The Factors That Impact Negatively on Municipal Service Delivery and the Mechanisms That Must Be Adopted to Enhance the Provision of Services in South Africa

M.M. Selepe

Department of Public Administration, University of Limpopo, South Africa

E-mail: martinus.selepe@ul.ac.za

Abstract

The study examines the factors that negatively impact the provision of municipal services and possible mechanisms that will address the current situation. The study's main objective is to identify mechanisms that will bring transformation in terms of inadequate provision of municipal services. Secondly, the objective of the study is to determine the strategies that can be adopted to improve service delivery. The study adopted qualitative research methodology with specific reference to a conceptual approach relying heavily on secondary data. Municipalities in their capacity as the third and lowest sphere of government and the one that functions closest to local communities who are the primary stakeholders of the municipalities, have often been described as comprising the sphere of government that is tasked mainly with the development and provision of services to communities. In terms of the South African local government legislative framework, it is mandatory for municipalities to provide services to communities. It is evident that the local municipalities play a pivotal role in community development and ensuring that basic services are rendered to the communities. However, in recent years, municipalities, particularly in South Africa have been heavily criticised for poor service delivery and in some instances non provision of services. The study explores the decentralised service delivery model and its challenges. The study concludes by exposing the factors that affect service delivery and the mechanisms to address the current service delivery crisis.

Keywords: *Service Delivery; Municipalities; Community; Local government; Strategy; Mechanisms*

1.Introduction

Municipalities are expected to be built on the strong foundation of invigorating local development through the rendering of quality services to its local citizenry. They play a notable role in being an effective and responsive driver of the local demands and should work towards enhancing the well-being and the living conditions of the residents. The level of poor service delivery is created by poor leadership, dysfunctional governance systems, embezzlement of the councils' funds, corruption, and poor implementation of recruitment policies, which have singularly or cumulatively contributed to poor local governance. The poor service delivery has frustrated communities, resulting in regular protests, the

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standard, and quality of the service delivery, leadership, and inadequate good governance (Kalonda & Govender,2021).

Municipalities in South Africa are mandated to deliver services that meet basic communal needs such as housing, water, sanitation, land, electricity, and infrastructure. The municipality as an institution is regarded as an engine for local development and is central to service delivery. South Africa has also adopted the concept of 'developmental local government' and, in conversing this developmental role on municipalities, the government has implemented an elaborate statutory framework and obligations to operationalise it. Developmental local government means that a local government should be committed to working with citizens and groups within the community to find sustainable ways to meet their social, economic, and material needs and refine the quality of their lives. First, South Africa constitutionalised local government. Section 152 of the 1996 Constitution mandates municipalities to render local communities' sustainable services. In fostering a developmental approach, Section 153 (1) requires municipalities to structure and manage their respective administrations, budgets, and plans, to prioritise the provision of basic services to communities. Furthermore, municipalities must also stimulate the social and economic development of the communities they serve. The Bill of Rights gives those communities the fundamental right to access social services (Masiya, Davids & Mangai,2021).

Ndevu & Muller (2018) asserts that it is evident that local government is the sphere of government closest to the people, it has a significant social function in rendering basic services to the community. Local government is at the coalface of public service delivery. Local government is often the first point of contact between an individual and a government institution. The local tier is often referred to as grass-roots government because of its direct interaction with communities at a local level. The White Paper on Local Government elaborates on the characteristics of developmental local government, identifies a series of development outcomes, and put forward several instruments to assist municipalities to become developmental.

Performance management is one of the instrumental management features required by local government legislation and forms an integral part of a new public management system, adopted to reorganise municipal government and administration in South Africa. Performance designates progress towards goal achievement, and performance management is intended to build on municipalities' capabilities to be more responsive, effective, and sensitive to the demands of their constituents, also being efficient in utilising the limited available resources to address those demands (Ndevu & Muller,2008).

The objective of the study is to identify mechanisms that will bring transformation in terms of inadequate provision of municipal services. Secondly, the aim of the study is to determine the strategies that must be adopted to improve service delivery.

2. *Methodology*

The study adopted a qualitative research methodology with specific reference to a conceptual approach relying heavily on secondary data. Secondary data used in the study was gathered from relevant books, journals, conference proceedings, and published articles. The sources used were those relating to municipal service delivery. Several journals focusing on municipal service delivery and the theoretical framework of service provision were also used.

