

CHAPTER SEVEN

CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Chapter Seven presented the results of this study. The data were presented in the form of tables, figures, percentages and hard facts, in order to present the results. This chapter presents a summary of the conclusions drawn from this study. A chapter-by-chapter summary of the conclusions has been given. This chapter also gives the findings and some recommendations of the study.

7.2 STUDY CONCLUSIONS ON THE ROLE OF TRADITIONAL AUTHORITIES IN THE IDP POLICY IMPLEMENTATION IN LIMPOPO PROVINCE

Chapter one gave the general introduction to the studies, the motivation and the background to the study. This chapter also presented a brief description of the case study, together with the justification for the choice of this case study; and in addition, it described the general layout of this study. The chapter also provided the study objectives, as well as the background to the statement of the problem. Clarification of the concepts and terms were also given. Finally, the chapter gave the framework of the research project.

Chapter two discussed the history of traditional authorities in South Africa, and how traditional authorities have been able to adapt to different environments for survival by, amongst others, forming alliances when it suited them. The colonial and apartheid governments co-opted and manipulated traditional authorities to implement their colonial and apartheid policies over their communities. Instead of representing their subjects, they assisted their colonial masters in subordinating their people. These governments turned traditional leaders into paid agents. Yet, the colonial and apartheid governments granted traditional leaders the right to allocate the land, which even the new government of South Africa is unable to do effectively. The role to allocate the land to community people is regarded by some as a remnant of the legacy of apartheid.

There is a call for the current democratic government to abolish traditional authorities in South Africa, in order to implement the Bill of Rights of the **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa**, 1996. The recognition of the institution of traditional leadership is seen as putting both the State and traditional leaders in a head-on-head struggle for power. However, the new government of South Africa views traditional authority as an important institution to complement elected local municipalities in expediting service delivery. The challenge to traditional leaders is that they are not participating meaningfully in the implementation of IDP, because they are no more than ex-officio members in municipal councils. But they participate in structures outside the municipal councils, such as IDP Representative Forums, where they are full members.

Chapter three discusses the conceptualization of the role of traditional authorities in policy implementation within the discipline of public administration. The chapter also discussed public administration, and its origin from the multinational bodies, such as the UN, the AU, the World Bank and the IMF. It also discussed the policies formulated by the World Bank and IMF, which were based on top-down theory; and policy formulation was separated from implementation, as if the two are not part and parcel of the same thing. It was only when the policies failed in the Third World that it was realised that policy formulation and implementation should be treated as inseparable, and that stakeholder participation was necessary if policies were to succeed. Traditional authorities as the guardians of communities should participate in policy formulation, if the policies were to obtain the required legitimacy in the areas where they were implemented. Participation in policy formulation was seen as a bottom-up theory, where the masses participate. The chapter has also discussed public administration in South Africa, based on the model of Cloete (1981). It was based on generic functions, such as policy-making, organizing, financing, staffing, work procedures, and control. The whole process of policy formulation is an interactive one, where all stakeholders participate with traditional authorities legitimising modern policies by their participation, so that communities could support the envisaged policies. If traditional authorities did not support government policies, communities would pledge their solidarity with them, and shun government, thus leading to ineffective policy implementation.

Chapter four discussed the implementation of the Integrated Development Planning (IDP) policy in South Africa. The IDP process produces an Integrated-Development Plan, which is a development plan for a municipal area containing short, medium and long-term objectives and strategies. Integrated-Development Plan serves as the principal strategic management instrument for municipalities. The preparation of Integrated-Development Plans (IDPs) became a legal requirement in South Africa for local councils. The implementation of IDP processes in Limpopo Province is enforced by the **Municipal Structures Act, 1998** (Act 117 of 1998), which compels municipal councils to identify and consult traditional authorities. Traditional authorities must be represented in municipal councils by traditional leaders. The **Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996**, compels municipalities to involve community organizations in the drafting of IDP. The participation of traditional authorities and communities has the potential to promote the bottom-up decision-making process. In Limpopo Province, IDP implementation is regulated by intergovernmental relations. The district municipalities have established implementation structures for the IDP. All these structures are aimed at the implementation of policies in a bottom-up fashion.

