

TRANSFERRABLE CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT LESSONS IN SUPPORT OF MUNICIPAL TRANSPORT SERVICE DELIVERY: CASE STUDY OF BOJANALA PLATINUM DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY

M MPHAHLELE¹ and M MOKONYAMA²

¹Kelelo Knowledge Management (Pty) Ltd, PO Box 7485, Halfway House 1685
Tel: +27 82 863 8646; Email: matukum@kelelo.co.za

²Council for Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR), PO Box 395, Pretoria 0001
Tel: 012 841 4732; Email: mmokonyama@csir.co.za

ABSTRACT

Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, in the North West Province is endowed with the extractive economy characterised with the mobile community, labour influx, unemployment and underdeveloped road infrastructure. The District facilitates service delivery through among others, the Integrated Public Transport Network and the District Integrated Transport Plan. The problems of inadequate budget impact on the performance, acquisition and retention of skilled employees for strategic and operational transport policies and infrastructure development. The purpose of this study was to examine challenges related to the use of capacity development of structures and policies in relation to service delivery, and explore how to overcome them in the improvement of rural transportation. The study examines structures and policies at the intersection of the theoretical perspectives of skills development, performance improvement and collaborative participation. The research approach is a qualitative naturalistic enquiry and also employs questionnaires for confirmatory purpose and documentary analysis. The study concludes that there is lack of administrative-political synergy, inadequate socio-economic resilience, and limited dissemination of knowledge. Against these conclusions the study recommends formation of responsive and efficient structures, creation and implementation of knowledge sharing strategies, and introduction of a transformative policy instrument to empower senior management.

Keywords: Capacity development, structures, policies, service delivery, social development.

1. INTRODUCTION

This study examines the problem of implementation of service delivery in relation to public transportation including public policy review (Bojanala Platinum District Municipality, 2019). The District also experiences difficulties associated with the high influx of labour migrants, socio-economic inequality, and unemployment (Van Wyk, 2012; Alexander at al., 2012). The study examines structures and policies, facilitators and inhibitors of skills development, performance improvement programmes and collaborative partnerships within the context of local government capacity development. The purpose of this study is to examine challenges related to the use of capacity development of structures and policies in relation to service delivery, and explores how to overcome them in the improvement of rural transportation. Although the original study assumes that organisational structures and policies improve capacity of the municipalities, the research

findings indicate that organisational administrative-political synergy and socio-economic resilience are key enablers of capacity development of service delivery structures and policies.

The study finds key challenges faced in the capacity development of service delivery structures and policies - 1) volatile *laissez-faire* organisational milieu characterised by scarcity of a political will and prevalence of political elitism suggestive of difficulties that creep into and weaken socio-political resilience. Other challenges are 2) inadequate administrative-political synergy characterised by contestation for power in relation to administrative authority and dislocated political leadership. The study concludes that there is lack of administrative-political synergy, and inadequate socio-economic resilience, and limited dissemination of knowledge. Against these conclusions the study recommends formation of responsive and efficient structures, creation and implementation of knowledge sharing strategies, and introduction of a transformative policy instrument to empower senior management.

2. BACKGROUND

The study is located in the Bojanala Platinum District Municipality (BPDM) in the North West Province, South Africa. The BPDM consists of five local municipalities, that is, Kgetlengrivier, Madibeng, Moretele, Moses Kotane and Rustenburg local municipalities. The District is in the 'platinum belt' of South Africa that is, home to the world's top three multi-national platinum producers. Largely, issues related to 1) roles of the elites, 2) unstable mobile population, and 3) inadequate public-private partnerships are compelling reasons for conducting the research study. Another, significant aspect is the Marikana tragedy. This labour related aspect draws attention to: "*what is the role of decision-makers in the public-private inter-sectorial setting in relation to capacity development of service delivery structures and policies*". The study therefore, explores context-specific elements peculiarly located at the intersection of the legislation, skills development and socio-economic environments.

