

INTEGRATED DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR IMPROVED SERVICE DELIVERY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF MUNICIPALITIES WITHIN THE MOPANI DISTRICT MUNICIPALITY, LIMPOPO PROVINCE

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—Abstract —

Service delivery remains one of the challenges of the 21st century in developing countries around the world. South Africa also forms part of distressed countries in terms of service delivery backlogs. It is for this reason that a management planning tool such as the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) has been adopted to enhance service delivery in municipalities. An IDP is aimed at the integrated development and management of the area of jurisdiction of the municipality concerned in terms of its powers and functions with a view of improving and sustaining service delivery. This article emanate from an empirical study undertaken to assess the IDP as a management planning tool for effectively enhancing service delivery using selected local municipalities found within the Mopani District Municipality in order to establish the existing gaps and realities on the ground. A mixed-method approach was used with structured questionnaires and supplementary unstructured interviews, documentary analysis and observations to collect data. The findings show that Municipalities have a challenge of engaging in management planning processes in the formulation and the implementation of the IDPs. This has a tendency of resulting in the planning process with predetermined service delivery objectives other than those to be implemented in terms of the needs of the citizenry. The findings justify the poor state of service delivery in municipalities within the study area and the country at large.

Key Words: *Integrated development plan, Service delivery, Municipalities*

JEL Classification: H760

1. INTRODUCTION

The South African democratic local government dispensation is founded within the developmental notion wherein all service delivery sectors need to be coordinated through integrated development planning processes (Binns & Nel, 2002; Manyaka & Madzivhandila, 2013). Such planning process culminates to the development of what has become to be referred to as an Integrated Development Plan (IDP). The IDP is a prime strategic planning apparatus which guides and informs planning, budgeting, management and decision making in a municipality (Maphunye & Mafunisa, 2008). South African municipalities have therefore become the 'development driver, through service delivery, poverty alleviation, infrastructure and economic development (Amis, 1999; Vatala, 2005; Patterson, 2008). Hence every public institution, just like municipalities, is created for the provision of public goods and services (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). However, according to Pretorius and Schurink (2007), post-apartheid South Africa faces foremost challenges in ensuring that municipalities deliver optimum and specialised services to their citizens. Such provision of public goods and services denotes that particular functions must be performed by municipalities. Since 1995, integrated development planning within the South Africa's evolving local government system was regarded as an important element for the realisation of the developmental aspirations of the state as well as ensuring the responsibilities of municipalities to develop IDPs (Binns & Nel, 2002). At that time IDP was conceived mainly as a tool to support coordinated implementation of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) among the varying spheres of government, being the national government, provincial government and local government. Eventually, municipal services were incorporated in the IDP and such has remained a prerequisite for all municipalities to ensure their operative functioning (Phago, 2009). This paper assesses the IDP as a management planning tool for the enhancement of service delivery in some municipalities found within the jurisdiction of the Mopani District Municipality area, Limpopo Province. To do that the paper begins with the clarification of the goals of the study followed by literature review, presentation of the methodology adopted and data presentation and analysis of findings.

2. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main goal of this paper is to assess the IDP as a tool for effective service delivery using selected local municipalities found within Mopani District Municipality area in order to establish the existing gaps with a view of making

recommendations to serve as a guideline to be utilised towards the improvement of service delivery within the area. The paper is therefore based on areas of different characteristics to ensure generalisations of the results through comparative analysis of the selected municipalities. The study was premised on the following objectives:

- To establish the basis of IDP as a management planning tool;
- To determine the extent to which IDP as management planning tool is implemented in local government, and
- To establish the gaps that exists between the extent of application of IDP as a management planning tool.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1 Integrated Development Plan (IDP) versus Integrated Development Planning

Although Craythorne (2006) is among the first to define Integrated Development Plan (IDP) while it was at its infant stage of being rolled out through the new local government dispensation as pronounced through the intentions of the *South African Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993*; the *Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995*; the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996; the Green Paper on Local Government of 1997 as well as the White Paper on Local Government of 1998; clarification of the concept was already featuring within various policy inputs papers at the time. A prototype example can be that of the definition provided by Binns and Nel (2009) while extracting from the policy paper on integrated development planning compiled by Oranje, Harritake, Meyer and Van Huyssteen (2002) for the then Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) that is now known as the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA). Oranje *et al* (2002) refer to the IDP to be conceived as a tool to assist municipalities in achieving their developmental mandates and as a planning and implementation instrument to bring together the various functions of government departments and municipalities. According to Craythorne (2006: 149) an IDP means a plan aimed at the integrated development and management of the area of jurisdiction of the municipality concerned in terms of its powers and duties in compliance with the general principles contained in chapter one of the *Development Facilitation Act 67 of 1995*, and where applicable, having regard to the objectives contemplated in chapter four of the same Act. It is on the stage of being a completed process that

the IDP becomes a tool to be utilized by respective municipalities to enhance service delivery.