3. *Theoretical Framework*

3.1 Decentralization Theory on Service Delivery

The study adopted the Decentralization theory on service delivery because several governments have acknowledged the use of decentralization theories based on their economic, political, cultural, and

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geographical factors, and decentralization could be understood as a process of expanding the role of sub-national governments. Every central government must perform nationally recognized functions (Mudalige,2019).

Recently, the responsibility of service delivery has strategically shifted from the central government to the most localised public sectors. Decentralization implies that a sub-national level government can choose between different measures and adapt service delivery to local circumstances or the characteristics of individual service recipients. Most governments globally have initiated decentralization based on the principle of self-governance. It consists of many key success factors and has become a method of choice for people to get closer to goods and services. In addition, various governments have decided to use decentralization to empower the local population for political, economic, social, management, administration, and technology. Consequently, local people can engage in the planning and management of development and decision-making processes. Decentralization theory is linked to service delivery, decentralised government is assumed to have better knowledge and understanding of the needs of local communities. Decentralization increases people's participation in local development, planning, and management, coordinates administrative functions, and political and administrative perforation, creating social equity, and more effective coordination, allowing local experiments, leading to more flexible, innovative, and creative administration, isolated or backward areas of development, integration of regional economies, macroeconomic stability, improve political stability, decentralising public goods and services, participation planning, monitoring, and evaluation, delivery of goods and services, local level financial management and administrative efficiency, so on" (Mudalige,2019).

According to Beyer (2013), decentralization is a process of cascading authority from higher to lower levels of government. The theory of decentralization has been embraced by both developed and developing countries to enhance service delivery backlogs. The audacity is that when the government works closer to the people there will be efficiency in service delivery, and this will ensure that the needs of the communities are catered for.

Mbate (2017) opines that decentralization increases responsiveness, meaning that when government functions are decentralized the needs of the people are immediately adhered to. The theory is suitable to service delivery because public officials serve as accounting officers to the people, they represent the people which means that there should be direct communication between the two parties.

The main supporting argument for decentralization is to create an efficient administration, prioritize the rights of citizens, and refine local development.

Maluka, Diale & Moeti (2014) avers that most African countries had decentralized their functions from the national to the local level to ensure the soundness of good governance to their constituencies. To support and achieve a democratic local government people should participate in the decision-making process within their respective communities (Bob, 2018). In local government, different stakeholders exist, such as local communities which should take part in local government initiatives. The decisions taken in municipalities impact the local citizen therefore, they should be notified before the decisions making process take place and this can improve responsiveness to local needs.

Tshukudu (2014) postulates that democracy, decentralization, public participation, and accountability contribute to the principle of good governance. That's the main motive most developing countries prefer to decentralize government functions to enhance service delivery to the people. Mkhatshwa & Khumalo (2020) accentuates that at the local government politicians, and public officials play a significant role pertaining to the needs and priorities of communities. The postulation is that when municipalities are within the proximity of the communities it is easy to identify people's needs and supply appropriate services. Decentralization strategies accelerate the processes in terms of planning and

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implementation of services because municipalities are entrusted with the authority to perform as an independent structure (Falleti, 2004).

4. Literature Review

4.1 Factors Affecting Municipal Service Delivery

Beyers (2016) avows that it is generally accepted that the biggest challenges facing South African municipalities lie in service delivery and that there is the inadequate capacity for social development programs. Notwithstanding South Africa's middle-income status, half its citizens lack sufficient nutrition, water, energy, shelter, healthcare, and education. The challenges facing municipalities, including segregation, institutional weaknesses, service delivery backlogs, and inadequate finance, need to be overcome. Furthermore, municipalities should do more to encourage a culture of community participation, transparency, and accountable governance. In finding solutions, it is significant to admit that the 257 municipalities across the country are faced with various social and economic challenges and have different capacities to respond to these challenges. Thus, each municipality should focus on developing the capacity to respond to the needs of the communities in their areas of jurisdiction. Local municipalities could play a pivotal role in ascertaining that democracy works for the poor at the grassroots level.