The Constitution of South Africa Act 109 of 1996, sections 152 and 153 stipulate that local government is responsible for the development and planning processes of a municipal area. Local Government Municipal Systems Act of 2000 stipulates that municipalities have a constitutional mandate to align management, budgeting and planning functions of their objectives consistent with intended purposes in the integrated development plan (IDP). The National Development Plan (National Planning Commission, 2011) prioritises rural development along mobility corridors and at strategic intersections as well as diversification of rural economy towards mining. The objectives of the of key performance areas of the BPDM, in Table 1, represent a link between strategy and operation. In the context of municipal capacity development, this study hones in on key performance areas, in the main, provision of basic service delivery. The objectives derived from the IDP serve to expedite service delivery (Bojanala Platinum District Municipality [BPDM], 2019). To cite an example, public transformation programmes employ strategies in support of the Integrated Public Transport Network (IPTN) and revision of the District Integrated Transport Plan (DITP) in order to maximise service delivery.

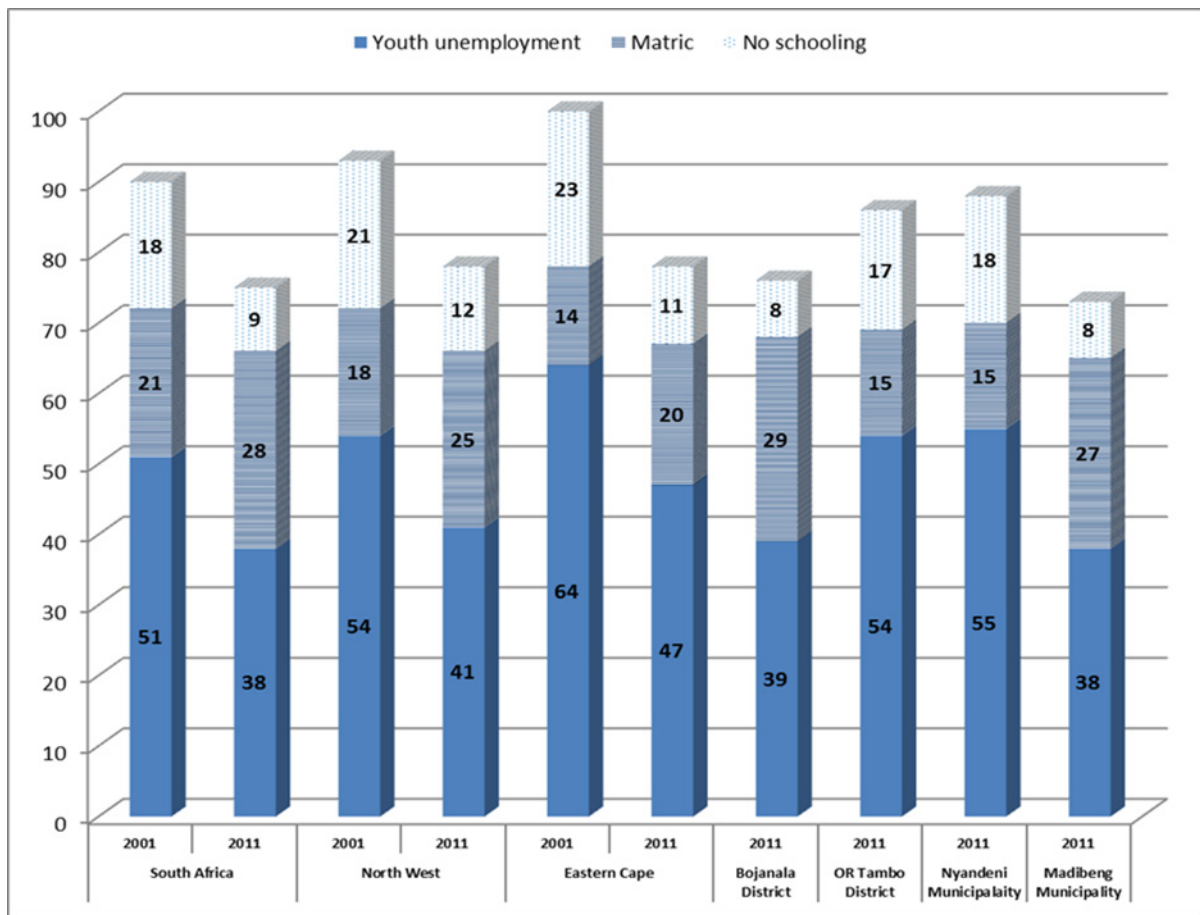
The key socio-economic challenges include youth unemployment, high influx of migrant labourers, unfavourable geographical settings and high population density in some local municipalities.