For an IDP to be in place there is a need for integrated development planning as a process. The IDP is a product of the integrated development planning process (Valeta & Walton, 2008). It is a process through which municipalities prepare a strategic development plan for a prescribed five year period. Integrated Development Planning is a tool which local government can use to provide vision, leadership and direction for all those that have a role to play in the development of the local area (De la Harpe, 2012). Van der Walt *et al* (2007: 95) cited the South African Intergovernmental Forum (2001) to refer to Integrated Development Planning as a participatory planning process aimed at integrating sectorial strategies, in order to support the optimal allocation of scarce resources between sectors and geographical areas and across the population in a manner that promotes sustainable growth, equity and the empowerment of the poor and marginalized. The South African Department of Provincial and Local Government (DPLG) (2001) now known as the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA) defines integrated development planning as a process through which municipalities prepares a strategic development plan for five year period (Rauch, 2001: 4; Binns & Nel, 2002: 924). On the other hand, the Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA) and the National Business Initiative (2000) define integrated development planning as a management tool that enables municipalities to take a broad strategic view of their development requirements and address all key issues holistically IDP (Van der Walt *et al*, 2007: 95). The Forum for Effective Planning and Development (FEPD) as cited in Rauch (2002: 9) defines integrated development planning as participatory planning process aimed at integrating sectorial strategies, in order to support the optimal allocation of scarce resources between sectors and geographic areas and across the population in a manner that promotes sustainable growth, equity and the empowerment of the poor and the marginalized.

The Local Government: *Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000* defines an Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as a plan envisaged in section 25 of the same Act that provide for it as the municipality's single, inclusive and strategic plan for the development of the municipality which links, integrates and co-ordinates plans and takes into account proposals for the development of the municipality; aligns the resources and capacity of the municipality with the implementation of the plan; forms the policy framework and general basis on which annual budget must be centred; complied with the provision of chapter 5 of the same Act; compatible

with national and provincial development plans and planning requirements binding on the municipality in terms of legislation. It can be seen from this conception that the IDP can take various forms within the local government functional landscape. However for the purpose of this study, such is viewed as a management planning tool for enhancing service delivery within local government.

3.2 The need and rationale for integrated development planning

The introduction of integrated planning for development within the South African local government landscape came about as a culmination of the outcomes of negotiated settlement informed by the democratic founding of 1994. Transformation of local government was however unveiled as a separate process that was started through the promulgation of the *South African Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993*. Such legislation was meant to serve as an interim major in the auspices of the South African Interim Constitution of 1993. It is of essence for this study that in articulating the IDP as a management planning tool, a brief review on circumstances that have at the time necessitated the need thereof be discussed. Although there is a range of meaningful literature that have surfaced after the notion of the IDP had been catered for through statutory legislation, it is important that circumstances that have preceded such be unveiled.

The Local Government Transition Act 209 of 1993 that have since been repealed provided for the space of transformation of the South African local government system that needed to address the apartheid legacy. It is on that basis that the White Paper on Local Government of 1998 was developed through the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (COGTA). The White on Local Government of 1998 that was preceded by the Green Paper of 1997 that became the basis of all the pieces of legislation that came out to lay foundation of the fully transformed local government with its final phase being of 2000. Such pieces of legislation were enacted to establish and operationalise the new system of local government are the *Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998* and the *Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000*.

However, before the pieces legislation as referred to above be enacted, there has been base legislation that was put in place to address the skewed development issues at the time. Such legislation had a bearing on the nature of integrated development planning as it appears to be as well as purposeful use of the IDP for management planning. Among such pieces of legislation was the *Development Facilitation Act* of 1995 that have paved the way for development planning as it

appears in local government. There are various reasons why a municipality should have an IDP. Amongst other reasons, the IDP helps a municipality to effectively use resources to satisfy the most critical needs for communities. The IDP also assists in ensuring the enhancement and speeding up service delivery. The IDP, as it is sometimes referred to as a business plan can be used as an instrument for raising funds from investors and other external stakeholders. Furthermore the IDP can be used as an instrument for promoting intergovernmental relations.