Kolonda and Govender (2021) outline five factors that negatively impact the provision of municipal services which are poor implementation of local government legislative framework, poor leadership, poor financial management systems, incompetent human resources, and poor governance. The factors are discussed in detail below as follows:

4.1.1 Poor Implementation of local government legislative framework

In an adequate legislative and legal structure, the powers, and roles of lower levels of government must be clearly defined, and the central government must be able to give up power and accept the sub-national government's importance in the delivery of services through this process. The South African Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs report (2009) reveals that weak compliance with local legislative and regulatory structures in South Africa is a common trend and this resulted in service delivery deficiencies. This entails inadequate adoption of good governance practices and a lack of understanding of the local government legislative framework.

4.1.2 Poor Leadership

Leadership is a person or group representative, that assists in creating an interrelated culture that includes value structures and behaviour that are important for the success of the organisation. Leadership also offers a forum to ascertain those policies of transition are successfully implemented as mandated by modernisation and transformation. It is evident that in South Africa the leadership of the municipalities is generally politically appointed, and this results in leaders tending to politicise the operation and having short-sighted knowledge of management principles that affect the rendering of services. These entail conflicts between the political and administrative interface, the inadequate capabilities of councillors to cope with local government demands in terms of service delivery, and incomplete separation of powers between the municipalities and political parties.

4.1.3 Poor Financial Management Systems

In South Africa, there is a common trend in most municipalities which is poor financial management and a lack of control and accountability systems. This situation increases fraud, corruption, and misuse of municipal assets and funds. For, example, municipalities are incapacitated and lack an

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understanding of debt management or collection of outstanding revenue. Lack of leadership capabilities, expertise, and transparency are the products of inadequate execution in terms of efficiency, effectiveness, and truthful financial resources sustainability. Hence, leadership is imperative to manage financial resources sustainably to improve service delivery and the overall institutional performance of the public entity.

4.1.4 Incompetent Human Resources

It is very important for the municipality to have well-trained and competent employees who can deliver services effectively and efficiently to ensure integrity, objectivity, transparency, and responsiveness to the requirements of the members of the community. Skills development and capacity building play a pivotal role within municipalities for employees and management to become innovative in the delivery of services. Inadequate human resource management systems which are not conducive to recruiting staff means retention impact negatively on the recruitment process which is often compromised. Other barriers to providing adequate service delivery in South Africa are poor governance and corruption which affect the municipalities' capacity to retain a competent workforce with the willingness to work for the municipalities.

4.1.5 Poor Governance

The main objective of good governance is to achieve various goals such, as enhancing the well-being of its people, promoting economic development, promoting the political stability of its citizens, ascertaining that democracy prevails and ensuring overall accountability for actions, as well as monitoring and evaluating the actions of the government in society. Good governance ensures that political, social, and economic goals are focused on a large consensus in society and that decisions on the allocation of development resources are heard by the poorest in most vulnerable members of society, particularly in rural areas. Leadership has an important role to play in public service delivery since effective leadership is geared toward good governance by promoting transparency, collaboration, clear roles, involvement, understanding, and responsibility in service delivery. In return, good governance fosters the commitment of leadership and management to be held accountable for their actions and decisions. Effective leadership and good governance are important for organisational performance.

Masiya,Davids & Mangai (2021) further outlines the factors that affect the performance of South African municipal officials as follows:

4.1.6 Unsupportive Institutional Environment

Public officials at various levels, regardless of their skills, are confronted by an unsupportive institutional environment coupled with a bureaucratic and rigid institutional structure that inhibits the adequate absorption and application of new skills, policies, regulations, and practices. an unsupportive institutional environment is an issue that poses critical challenges to municipal service delivery. Institutional environments are influential through incentives that they create that have a strong bearing on the degree to which officials' performance can be enhanced and sustained.

4.1.7 Negative Power Struggles and Political Interference

The internal municipal environment is primarily one of the negative power struggles between the political and the administrative spheres. It is a challenging organizational culture that adversely affects the morale and agency of officials. in terms of the political–administrative interface, political interference is visible in "the politics of the day, the encroachment of politicians on officials' sphere of responsibility and officials who are affiliated to a political party. interference and institutional context have led to the development of a commanding authoritarian language from politicians which is very unappreciative of

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officials' skills and expertise and causes officials to feel pessimistic about their ability to undertake their tasks in a professional manner and thereby creating dissonant workplaces. There is limited space for politicians and officials to engage with each other on key issues in a constructive manner. Municipal officials often feel unprotected from this tension and political priorities frequently override formally approved implementation plans and administrative needs.