Table 1: The BPDM key performance areas, objectives and strategies

	Key Performance Area	Objectives	Strategies
1.	Basic Service Delivery	Provide Municipal Public Transportation	Support IPTN Revise DITP
2.	Local Economic Development.	Support job creation initiatives. Promote rural development.	Support EPWP Co-ordinate job creation initiatives in all government spheres. Analysis of SLPs
3.	Municipal Transformation and Organisational Development.	Promote skills development. Recruit and retain staff. Improve performance management. Strengthen IDP Planning.	Funding for community skills programme. Conduct skills audit. Revise selection and recruitment policy. Develop talent management policy. Revise PMS. Compile IDP.
4.	Municipal Financial Validity and Management Strategies.	Promote sound financial governance. Promote accountability. Provide integrated supply chain management (SCM) function.	Improve accountability. Improve contract management. Adhere to SCM policy.
5.	Good Governance and Public Participation Strategies.	Promote good governance. Promote stakeholder participation. Facilitate and support municipal committees.	Improve accountability. Conduct ethics awareness programmes. Review community participation policy. Develop ward committees strategy. Ensure IGR committees are supported.

Source: Bojanala Platinum District Municipality (2019)

A dip into the socio-economic environment, reveals that the mining sector is the leading employer at 43% and youth unemployed is at 39% (Statistics South Africa [Stats SA], 2013). According to Statistics South Africa (2013) in Figure 1, population dynamics of Bojanala (host district) and OR Tambo (labour sending district) assert that the labour sending Nyandeni Local Municipality experiences 18% no schooling whereas Madibeng Local Municipality is only at 8%. In addition, the Nyandeni Local Municipality experiences youth unemployment of 17% more than the whole country. Unemployment at Moretele Local Municipality is at 57% whereas the BPDM averages at 39%. The social realities of the 'Madibeng-Nyandeni corridor' present a gloomy picture inconsistent with a democratic society.



Source: Statistics South Africa (2013)

Figure 1: Population dynamics Bojanala and OR Tambo

It is against this historic background, in the context of mining in the colonial and Apartheid South Africa that Mineral and Petroleum Resources Development Act 28 of 2002 encourages mining companies to collaborate with the host and labour sending municipalities to empower communities. The BPDM population increased by 10% in the period 2011-2016 (Statistics South Africa, 2012; 2017) and there is a huge population density discrepancy with Madibeng at 389 (people/ km) and the under-resourced Kgetlengrivier local municipality at 15 (people/km²). This description is consistent with the stipulation that sparsely populated areas depend on natural resources and to some extent depend on migratory labour (National Treasury, 2011).

