvement.

Table 11: Does MM create an opportunity for communities to make decisions on issues affecting them?

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly agree	14	13.5
Agree	13	12.5
Don't know	11	10.6
Disagree	15	14.4
Strongly disagree	49	47.1
Total	102	98.1
Missing System	2	1.9
Total	104	100.0

Table 3.9 sought to determine the level of affording communities an opportunity to make decisions on matters affecting them. The respondents gave their opinion as follows: 13.5% strongly agreed that they are involved, 12.5% somewhat agreed, 10.6% did not know, 14.4% disagreed and 47.1% strongly disagreed. The majority therefore felt that decisions were made on their behalf by MM. The response is similar to that of Table 3.8, which highlighted that MM does not involve them in the planning of community projects.

The study findings indicate varying opinions from the respondents, but it is evident that the majority of community members are not content with the service provision and it seems as if people have lost confidence in the municipality and government. The average response of respondents who showed dissatisfaction by strongly disagreeing with most questions was about 65%, which is a cause for concern. The following questions sought the respondents' opinions and how poor services affects them.

Question 14 of the questionnaire asked respondents to indicate aspects of basic service delivery that they are satisfied with. The results gave a range of responses; some were not happy with any of the services as even those services available to them are of poor quality, while some were happy they had access to electricity.

Question 15 asked respondents to indicate those services they are not satisfied with. The findings reveal the following range of services that community members are not happy with: availability of safe drinking water – respondents highlighted the fact that there are six tanks in the village but only one is filled with water; lack of proper sanitation; some still do not have electricity; poor access to roads as during the rainy season no in-coming or out-going transport is possible due to the terrible condition of the roads; lack of proper housing; lack of a high school; no proper transport for pupils, who end up using transport that is not road worthy; lack of recreational facilities; and lack of community projects. The study revealed that their dissatisfaction goes beyond mere basic services. Nyalunga (2006:15) refers to the situation as inherited from the Apartheid regime, wherein those areas reserved for black people (including rural areas) were underdeveloped and characterised by poor service conditions. It is devastating to realize that this situation still persists even after two decades of South Africa being a democratic country.

Building on the above-mentioned responses:

Question 16 asked respondents how poor service delivery affects them as individuals to carry on with their daily activities, taking into perspective all the issues that were raised. The study findings highlighted various effects in this regard, some of which were common for both youths and adults. The great concern was lack of safe drinking water for most respondents and the impacts this has on everything (drinking, cooking, bathing, cleaning and for crop and animal consumption). Some respondents were quoted as saying, "Water is life". The lack of proper sanitation is another critical aspect; the ventilated improved pit (VIP) latrines were not emptied regularly, some of which for a very long time. This is an uncomfortable situation, being a breeding ground for diseases, and it is also risky going out at night if one suffers from a runny tummy. For those households that do not have access to electricity, they have to collect wood or animal dung to make fire for cooking. This

also affects students, who find it difficult to study using a candle at night. The area is largely inaccessible due to poor roads, so even business people who would like to start a business in the area find it difficult to drive to the village. When it is raining there is no transport to town because the bridge becomes flooded. There are no government services provided to the community, no proper shops except for Spaza shops, there is no library, no recreational facilities (so people have to go to Thaba Nchu for everything), and this is expensive as they have to spend more money on transport, which is money they do not have.

Question 17 asked the respondents to indicate what they would do to contribute towards service improvement. The responses varied, with some participants being despondent as they felt they could not do anything or did not know what to do (27.9%). A total of 25% of responses indicated that they would like to start a community project that would benefit the villagers: 12.5% of the youth indicated they would establish a vegetable garden as their project, while 10.6% of respondents indicated that they would ensure they have better local representation as they were concerned that the current representative does not represent them well, hence no developments in the village. A total of 18.3% of respondents highlighted that given an opportunity and the necessary support by government, they would share their farming experience with others because they already have implements, while 2.9% indicated that if the municipality could support them with water, they would be willing to work on the land. In general, respondents indicated their willingness to work but needed support, especially with water. In fact, this has been such a thorn in the side of the Paradys community that they even went to the media in 2015 to complain in this regard (SABC News, 13 Jan 2015).