4.1.8 Lack of Trust Due to Political Appointments

There is a deep or entrenched organization-wide lack of trust – between councillors from various political parties, between officials and oversight committees, and by councils distrusting senior officials' intentions. the prevailing political deployment arrangement under which councillors do not necessarily take the decision to appoint the municipal manager and approve the appointment of other senior officials, but instead regional political party structures make these strategic decisions. The result is that the municipal council is not always convinced of the skills and intentions of the municipal manager, whose conduct, decisions, and advice are then subject to suspicion and challenge. The same suspicion applies to subsequent appointments by the municipal manager. It is a common trend to have a high turnover or rotation of team and thematic leaders, as well as long-term acting appointments. This combination creates a climate of uncertainty and distrust where officials can't make meaningful decisions and undertake appropriate long-term planning that enables predictable service delivery.

4.1.9 Poor Oversight Mechanisms

Severe dysfunctionality in some municipalities is exacerbated by poor oversight by national or provincial departments which have responsibility for local government. This is the case even though municipalities are mandated by law to report monthly and quarterly to the National Treasury, and quarterly to the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. oversight responsibilities are stipulated in legislation such as the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 1998 and the Municipal Finance Management Act 2003. In the context of these legislative provisions, municipal public accounts committees are expected to perform an internal oversight role, while external oversight is the responsibility of municipal audit committees. Municipal oversight in principle also requires officials to ensure that communities have access to information and that the provision of information should go beyond placing certain information online. Municipalities should, therefore, create conditions for the poor to access information, and consult communities to share insight from their lived experiences. In other words, municipalities must not just perceive IT and social media as the new 'sexy thing' to engage constituencies and stakeholders, because doing so can limit 'real' engagement and accountability. What is needed is meaningful engagement with communities and stakeholders to ensure that municipalities address their constituents' concerns and service delivery issues

Beyers (2016) postulates that the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGHSTA) Local Government assessment sought to identify the main causes of poor service delivery in municipalities across the country. The results revealed several problems within municipalities, but, most importantly, they demonstrated that not all the problems experienced by communities are applicable to all municipalities. Several municipalities are struggling to operate and maintain their services infrastructure in a cost-effective and sustainable manner. The challenges include those relating to the general rendering of services to communities; procedures to appoint new staff members; irregularities and deficiencies in procurement procedures; leakages and overflowing sewerage systems; a general lack of consultation; and the lack of cooperation between municipalities and the business community. It is estimated that more than half of South Africa's municipalities are experiencing financial difficulties.

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5. Developing a Local Government Performance Management System

Selepe (2018:543) avers that it is very important to develop a performance management system that is not an isolated project, but well aligned to other Human Resources Management systems within the municipal context. Typical issues to be addressed to ensure an appropriate customised municipal performance management system are highlighted in the subsections that follow:

5.1 Pre-Design Considerations

Selepe (2018:543) accentuates that an effective performance management system should enable and empower line management to implement the strategies and objectives of an organization successfully. Probably one of the most crucial aspects during the very early stages of planning the introduction of systematic performance management would be the very question of whether we want to have such a formal system for managing work performance or not. While Human Resources practitioners might well see the value and have relevant expertise the key is that the top management team must be keen to have it. If it can be demonstrated that such a system is fundamental to the actual process of strategy execution it should be straightforward.

5.2 Designing the System

Once the decision has been made active engagement in developing the system will commence. The input of internal or external specialists is required. Probably the most important thing is to engage the people who will be using the system. The actual essential activities must be performed to develop the system:

- **Obtaining Basic Job Information**

  Job design and analysis, form the cornerstone of gathering job-related information. The nature of the work and typical job duties and responsibilities should guide how the system should work.

- **Establishing Performance Standards and Performance Criteria**

  Performance standards describe the conditions for desired work performance. The system should probably be designed such that the work performance standards are mutually agreed upon by those who must do the work and those to whom they report.

- **Choosing the Format and the Source of Appraisal Information**

  Decisions on the format of appraisal instrument and sources that should generate the ratings must again be the outcome of thorough deliberation on my factors such as the overall objectives, potential advantages and disadvantages, and organization-specific circumstances.