To complete the contextual orientation, this study hones in on skills development located in the post-school environment. In his first state of the nation address President Mandela encourages the public and private sectors to regard labour as a resource, and adds that skills training should be used to empower workers (Mandela, 1994). It is against the background of the argument that “the skill and skin ‘whiteness’ tended to coincide with blasting certificates awarded only to Whites in 1896” in early days of mining in the colonial era (Katz, 1995:469). Thus, the justification to address the historic dearth of skills deficit through the transformative legislative instruments. Accordingly, the Skills Development Act 98 of 1998 aims to improve delivery of services, investment in education, enhance quality of life of workers and their prospects of work and labour mobility. Despite the progressive legislation, workplace racial discrimination in the mineral and mining sector underscores high inequality at the level of decision-making and policy implementation. A look at the sector-specific occupational skills categories demonstrates, in Table 2, that only 34.3% of Africans compared to 59.0% of Whites occupy senior level, and females constitute only

14.4% of the workforce (Mining Qualifications Authority [MQA], 2014). Similarly, the Engineering Council of South Africa [ECSA] (2014) asserts that most engineers are White (65.4%). Notably, despite Africans being in the majority at, 477 835 (84.8%), out of every 100 Indians 14 are in management, compared to only one African manager out of 100 (MQA, 2014). Africans are in the majority at the non-skills based elementary occupational level.

Table 2: Sector-specific occupational skills mining sector

Occupational Group	African		Coloured		Indian		White		Grand Total
	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	Number	%	
Managers	5031	1%	502	4%	487	18%	8656	12%	14676
Professionals	13604	3%	1103	8%	781	28%	10891	16%	26379
Technicians	38698	8%	1944	15%	529	19%	19693	28%	60864
Clerical support workers	14865	3%	1331	10%	419	15%	6537	9%	23152
Service and sales workers	5382	1%	207	2%	24	1%	709	1%	6322
Trades Workers	20066	4%	1810	14%	258	9%	14852	21%	36986
Plant and machine Operators	235107	49%	4260	32%	194	7%	4775	7%	244336
Elementary occupations	145082	30%	2202	16%	74	3%	3256	5%	150614
Grand Total	477 835 (84.8%)	100%	13 359 (2.4%)	100%	2 766 (0.5%)	100%	69 369 (12.3%)	100%	563 329

Source: Mining Qualifications Authority (2014)

The *ad hoc* 'silos' government role-playing and imbalance of power dynamics among mining companies is a thorny concern with 64% of mining right holders not meeting the stipulated targets in relation to mine community development (Department of Mineral Resources, 2015:30). Although this study is not about roles of the mining sector in development of communities, knowledge and understanding of the socio-economic elements and workplace inequality distinctly peculiar to this study clarify the context and orientation of this study. At this juncture there is plausible evidence of deep-rooted social realities that underscore inequality and possible social-ills in the space of skills training, social and economic development in the BPDM.

Challenges of the imbalance between administrative authority *vis-à-vis* political power, depressive socio-economic issues and poor policy implementation prompt the primary question: "What are the challenges of capacity development of service delivery structures and policies in Bojanala Platinum District local municipalities, and how can they be overcome?" According to Otto *et al.* (2009) capacity development is "locally driven process of learning by leaders, coalitions and other agents of change that bring about changes, in socio-political policy-related and organisational factors to enhance local ownership, effectiveness and efficiency of efforts to achieve a developmental goal". In the context of public transportation, to cite an example, governance improves decision-making leading to better planning and delivery of sustainable transportation systems (Gudmundsson *et al.*, 2016). Distinct elements at the interface of the social and economic environments elevate

governance issues. In the South African local government context, aligning the municipal Integrated Development Plan (IDP) and the mining Social and Labour Plan (SLP) advances public-private partnerships in the development of host communities, including the workers and should not be taken for granted (Bond, 2013; DMR, 2015; Muswaka, 2014). These issues prompt the questions - “*how do mining companies promote capacity development and policy implementation?*” and “*how can municipalities better employ organisational structures and policies and strengthen partnership with business?*” A look into the transportation policy environment and governance issues reflects that the geographic settings and nature of local transport system of a rural under-resourced low-income population municipality are not mutually exclusive, literature suggests.