Question 18 asked respondents to indicate in their opinion what MM should do differently. The responses showed that the majority of respondents (58.7%) would like MM to listen and act promptly to the needs of the community. 12.5% of respondents indicated that MM should involve the community in decision-making on issues affecting them, another 12.5% wanted MM to establish community job creation projects to relieve poverty and unemployment. Lastly, 13.5% of respondents indicated that MM should refrain from making unrealistic promises. It is worth noting that Paradys community do not know exactly where they belong to; whether it is MM or the Traditional House of Barolong Boo Seleka? the house numbers have two or

even three kinds of numbers, for the Traditional House of Barolong Boo Seleka, MM, and Eskom. What frustrates them most is when they need assistance and there is no one who wants to take responsibility.

4.4 Mangaung Metro officials

The study intended to conduct interviews with MM officials from different directorates or sub-directorates (Electricity, Water, Environment and Housing), including management and operational staff. However, the researcher ended up interviewing only two officials: The Acting Regional Manager for MM and an official from Eskom. The reason for this was because the Acting Regional Manager indicated that in Thaba Nchu the issues pertaining to infrastructure (Housing and Roads) are handled by the Department of Housing. The researcher tried to secure an appointment with the Department of Housing but was unsuccessful, as the lady in question did not honour the appointment. With regard to issues pertaining to water, MM indicated that they work in partnership with Bloemwater and the appointment with Bloemwater did not materialise either. Regarding electricity, MM works in partnership with Eskom and CENTLEC, and the researcher managed to secure a successful appointment with Eskom.

Question 1 of the MM officials' questionnaire sought to determine how long the officials have been serving in the municipality, since this would have an effect on the quality of the results. The response revealed that both officials had been with their respective departments/institutions for more than five years, namely MM and Eskom respectively.

Question 2 asked officials their opinion on the provision of basic services to residents of MM. The official from MM indicated that the municipality provides water, sanitation, refuse removal services and roads in the villages; however, access roads are the responsibility of the Department of Police, Roads and Transport. They also said that if roads are in poor condition then the municipality cannot reach the villages. The municipality works in partnership with Eskom and CENTLEC with regard to electricity, and the official from Eskom indicated that they do indeed provide electricity to the village households.

Question 3 sought to determine challenges encountered by the municipality and Eskom, in this case the delivery of basic services (water, sanitation, electricity and waste management) to rural areas. The MM participant's response was that they provide services to rural communities with support from other departments. The Department of Housing, for example, is responsible for housing, sanitation services and roads, while Bloemwater and Eskom fulfil their specific mandates. The other challenge is that the MM does not have a large-enough budget; as a consequence, they have to prioritise services, with the result that other areas are unattended to. The MM participant also mentioned that they do not receive cooperation from other departments, but in essence MM does not take part in stakeholder forums around Thaba Nchu, which could be the reason why they couldn't get cooperation from other departments and related stakeholders. It seems MM does not fulfil their role of promoting social cohesion.

The Eskom representative indicated that their primary challenge is inadequate funding to enable them to install electricity in all the rural areas, with another challenge being the state of the roads, in that they sometimes cannot reach the more outlying areas. Some villages are far from the networks (electricity), making them difficult to connect. Eskom is also unable to provide enough energy due to lack of adequate transformers, which results in electricity outages. They are awaiting funds from the Provincial Government to build more stations (transformers).

Question 4 sought to understand if MM involved communities in their planning of services geared towards community improvement. The MM representative indicated that they involve communities (meaning; municipality conduct needs assessment) through the Ward Committees and Ward Councillors respectively during the process of developing Integrated Development Plans (IDPs).

Eskom indicated that they involve communities by conducting community-training workshops on electricity related matters (how electricity works and what precautionary measures one should take, for example).

Question 5 of the questionnaire sought to determine what MM would do differently to bring about change in the lives of rural communities. The responses from both parties were similar: MM indicated the need for extra funding in order to plan better and provide quality services for the Mangaung communities.

Eskom also reiterated the need for extra funding for improved provision of services and, in addition, that they would like to have a close working relationship with MM that starts with planning together, because as matters stand they both communicate on an ad hoc basis when there are challenges that need to be addressed. For example, during electricity outages and when Eskom cannot reach certain areas because of road conditions.