- **Preparing Documentation**

  The relevant policy documents should form the framework for the process and procedures that detail more finely who should be doing what and when in terms of planning and managing work performance. The actual performance appraisal forms are very important because they will form the basis for discussions as well as where we will be able to access relevant work performance-related information. It is normally quite important to develop user guides together with the policies and procedures manuals for managers. Particularly important in this regard will be guidelines in relation to the actual processes of assessing and discussing matters related to work performance.

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- **Introducing and Operationalising the System**

Selepe (2018:544) postulates that the process related to the implementation phase focuses mainly on various training sessions and introductory exercises. The contents of such training may be determined by the level of involvement of users during the development phase, the complexity of the specific system, and the existing competence in performance management of the supervisors.

- **Maintaining the System**

The maintenance of an appraisal system entails activities such as:

✓ Monitoring the consistent application of performance ratings.
✓ Reviewing satisfaction levels of managerial as well as non-managerial staff who are using the system and finding out about what can be done to improve the system.
✓ Devising and arranging and arranging training and development interventions indicated by review results.
✓ Monitoring the internal and external environment for changing circumstances that may necessitate a review or adjustment of current practices; and auditing and evaluating the effectiveness of the system comprehensively from time to time (Selepe,2018:544).

6. The Mechanisms to Resolve Poor Provision of Municipal Services

6.1 Strategic Management in Public Administration

An organization's management success, regardless of its profile and activity, is shaped and supported by the promotion of strategic management. The organization's leaders determine, through strategic management, its long-term evolution, and performances, ensuring a meticulous formulation of proper application and continuously evaluating the set strategy. The administrative institutions and workers are required to undertake the formation of strategies, objectives, and priorities as part of the managerial activity (Marin, 2016:188). Strategic management considers the public workers situated in responsible positions, the workers who do not just need to mechanically fulfill their day-to-day work but also refer to the organization's general objectives. It is mostly, linked to the public workers from the senior levels, where the strategic decisions are being conceived. It is assumed that strategic management describes that part of a public manager's activity, which entails a widening of the immediate horizon to offer the entity that he, leads a "Perspective way of thinking". It consists of the definition of the objectives, the strategy, the structure, and the functioning principles of the entity, as well as the measure of impact, through space and time, of an applied action. The strategy means determining the organization's long-term goals and objectives, adopting determined politics, and assigning resources to achieve these goals. This definition shows, practically, the major problems to which the strategic process should respond:

- Where does it want to move forward?
- What parameters can translate the organization's goals?
- What certain politics will these goals imply?
- What human and financial measures will need to be taken?

Strategic management is attractive because it focuses on setting goals and identifying strengths and weaknesses and it highlights the importance of foreign opportunities and threats through the perspective of an optimal forces deployment to achieve the set goals (Marin, 2016:188).

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Höglund et al., (2018) accentuate that strategic management is now prominent on the agenda in many public organizations and is reportedly becoming increasingly relevant in practice due to New Public Management changes. However, too little is known about the application of strategic management in practice and its possible consequences. It is very difficult to include strategic management in the public sector. However, too little is known about the implementation of strategic management in practice and its possible outcomes. This is despite the last few decades of New Public Management reforms in the public sector. New Public Management generated many unintended consequences, such as (too) strong a focus on internal efficiency at the expense of external efficiency and short-term, output-oriented, and measurable outcomes at the expense of more long-term and outcome-oriented results, consequently impeding the application of strategic management. The strategy as process direction clearly sees the public sector and the non-profit context, as well as private firms, as areas of interest. However, as inclusive as this direction of strategy is, most research is still done on private firms. When applied in a public-sector context, it is common to view the strategy process as several organizational activities, some of which run adjacent to each other, but most of the time the process is described as chronological and in different stages. In a nutshell, the work of strategy in the public sector mostly addresses the work of strategy by addressing processes of strategic planning, formulation, implementation, evaluation, and monitoring. the strategic process of formulation is quite like those in the private sector. Hence, managers in the public sector can get several benefits from formulating written strategy documents, including vision, goals, and strategic plans. Thus, strategic planning entails formulating strategies that give a holistic view of the organization by mixing long-term thinking, goal analysis, and subjective evaluation of values, goals, and priorities.