Chapter five discussed the case study of the Vhembe District Municipality with respect to its organisation and context. The case study was an attempt to study the unit of research, in order to obtain an in-depth knowledge on the role of traditional authorities in the implementation of IDP. The topic of the study was: “The role of traditional authority in Integrated Development Planning (IDP) policy implementation with reference to Limpopo Province”. The focus of the study was the Vhembe District Municipality. In order to respond to the topic, objectives and research questions, as well as a mixture of qualitative and quantitative methodologies were employed. Traditional leaders, who represented traditional authorities in Vhembe District Municipality and its four local municipalities, namely: Makhado, Thulamela, Mutale and Musina, were sampled as respondents. Municipal officials and SANCO were also interviewed. The collected data were analysed through SPSS, 18 of 2010.

Chapter six further discussed the case study of Vhembe District Municipality with a focus on the presentation of the results. This chapter revealed that divisions of perceptions in relation to the participation of traditional leaders in local government IDP processes in the Vhembe District Municipality are obvious. For example, the respondents revealed a wide response in relation to participation (45.5%), involvement (45.2%), consideration of views in council (41.2), ward committee participation (42.8%), council meetings attendance and participation (90.0%), meaningfulness of the role played by traditional leaders in IDP processes (50.0%), submission of IDP proposals (38.7%) and consultation of traditional leaders by municipal authorities in relation to IDP processes (93.2%). All these parties agreed that traditional leaders should be participating properly in the IDP processes in this municipality.

However, those who showed disagreement revealed a diverse distribution in contrast to those who agreed that they should participate. For example, the respondents revealed 50.0% for non-participation, 50.0% for non-involvement, 50.0% non-consideration of views in council, 57.0% non-participation in ward committee meetings, 10.0% for non-participation in council meetings, 40.0% for not playing any meaningful role in IDP processes, 38.0% for non-submission of IDP proposals, and 6.80% for non-consultation by municipal authorities in relation to IDP processes.

Finally, those who lacked knowledge revealed the following distribution: 4.50% for participation, 4.80% for involvement, 8.80% for consideration of views, 0.0% for ward committee participation, 10.0% for participation in council meetings, 0.0% for a meaningful role in IDP processes, 0.0% for submission of IDP proposals and 0.0% for the consultation of traditional authorities by municipal councils in the IDP processes.

7.3 GENERAL FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH IN THIS STUDY

7.3.1 General findings

Perceptions of views on the participation of traditional leaders in IDP policy processes in the Vhembe District Municipality revealed some obvious and fundamental divisions among stakeholders.

- ***Lack of information and knowledge on the role of traditional leaders in IDP policy processes***

This study found that several stakeholders – in particular those who formed part of the questionnaire-survey lack understanding and information on the role played by traditional authorities in the IDP policy processes in the Vhembe District Municipality. It emerged that both municipal officials and traditional leaders lacked proper information and knowledge on the role of traditional authorities in municipal processes – especially their role in IDP policy processes. Lack of information and knowledge led to several other challenges in this province – especially in the Vhembe District Municipality.

- ***Poor working relations among stakeholders – traditional and municipal authorities***

Resentment and animosity among traditional leaders as representatives of traditional authorities in municipal councils and some stakeholders in this municipality were quite obvious. The study revealed that some traditional leaders felt undermined, disrespected and disregarded.

Most municipal authorities viewed traditional authorities as former collaborators and supporters of the hated apartheid regime in South Africa. On the other hand, traditional leaders viewed municipal authorities as representatives of the ruling party, who could neither be impartial nor unbiased, because they had become an

extension of the ruling party. These perceptions led to acts of resentments and animosity among these stakeholders. In response to the poor relations, some traditional leaders, therefore, withdraw their participation in municipal IDP processes in this municipality – citing marginalization of their views and ignorance of their IDP policy proposals, for example. Unfortunately the poor working relations between traditional authorities and municipal authorities have other implications within the municipality.

- ***Withdrawal of participation and involvement of communities in IDP policy processes***

Resentment and withdrawals of traditional leaders from municipal IDP policy processes in this municipality have also resulted in some communities not participating in local government activities in support of their traditional leaders. This shows that traditional leaders still have immense influence in their communities.