4.5 Chapter Summary

This chapter analysed the data collected from the two types of questionnaires distributed among community members of Paradys Village and officials of MM and Eskom respectively. The preliminary findings indicate the significance of municipalities in involving communities in the planning of activities affecting their development by taking the principles of community participation into account. There were huge gaps identified in the provision of services to rural communities. The findings will be analysed and synthesised in the next chapter in order to draw conclusions and make recommendations.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents and discusses the findings of the study on community perceptions of municipal service delivery in Paradys Village in Thaba Nchu, as well as the role that municipalities play in improving the conditions of rural communities in South Africa. This takes us back to the primary role of municipalities or local government: municipalities were established and exist today to ensure the provision of sustainable services to the communities they serve, including the promotion of social and economic development and a safe and healthy community environment. This is in accordance with Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Section (1); (b, c and d). In view of this, municipalities are significant role players in bringing change to the lives of citizens of this country and rebuilding their lost dignity due to the effects of Apartheid. Provision of quality services is essential for the growth and sustainability of our communities.

Chapter 2 highlighted several issues of poor service delivery and their effects, such as the constant poverty preying on communities and the regular service delivery protests happening throughout South Africa. This chapter (Chapter 5) includes a discussion on the research study findings and the dynamics of service delivery, as well as recommendations in this regard. The next section entails an overview of the study.

5.2 Overview of the study

The purpose of this study was to determine the perceptions on municipal service delivery of the Paradys Village community in an attempt to identify potential gaps that may exist in this regard. The study sought to ascertain discrepancies between the community perceptions of service delivery and what the municipality actually delivers. In order to accomplish the purpose of the study and to frame the conclusion it is imperative to focus on the objectives of the study, namely to assess the community perceptions on the provision of basic municipal service delivery (sanitation, water, electricity and refuse removal). This was in order to determine how communities are affected by poor service delivery, how they think service

provision could be improved, and also to determine community involvement by Mangaung Metro (MM) in their planning.

The last objective was mainly to assess if municipalities align themselves with their obligations as enshrined in Chapter 7 of the constitution, Section 152 (e), which encourages municipalities to involve communities and community organisations in matters of local government, especially the planning of issues affecting them. The results of the study revealed a statistical and practical significant difference between community perceptions of service delivery and the actual nature of services delivered by MM.

5.3 Contribution of the study

In South Africa and also globally, local government is required by law to develop communities. Development is a human right and, as such, this makes it a legislative requirement for local governments to develop communities into socially and economically viable institutions in order to enable and empower them. The United Nations (UN) declared the Right to Development as a human right on 4 December 1986 during the UN General Assembly. Chapter 2 of the study (Section 2.8) outlines the responsibilities of local municipalities, specifically the provision of quality services for communities that are community-driven to enhance satisfaction and trust. Municipalities are faced with a series of challenges besides resources, as in how to service their communities better, hence the Batho Pele Principles were developed to improve upon and realise the slogan "A better life for all". However, there is seemingly a disconnection in this regard, as many municipalities, particularly those serving rural areas, have clearly failed in their mandate to deliver according to the above ideal.

Municipalities should listen to the needs of the communities they serve, engage with them regularly to update them on available services to them, including new developments. Furthermore, where they are unable to deliver on time, this must be communicated because failure to do so reflects negatively on municipal officials, portraying them as people who are not concerned and who do not take their work seriously. The current economic state of our country puts tremendous pressure on already depleted resources, while on the other hand there are new policy directions that need to be implemented by municipalities.

A significant number of community members who participated in the study indicated that the municipality denied them the opportunity to participate in decision-making on issues affecting them and that this has had a bearing on the development of their community. For instance, they see projects being implemented without their input or knowledge, and sometime even the people (labourers) who work on these projects are not even from the local community. This study provides a clear understanding on how the Paradys community perceives service delivery by MM. This knowledge will facilitate informed planning in terms of prioritisation, resource allocation and value for money. Most importantly, it will serve as a platform for the provision of quality services for communities because these services will be needs-based.

This study seeks to make a significant contribution to influence municipalities to render more effective and efficient services to beneficiaries, thereby improving service delivery by designing their programmes to best suit the needs of the communities they serve. It is important to note that the majority of responses were negative in terms of their perceptions with regard to provision of basic municipal services. These responses reflect participants' lack of faith and disappointment in the local municipality and government. In highlighting the gaps, the study contributes to assisting MM to bridge the service delivery gaps through better understanding the expectations and perceptions of the communities it serves, thereby ultimately leading to provision of quality services.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are based on the study findings and the statistical analysis of the feedback received from the community of Paradys Village in MM. The recommendations are reflective of the community perceptions regarding the quality of services delivered. The study indicates that the community of Paradys Village has negative perceptions of the basic services delivered by MM. In general, community members were dissatisfied with the quality of services delivered, including the following examples: they were dissatisfied with sanitation (no water-flushing toilets) and the poor access to safe drinking water, with some community members indicating that they occasionally find dirty objects in the water.