Bryson & George (2020) postulates that strategy is boundless in government, and many approaches tied to strategies such as strategic planning and management are part of the standard toolbox of public managers and policymakers. The 21st-century policymaker or public manager is indeed faced with a multitude of challenges all of which require effective strategies posing questions such as what is the public value he or she wants to generate? how will he or she do so? and with whom? Strategies link aspirations and the capabilities needed to achieve them. Strategizing implies the deliberate as well as emergent realignment of aspirations and capabilities, thus making sure that aspirations can be achieved or else need to be changed by considering current capabilities and the possible need to develop new ones. Strategizing is not limited, of course, to single organizations but is relevant to any entity where aspirations and capabilities need to be aligned (e.g., individuals, teams, organizations, coalitions, communities).

Bryson & George (2020) further posits that strategic planning and management are specific approaches that can enable effective strategizing in and by public organizations or other entities (e.g., cross-boundary functions, collaborations, and communities). Each approach consists of a set of concepts, processes, procedures, tools, techniques, and practices to be drawn on selectively and customized to specific contexts, even as the context itself likely should be changed. Strategic management also adds characteristic structures to this mix.

Notwithstanding a clear need for strategy in governments as well as the widespread (and often coerced) adoption of strategic planning and management by public organizations, these approaches have not gone without criticism. Several critics base their skepticism on the sense that strategy as a focus, strategic planning, and strategic management are derived from the new public management type thinking in the 1980s and onwards. Hence, strategy, strategic planning, and strategic management have often been confounded with concepts and practices speculated to be imported from businesses, including efficiency and effectiveness, market-oriented thinking, and competition all of which have deep roots in the public sector.

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Makenyeza,Ikobe & Kwandayi (2013) posit that in today's globally competitive environment, the service industry plays an increasingly important role in the economy of many countries, therefore, delivering quality service is considered an essential strategy for success and survival. Increasing service delivery is primarily about improving the effectiveness and efficiency of the way in which services are delivered. The current cities are faced with many urgent challenges which have necessitated the implementation of new intelligent service delivery systems to address those problems. The rationale behind this strategy is that, in the developed world, cities are increasingly becoming the driving forces of their national economies. The use of public values, institutions, and service markets in contracting can enhance the provision of services. They insist that stakeholder preferences and democratic processes establish the values to be upgraded in service delivery. Furthermore, public law and organizational arrangements determine the contracting tools available for balancing competing values; and the characteristics of service markets influence which contracting tools and vendors are best suited to achieve stakeholder values. A robust combination of strategies is required to ascertain that service employees are willing and capacitated to deliver quality and adequate services and that they stay motivated to perform in customer-oriented, service-minded ways and ongoing motivation of employees to be customer-oriented will enhance service quality. To build a customer-oriented, service-minded workforce, organizations must hire the right people, develop people to deliver service quality, provide the needed support systems, and retain the best people.

6.2 The Role of Good Governance in Service Delivery

Good governance is the active and productive cooperation between the State and citizens, and the key to its success lies in the powers participating in political administration. Only when citizens have sufficient political power to engage in elections, policymaking, administration, and supervision can they prompt the State and collaborate with it to build public authority and order. Evidently, democracy is the only practical mechanism that can safeguard the fully free and equal political power owned by citizens. Hence, good governance is naturally combined with democracy. In an autocratic system, it is possible to have a good government when the system is at its best, but it is impossible to have good governance. Good governance can only be achieved in a free and democratic political system, as it cannot materialise without freedom and democracy (Keping, 2017:4).

Shai (2017) asserts that the philosophy of a New Public Service (NPS) was replaced by the emergence of the Governance Perspective in the Public Administration debate, which is perceived as one of the most important developments in the political arena. The emergence of the governance paradigm was necessitated by the weakness in the liberal, free market-based New Public Management approach and Governance as the network of interactions and collaborations. Governance is dogmatically conceptualising by a democratic government to achieve and sustain policy objectives in the most effective and efficient way. The concept of governance is the interactions between the public and private actors to deal with societal complexities.