Rural road infrastructure and associated transport services play a significant role in the provision of accessible and affordable services for poor communities (Visser & Cook, 2019). Local government needs funding and resources for transportation related infrastructure (Institute for Transportation and Development, 2021). Informal public transport system has unreliable operations and is often the only transport option in low-income populations (Behrens & Brun, 2016). The system contributes to 65% of all public transport trips in South Africa despite key challenges of poor safety, long waiting times, and a lack of data collection (Booyesen *et al.*, 2013). As a form of service delivery local transportation is premised on ownership and meeting expectations of the communities (Di Maddaloni & Davis, 2017; Tengan & Aigbavboa, 2017). The emergent thematical orientation of the literature, notably advances distinct elements in relation to capacity development enablers at the intersection of the socio-economic and administrative-political milieu.

Although the literature advances contemporary scholarly debates and nuances in relation to the employ of organisational structures and policies, nonetheless the arguments do not succinctly and distinctly generate plausible evidence that underscores significant capacity development of service delivery structures and policies in the improvement public transportation policies.

3. METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employs in-depth face-to-face interviews of a purposive sample of 30 municipal senior managers that is, Technical Services; Corporate Support Services; and Office of the Municipal Manager. The social development manager of the local mining company provided perspectives from the private sector partnership with the District. In addition, questionnaires were employed in a descriptive statistics confirmatory study with a sample of 52 junior to middle management. As a qualitative approach the study avoided inferential statistics typically of a quantitative tool. The rationale for using qualitative method followed by a descriptive statistics component is to get a broader perspective of viewpoints and a rich triangulation of data. Respondents using questionnaires were asked to indicate ‘*strongly disagree*’, ‘*disagree*’, ‘*agree*’ or ‘*strongly agree*’ suggestive of the non-numerical ‘intensity’ of their attitude on an ordinal scale consistent with the use of descriptive statistics (Kaur *et al.*, 2018). Ordinary Microsoft Excel was used to calculate only percentages, typical of a descriptive statistics tool. The study employs interpretive paradigm that provides senior municipal managers the opportunity to express their subjective worldviews associated with their experience and knowledge. As the study forms part of the completion of doctoral studies, the University of the Witwatersrand provided Clearance Certificate as part of the ethical considerations, including Consent Forms, and Permission Seeking letters for audio recording of interviewees.

The following section hones in on data presentation and discussions of findings.

4. FINDINGS

This section explores the role of political elites, organizational culture and varied allocation of the fiscus.

Data presentation underscores in-depth interview perspectives that assert that the grading system of local municipalities impedes collection of revenue which in turn indirectly contribute to community protests for lack of services (Respondent 09, personal communication, June 30, 2016; Respondent 17, personal communication, July 12, 2016; Respondents 11, 12 and 15, personal communication, July 06, 2016). In addition, the role of elites in the administrative-political interface manifests into political interference that creates a “poisonous environment” (Respondent 09, personal communication, June 15, 2016). To cite an example, some councillors would hurl insults and instructions like “*listen here I am the boss and I instruct you to appoint so and so*” (Respondent 10, personal communication, July 11, 2016). Municipal councils have resolved not to reward performance and this practice is associated with a *laissez-faire* organisational culture (Respondent 01, personal communication, 20 May 2016). Predominantly there is a “bureaucratic lacuna” or inept leadership. Political leaders hoard or keep information to themselves at the expense of service delivery and to the advancement of party-political loyalty. The majority of junior employees also feel deprived of critical knowledge including decisions taken by senior managers concerning public transportation and local economic development programmes, to cite an example. Notwithstanding the perceived compliance with the social and labour plan (SLP) and corporate social responsibility (CSR) programmes (Respondent 17, personal communication, July 12, 2016), mining companies are non-committal to partnerships with local municipalities (Respondent 15, personal communication, July 06, 2016). The social development manager of the local mining company asserts that during elections councillors use projects of the company for electioneering (Respondent 31, personal communication, 22 June 2016). Municipal allocation of the fiscus is not responsive to the needs of the communities.