The other worrisome aspect is that community members claim that municipal officials hardly ever hold meetings with them or discuss any projects with the community.

They made mention, for instance, of a road construction project that they saw being implemented without any discussions with them and which suddenly stopped before completion. This is of concern to them because, much as they need roads, their primary priority is water and sanitation.

5.4.1 Recommendations for Mangaung Metro

Based on the above, the following recommendations are suggested for MM in order to improve upon their mandate and the quality of services they deliver to their communities:

- To develop strategies to improve on collaboration, coordination and cooperation with other stakeholders (establish a municipal forum)
- To adopt integrated planning processes between stakeholders, including community members
- To strengthen its communication programmes (adequate promotional material, partner with local radio stations etc)
- To recruit personnel with relevant skills and knowledge to ensure provision of quality services (appointing the right people in the right positions)
- To educate officials on the role of municipalities and legislation governing the functioning thereof
- To educate officials on the importance of community involvement and promote active participation to enhance trust
- Municipal personnel should understand the specific needs of their communities and provide individual care aligned with the relevant legislation
- MM must clarify the issue of division of powers between itself and Barolong Boo Seleka so that they put the community of Paradys at ease; people should know exactly where to take their concerns, in other words
- It is also highly recommended that the MM management team is trained in management and leadership, including financial management

5.4.2 Recommendations for Policy Makers

- Allocate adequate funding for local municipalities, so that resources can be allocated equitably and where necessary
- Develop a service delivery model that will be used as a guide for municipalities
- Review the policy on Affirmative Action and Cadre deployment
- Address service delivery backlogs (sanitation, water issues and installation of electricity in some parts of Paradys) by speeding up the process, thereby helping to restore faith and trust in the government by enabling communities to exercise their right to development.

5.5 Future research opportunities

The study has evaluated community perceptions and, to a lesser extent, community expectations and service quality of basic municipal services delivery. Future studies may be undertaken to include other services such as housing, roads and recreational facilities, which kept coming up as some of the service aspects that community members were dissatisfied with. (Some community members stay in shacks and some in mud houses, for example) As mentioned earlier under limitations (Section 3.11), the study was confined to Paradys Village; future research could therefore be expanded to include the other villages in Thaba Nchu.

5.6 Concluding remarks

The failure of municipalities to deliver on their mandate (provision of quality services) is a worldwide challenge. Most municipalities focus on projects and administration (typical of what is happening in Paradys) rather than on the communities they serve. Instead, municipalities should focus their attention on the needs and priorities of communities, which would then go a long way in keeping community members satisfied and boosting their morale and dignity. Given the current status of financial and resource constraints that municipalities are operating under, it is imperative to

prioritise the needs of communities and bridge any service delivery gaps in this regard.

5.7 Chapter summary

This chapter analysed the study findings, gave an overview of the study, made suggestions that would assist municipalities to plan better in the future, highlighted service delivery gaps and made recommendations for MM as well as for policy makers in order to enhance the provision of quality services. It also highlighted future research opportunities, including increasing the scope in terms of adding additional elements and expanding the research to cover all the villages in Thaba Nchu.

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APPENDICES

Appendix1



UNIVERSITY OF THE FREE STATE

Structured questionnaire

COMMUNITY PERCEPTIONS OF MUNICIPAL SERVICE DELIVERY: A CASE STUDY OF PARADYS VILLAGE IN THABA NCHU

Prepared by:

Felicitous Elizabeth Seate, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, UFS

The objectives of the study are to assess the perceptions of community on the provision of basic municipal service delivery namely; water, sanitation, refuse removal, electricity and housing in Paradys Village in Thaba Nchu.

General Instructions:

Please attempt to answer all questions as honestly and consistently as possible

Participation is anonymous and voluntary

Your personal identity will not be disclosed in this questionnaire

It should take about 15 to 20 minutes of your time to complete

The questionnaire has 4 sections

Write clearly or indicate with an 'X' against appropriate response as applicable

This information will remain confidential

SECTION 1: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

Please indicate your response by making an (X) in the appropriate box

1. Gender

Male	1	Female	2
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2. Age

Below 18	19-25	26-30	31-40	41-55	56-60	65+
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

3. Employment status

Employed	Unemployed	Self-employed	Student	Retired
1	2	3	4	5

4. Household monthly income

≤ R500	R500 –R1100	R1200-R2400	R2500 –R4999	R5 000-R9 999	R10 000 or more
1	2	3	4	5	6