Maramura (2022) encapsulates that ever since the present South African government acquired power in 1994, enhanced governance and service delivery were prioritized by the government, further making promises to transform the quality of citizens' livelihood through effective and efficient service delivery. Rural development was then prioritized post-1994 as a key objective to develop citizens' livelihoods. Thus, the local government's mandate is to render quality service delivery to citizens, more specifically those in rural areas. Good governance principles provide opportunities for citizens to obtain accountability from public administrators. Good governance enables service providers to be centred on a tolerable governance framework and the engagement of larger citizens through decentralization. This approach calls for advocates for good management and coordinated governance that has accountability systems in place. This means that effective service delivery needs control systems that ascertain collective work between private and public entities. Institutions like the Auditor-General Office, Public Protector

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Office, and the Anti-Corruption Commission Office ought to effectively support accountable administration while precluding public resource mismanagement. This implies that the formation of structures that ascertain good governance practices at the local level is important for service delivery. Such structures necessitate the citizenry to be involved in the decision-making process to smoothly implement government policies and programs. Governance structures essentially describe how things are determined and understood in an organization, whether private or public. Moreover, the consequent argument is that governance is an important tactical issue for loyal regions as it regulates how they are managed, directed, and controlled. Good governance does promote public participation that allows citizens to contribute to local development initiatives, thus increasing municipal transparency and accountability in service delivery. Good governance practices advocate for government accountability, integrity, responsiveness, transparency, and effective, efficient, and active public participation. Good governance practices involve the features of democratic government whereby all citizens are recognized and appreciated. Thus, good governance practices must emphasize refining socio-economic development. Good governance practices contribute to public service execution and quality-of-service delivery (Muramura,2022).

Conclusion

The objective of this study was to scrutinize the factors that impact municipal service delivery and to identify the mechanisms that must be adopted by the municipalities to enhance service delivery. The study gave an exposition of the factors that negatively impact the provision of municipal services and identified the mechanisms that must be adopted by municipalities in South Africa. The study discussed the developing process of the performance management system for municipalities which will encourage individual performance and institutional performance as well as adequate service delivery. Decentralisation service delivery model was also discussed in detail. The study concluded with a detailed discussion about the mechanisms that can be adopted by the municipalities to refine the provision of service. The mechanisms identified are strategic public administration and the role of good governance in service delivery.

Recommendations

Based on the exposition and findings given and discussed above, the researcher proposes several mechanisms to enhance service delivery. The recommendations are presented below as follows:

- The study revealed that an organisation's management success, regardless of its profile and activity, is shaped and supported by the promotion of strategic management. The organisation's leaders determine, through strategic management, its long-term evolution, and performances, ensuring a rigorous formulation of proper application and continuously monitoring and evaluating the set strategy. Therefore, the study recommends that the administrative institutions and workers are required to undertake the formation of strategies, objectives, and priorities as part of the managerial activity as well as the appropriate implementation of the crafted strategies.
- The study further recommends that municipalities must implement the principles and elements of good governance such as participatory, consensus-oriented accountability, responsiveness, transparency, effectiveness, and efficiency because good governance is the active and productive cooperation between the State and citizens, and the key to its success lies in the powers participating in political administration. Only when citizens have sufficient political power to participate in elections, policymaking, administration, and supervision can they prompt the State and join hands with it to build public authority and order.
- It is recommended that municipalities must implement training and development workshops and programs to improve the skill of their employees. In addition to that, globalization and technological changes reveal the need to continuously acquire new skills in both private and

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public sectors to compete in the industrialized world. The study recommends that municipalities must strengthen political leadership, public participation, and effective revenue collection systems and encourage good recruitment practices.

- It is also recommended that municipalities must operationalise Decentralised Service Delivery Model because it is the most common model of local governance globally and it is based on the principles of good governance.
- The study recommends that municipalities must develop a municipal performance management system that resonates with their situations, and it must cater for both individual and institutional performance.
- It is recommended that municipalities must craft strategies to implement the local government legislative framework, ensure the existence of excellent oversight mechanisms, build trust between the politicians and members of the community, eradicate negative power struggles and political interference, create a supportive institutional environment and a sound financial management system.
- Lastly, the study recommends the implementation of consequence management by the government. The control measures to deal with accountability failures are outlined in legislation such as Section 32, of the Municipal Finance Management Act regarding irregular expenditure, unauthorised expenditure, and wasteful and fruitless expenditure. Secondly, section 83(1) of the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA) also outlines consequence management regarding irregular expenditure. It is therefore recommended that the South African government must enact a new legislative framework that will incorporate Consequence management that will be vested with the authority to work and prosecute the perpetrators. The approach should directly involve Law Enforcement Agencies, the Auditor-General, and the Public Protector.

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