Managers significantly demonstrate lack of financial accountability. The Madibeng and Rustenburg local municipalities received the biggest share of the cake of 2012/13 to 2014/15 fiscus allocation at R1.3b and R3b respectively (Local Government Handbook, 2016). Despite the high level of poverty Kgetlengrivier local municipality underspent by R41.6m. However, only Kgetlengrivier local municipality experienced Unqualified Audit opinion with Findings in the 2016-2017 financial year. The Auditor’s Report (2018) also finds shortcomings in the financial and performance management systems, failure of the District to finalise audits in the financial year 2014-2015. The District experienced a Disclaimer Audit opinion with Findings in both 2015-2016 and 2016-2017 financial years. On-going activities in breach of the Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 occur without consequence management or corrective action.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings reveal thematic orientation rooted in 1) Administrative-political synergy; and 2) Socio-economic resilience. Administrative-political synergy has the potential to alleviate the impacts of the volatile *laissez-faire* socio-political milieu that weakens organisational resilience. It is against the background of perceived inadequate policy implementation in the rural transport sector that the focus of improvement should be on the application of more effective knowledge management strategies (Visser& Cook, 2019). A responsive and

purposive socio-economic environment encourages creation of an environment conducive for functional collaborative partnerships including developmental corporate social responsibility (CSR) with the local government (Ablo, 2020). However, the erstwhile colonial governance features still exist in the post-Apartheid state in the form of neo-colonial features that still pose difficulties (Bisson, 2020). The post-Apartheid era South Africa witnessed the fatal shooting of 34 mineworkers (Satgar, 2012) and the citizenry demonstrating against lack of basic services (Govender, 2014) at Marikana and Mothutlung villages by the state respectively, in the Madibeng local Municipality. The brutal use of state apparatus against mineworkers is consistent with the aim to 'kill' and render labour movements and activism ineffective (Lust, 2014). Thus, lack of political accountability cannot be precluded from the myriad of nuances that are intrinsically interwoven in the space of local government and inhibitive of capacity development of service delivery structures and policies.