5. Level of formal education

Primary	Secondary	Diploma	Graduate
1	2	3	4

6. How long have you been staying in this community?

0 - 1 year	2 – 3 years	3 – 5 years	6 – 9 years	10 years or more
1	2	3	4	5

**SECTION 7 (a) EXPECTATIONS AND PERCEPTIONS OF THE QUALITY OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY
MANGAUNG METRO**

Please mark your answer with a cross (X)

7. Are you aware of the development activities taking place in your community?	
Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

8. What basic municipal services are available in your community?			
	Yes	No	Don't know
1. Water	1	2	3
2. Sanitation	1	2	3
3. Electricity	1	2	3
4. Refuse removal	1	2	3

9. Based on your experience as a beneficiary of services rendered by Mangaung Metro, please indicate your perceptions on service provision by indicating whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Access to safe drinking water						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
9.1	Every household has piped (tap) water in the yard	1	2	3	4	5
9.2	Water source is within 200m walking distance	1	2	3	4	5
9.3	Water source is between 200m – 500 m walking distance	1	2	3	4	5
9.4	Water source is between 501m – 1km walking distance	1	2	3	4	5
9.5	Water is available at all times	1	2	3	4	5
9.6	When there are anticipated water interruptions the municipality informs the community promptly	1	2	3	4	5
9.7	The municipality always provide alternative water sources during interruptions	1	2	3	4	5

10. What type of sanitation facility do you have?

Access to sanitation		
Type of toilet facility available for household use	Yes	No
10.1 A flush toilet connected to a sewerage system	1	2
10.2. A flush toilet with septic tank	1	2
10.3 A pit toilet with ventilation (VIP)	1	2
10.4 A pit toilet without ventilation	1	2
10.5. A Bucket system	1	2
10.6 Do you share the toilet facility with other households	1	2
10.7 If so, how many households use the toilet facility?		

11. Refuse removal:

Refuse removal						
		Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
11.1	The garbage is removed by municipality at least once a week	1	2	3	4	5
11.2	Every household is provided with a garbage bin	1	2	3	4	5
11.2	The community members are trained on waste management	1	2	3	4	5

Source of energy		
12. Indicate the source of energy available for household use	Yes	No
12.1. Electricity	1	2
12.2 Gas	1	2
12.3 Solar	1	2
12.4 Paraffin	1	2
12.5 Wood	1	2
12.6 Animal dung	1	2

Perceptions on provision of services by Mangaung Metro						
	13. What is your perception regarding service provision in your community?	Strongly agree	Agree	Don't know	Disagree	Strongly disagree
13.1	Mangaung Metro informs the community timeously of interruptions (water, electricity)	1	2	3	4	5
13.2	Access to information (pamphlets, brochures, community radio stations)	1	2	3	4	5
13.3	The Mangaung Metro provides services timeously as promised	1	2	3	4	5
13.4	Personnel at the Mangaung Metro inform community members about services available to them	1	2	3	4	5
13.5	The Mangaung Metro personnel understand the specific needs of their community	1	2	3	4	5
13.6	The Mangaung Metro holds social events/activities that bring communities together	1	2	3	4	5
13.7	The Mangaung Metro holds community meetings regularly	1	2	3	4	5
13.8	The Mangaung Metro involves the community in the planning of community projects	1	2	3	4	5
13.9	The community is given the opportunity to make decisions on issues that affect them	1	2	3	4	5

Kindly provide your opinion on the following:

14. Mention any three aspects of basic municipal service delivery that you are SATISFIED with.

14.1.....

14.2.....

14.3.....

15. Mention any three aspects of basic municipal service delivery that you are DISSATISFIED with.

15.1.....

15.2.....

15.3.....

16. How does poor service delivery affect you as an individual to carry on with your daily activities?

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17. What would you do to contribute towards service improvement in your community?

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18. In your opinion, what should the municipality do differently to improve service delivery?

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SECTION 2 (b) QUESTIONNAIRES FOR MANGAUNG METRO OFFICIALS

1. How long have you been working for Mangaung Metro?

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2. What is your opinion about the provision of basic services to residents of Mangaung Metro?

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3. What are the major challenges encountered by the municipality in delivering basic services to rural areas such as ?

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4. Does the Mangaung Metro usually involve the community in their planning of services geared towards communities, if so how?

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5. What would Mangaung Metro do differently to bring about change in the lives of the rural communities?

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