- ***Traditional authorities still have a major role to play in modern local government systems***

Traditional leaders and their authorities still form a critical part of social life in South Africa – especially in rural provinces, such as Limpopo, where this study was undertaken. They are highly valued and recognized – and any model seeking to undermine their cultural, traditional and social practices in these communities should expect to experience serious resistance. It is clear from the findings of this study that municipal processes, such as the IDP policy processes, cannot be effectively implemented unless the challenges, which limit the participation of traditional authorities, are properly addressed.

- ***Poor demographic and endowment factors impacting on participation and involvement of traditional authorities in IDP policy processes***

The majority of the traditional leaders who represent traditional authorities in IDP policy processes in this municipality are old, and lack the relevant skills and education; they are also poor in those supportive endowments, which are necessary to assist them in their role and participation – among others money for transport to attend the meetings. The fact that they also have larger households to take care of also limits most of them to the use of personal resources to attend meetings, as they need to use their resources for their extended households. Furthermore, most of these traditional leaders are not compensated for rendering any municipal services. They, therefore, become discouraged and withdraw from this service – with major disadvantages to their respective communities.

7.3.2 Recommendations

In order to improve the role of traditional authorities in IDP policy processes in the Limpopo Prince, as well as their participation and involvement, this study recommends the following:

- ***Capacity-building and training with regard to understanding the role played by traditional authorities in IDP policy processes***

Stakeholders in municipal IDP policy processes should be trained to understand the role of traditional leaders in the IDP policy processes in local government – as required by the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. This might remove any incorrect perceptions among municipal officials against traditional authorities with regard to their representation of communities in municipal processes. Equally, traditional leaders should also be made aware of the role played by municipal officials – and further that they are not necessarily an extension of the ruling party.

Such training might well be conducted by the South African Local Government Association (SALGA), skilled academics in the field of public administration and service delivery, as well as other professional bodies with some expertise in public affairs.

In order to garner support and co-operation with regard to attendance at such training sessions, those who complete such training courses might be rewarded through some recognition for their attendance. In other words, an accredited service provider should be sourced to conduct such trainings.

- ***Proper dissemination of information on the role of traditional authorities in IDP policy processes***

Poor working relations amongst municipal authorities and traditional leaders representing traditional authorities in IDP policy processes are causes of resentment and resistance meted out by traditional leaders, and subsequently by their respective communities on municipal authorities.

Resentment and resistance curtail and impede IDP policy processes in this municipality. It is, therefore, premised that harmonious collaboration amongst the stakeholders, traditional leaders and municipal authorities are very crucial issues, in order for stability to be achieved with regard to the IDP policy processes and service delivery for the communities within this municipality. In order to promote this collaboration, this study recommends that any form of resentment among the stakeholders should be investigated, identified and removed forthwith. This might be achieved by training municipal officials to understand the role played by traditional authorities in the current political dispensation, the role they played during the apartheid era, and the reasons why they played such a role in the past.

The Limpopo Provincial Department of Co-operative Governance, Human Settlements and Traditional Affairs, various NGOs, CBOs, Private companies, Institutions of Higher Learning, such as the Universities of Venda and Limpopo and individual academics in the field of Public Affairs might be requested to

assist with such training, as part of their social responsibility programmes. It is premised that such trainings should focus on inter-governmental relations, stakeholder relations, and organisational communication, among others.

Furthermore, local government and SALGA should assist municipalities to develop efficient and effective communication strategies to consult traditional authorities on issues that affect them and the communities they represent. The consultation process, if well conducted, could narrow the gap of misunderstanding between the traditional authorities and the municipal councils. Municipal officials and councillors, and particularly ward councillors, should be trained to establish partnerships with traditional authorities, so that they co-operate. The co-operation between municipal officials and traditional authorities might induce communities to support local government activities – especially IDP policy processes – as these communities might begin to see their traditional leaders as having some kind of interest in such processes.