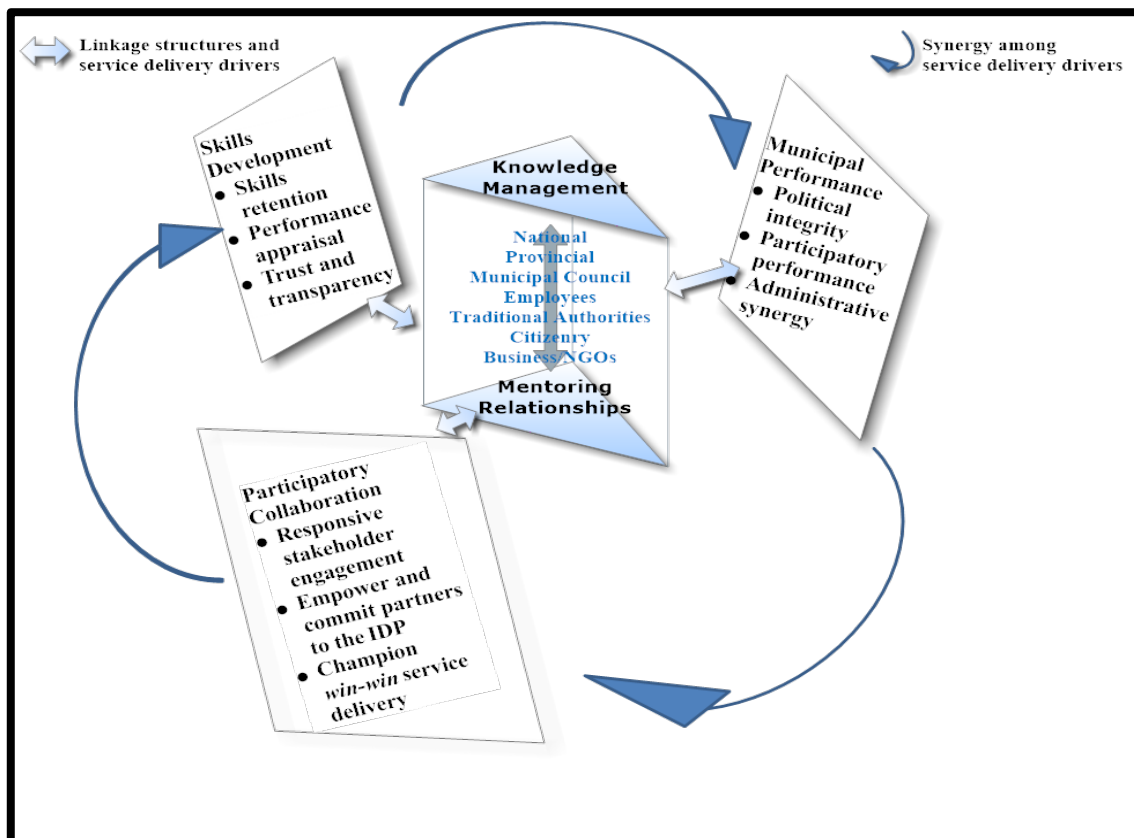
Functional public-private partnerships could maximise capacity of management and enhancement of service delivery (Germà & Gradus, 2018; Shava & Maramura, 2016). Thus, contestation for power in relation to administrative authority retards accountability and implementation of socio-economic developmental programmes and policies, including IDTP, IDP and SLP projects. Knowledge hoarding and lack of formal mentoring programmes exacerbate difficulties for capacity development of service delivery structures and policies. Knowledge management not only integrates the organisation, people, and infrastructure, but also strengthens administrative processes and systems in disseminating organisational knowledge leading to strengthened municipal capacity (McAdam & McCreedy, 1999; Sunassee & Sewry, 2003). Mentors could use their expertise to facilitate the "learning, communication skills and information sharing in order to meet their objectives" (Gordon, 2000:32) despite the disabling politically volatile environment.

6. CONCLUSION

6.1 Towards Administrative-Political Synergy and Socio-Economic Resilience

The emergent service delivery policy implementation framework, in Figure 2 advances a new theoretical trajectory in relation to capacity development of service delivery structures and policies. The model outlines synergy of service delivery enablers. Synergy of skills development, performance improvement and participatory collaboration serves as key operational levers facilitate integration of knowledge management strategies and mentoring relationships. Knowledge management and mentoring programmes provide a catalytic thrust in the promotion of organic communication across the national, municipal, traditional leaders and the citizenry.

In conclusion there is 1) A disconnect between administrative authority and political leadership with knowledge embodiment that stifles dissemination of knowledge and a transformative paradigm shift that could encourage co-operation between municipal employees and political representatives, 2) Lack of socio-economic resilience results from non-commitment of partners to integrated development plans, 3) disjointed and non-responsive stakeholder participatory engagements to champion a *win-win* service delivery system that capacitates communities.



Source: Mphahlele (2021)

Figure 2: Service delivery policy implementation framework

This study addresses the knowledge gap by demonstrating the strategic link between capacity development and service delivery. Although the original study assumes that organisational structures and policies improve capacity of the municipalities, and alleviate impacts of poor policy implementation and the *laissez-faire* organisational governance environments, the research findings indicate that organisational administrative-political synergy and socio-economic resilience are key enablers of capacity development of service delivery structures and policies.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

Formation of responsive and efficient structures with the capacity to detect early warning signs of corruption and supportive of consequence management to promote synergy between administrative authority and political leadership.

Creation and implementation of knowledge sharing strategies and on-going mentoring programmes for optimisation of socio-economic resilience against the perceived social ills and societal economic deprivation.

Introduction of a transformative policy instrument to address political abandonment and challenges of collaborative public-private partnerships by empowering a sustainable autonomous authority of senior management and the delink of their posts to the current five-yearly contract tenure of the political office bearers.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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