It is, furthermore, envisaged that such co-operation might also reduce and/or remove the obvious resentment displayed by most of the traditional leaders and their communities against participation in municipal processes. It is clear that these training sessions might have intertwined effects on these challenges, as other subsequent challenges – such as protest withdrawals by communities from participation in IDP policy processes in support of their traditional leaders – might also thereby be effectively addressed.

With regard to ***the effect of demography and endowment factors of traditional leaders on their role in IDP policy processes***, this study premises that negative factors, such as old-age, poor educational levels, larger households and poor endowments might be improved by increasing skill development among these leaders. For example, older and poorly educated leaders might have to receive well-designed training adapted to their age and educational level. In other words, training sessions should adopt the so-called ABET model of training. A compulsory compensation scheme for the traditional leaders should be enforced within all the local municipalities of the province, in order to provide an incentive for the traditional leaders to attend local government meetings –

especially those on the IDP policy processes. It appears that where such compensations exist, they are unfortunately largely unmonitored, and took long to be processed, with the effect of discouraging some of the traditional leaders from attending such meetings. Fixed periods of claims should be enforced – which might be payment within seven days after the claim has been made.

7.3.3 Areas of further research

It is clear that this study focused on a regionalised case study (Limpopo Province and Vhembe District Municipality, in particular) which might not be enough to generalize its findings for all the rural municipalities within South Africa, in general, and also Limpopo Province, in particular.

- ***National study on the role of traditional authorities in IDP policy processes in South Africa is needed.***

It is, therefore, obvious that there is a need for another study that could focus on the broader geographical areas of South Africa, in general, and Limpopo Province, in particular. However, to undertake this kind of study all at once might be resource-limited, complex and complicated. It might, consequently, be highly desirable and convenient that this kind of study be conducted on a province-to-province basis.

- ***Demographic and endowment characterization of traditional leaders serving in municipal IDP policy processes in South Africa are largely unknown.***

Throughout this study, it has emerged that the demographic characterisation of municipal stakeholders – especially those of traditional leaders – in Limpopo Province, in particular, and South Africa, in general, remain largely under-researched. Information on the demography of traditional leaders, in particular, is virtually non-existent.

It becomes especially hard to deal with a stakeholder who might not be well-understood – and with policy issues around such stakeholders that might be very difficult to develop and implement. For example, crucial information on the gender distribution, chronological age, and level of education, marital status, and number of subjects under their leadership, endowment characterisation and economic typologies of these leaders might be very crucial for a better understanding of these leaders – especially with regard to crucial behaviour and decision-making on issues, such as the dispensing of public service and interrelations with government systems – especially at local government level.

A study might, therefore, be of paramount importance on these issues – to establish how the demographic and endowment typologies of the traditional leaders relate to the role of traditional leaders in policy processes and local government service delivery, in particular.

- ***The effect of politicisation of municipal service systems***

Furthermore, the concept of the participation and involvement in local government systems in South Africa, in general, is very new – and is still in its infant stage. It is clear that in such circumstance, stakeholders might struggle to understand the role expected of each stakeholder at local government level. The findings of this study have revealed that this has often resulted in political interference and domineering tendencies by political parties in municipal governance. Therefore, a comprehensive study is needed to investigate the effect of politicisation of municipal service systems, with a particular focus on the separation of political influence and community service, as well as development, because the politicising of service delivery evidently proves to be divisive to the community.

- ***Communication strategies in local government processes – especially on the IDP policy***

Finally, communication is poor among stakeholders in local government, as evidenced by the fact that the majority of stakeholders in this municipality lacked certain crucial information on municipal IDP policy processes. A study is needed to investigate a better communication tool that could develop a proper strategy of effective and efficient communication processes in this municipality.

7.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter has shown that on the participation of traditional authorities in IDP policy there is division of perceptions. There are those who agree that traditional authorities participate in the IDP policy processes in Vhembe District Municipality. Apart from this group, there are those who disagree that they play any role in the implementation of IDP policy processes. Finally, there is a group of those who lack knowledge on the participation of traditional authorities in IDP policy implementation. This chapter has shown the findings and recommendations; and these have been proposed as possible solutions to the problems. The chapter concluded by proposing areas for further research.