4. METHODOLOGY AND APPROACH

The study employed mixed methods, whereby structured questionnaires designed within the Likert rating scales and supplementary interviews were used to collect primary data in order to understand the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as a tool to improve service delivery. The methodological rationale was derived from Creswell, Klassen, Clark and Smith (2010: 4), wherein a mixed method is defined as a research approach or methodology focusing on research questions that call for real-life contextual understandings, and multi-level perspectives. The phenomenon of local government presents an ideal opportunity for such methodological design due to its realistic societal interplay. Secondary data was also collected by means of Municipal Reports and regulations, policy statements, pieces of legislation and journal articles. Due to the nature and scope of the study a purposive sampling technique was used to select participants from the selected municipalities. The sample comprised of twenty (20) officials from each of the four municipalities that are dealing with issues related to the formulation, providing content, and implementation of the IDP. However, only a total of sixty-eight (68) questionnaires were returned for analysis. The sample selection is biased and purposive in that the researcher selects the participants for the study based on pre-knowledge that they have information that is related to the subject under research. In this case, officials selected are those within a defined level within the relevant municipalities' hierarchy in terms of responsibilities related to IDP development and planning. Such is complimented by representatives' structures that serve in the IDP forum of each selected municipality.

5. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF FINDINGS

Having adopted a purposive sampling strategy to select participants, the sample consisted of 63% of male and 37% of female respondents. The gender profile of respondents indicated a disparity in terms of representation and empowerment of women. Although South Africa has promulgated policies to correct the gender

imbalances particularly in the work environment (see Mathebula, 2014), majority of South African municipalities continues to exclude women (Govender & Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2013). The participants comprised employees from all employment levels from the Integrated Development Plan section, Local Economic Development section and Corporate Services in order to understand how the IDP is used to improve service delivery.

The municipalities use the IDP among other planning instruments as a management tool

For the purposes of enhancing service delivery through the IDP and other instruments of planning such as the Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan are required to support and supplement the delivering of the IDP objectives.

There is a general agreement that municipalities use the IDP as a management planning tool. All municipalities recorded 33% strongly agree and 60% agree. However, the Mopani District Municipality recorded 8% disagree and 8% strongly disagree. Although the difference in frequencies is not significant, it can be stated that as a district municipality (Mopani) has slight irregularities in using the IDP as a management planning tool. If the IDP is to realise the service delivery objectives of a municipality, it must be used as a management planning tool rather than being viewed as a mere paper required for legislative requirements fulfilment.

Municipalities has adopted the principles of management planning during the development of its IDP

If the IDP is to be employed as a tool to improve municipal service delivery, municipalities must adopt principles and processes of management planning. Literature suggests that there are benefits associated with management planning which could enhance service delivery through the IDP. This study probed the adoption and application of management planning principles and processes in the development of the IDP in relation to the enhancement of service delivery in municipalities.

The information above indicates that municipalities adopt the principles of management planning during the development of IDPs. Generally there is an agreement that municipalities adopt principles of management planning in the adoption of the IDP with the total of all municipalities recording 22% strongly agree and 58% agree. However, there are anomalies arising from the findings. For example, Mopani District Municipality recorded 15% undecided and 15%

disagree. Such irregularities can be attributed to municipal officials not aware of management planning and related concepts. In supplementary interviews conducted with members of spatial planning at Mopani District Municipality, one of the employees stated that:

‘Majority of members within the planning section are not informed on issues pertaining to management planning. Furthermore, there is a tendency within the municipality to adopt two different IDPs used for different purposes. One is presented to council while the other is submitted to the Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs’.

Though municipalities can adopt principles of management planning, the IDP will no longer serve as a management planning tool that could be used to enhance service delivery if not applied properly.

The municipalities’ use of IDP as a tool for effective service delivery has proved to be successful in the past

The success of the IDP as a tool for effective service delivery can be determined through achievements and milestones reached as was planned and incorporated within the IDP. South African municipalities have in the past formulated IDPs that do not have measurable objectives and not assess their success after a certain period of time. This study probed the success of the IDP for effective service delivery.

There is a solid general consensus that the IDP has proved to be successful in the past. All municipalities recorded a total of 27% agree and 44% strongly agree. There is a trend which indicates the variety in responses between local municipalities and the district municipality. For example Greater Giyani Municipality recorded 50% strongly agree and 43% agree, Greater Tzaneen Municipality recorded 26% strongly agree and 47% agree, while Greater Letaba Municipality recorded 22% strongly agree and 38% agree. In contrast the Mopani District Municipality recorded 8% strongly agree and 46% agree. Furthermore, there were disagreements with the success of the IDP across all selected municipalities. For example, Greater Tzaneen Municipality recorded 10% disagree, Greater Letaba Municipality recorded 16% disagree and 5% strongly disagree, while Mopani District Municipality recorded 15% disagree and 8% strongly disagree. The inconsistencies in the findings although not very significant, can be attributed to dissatisfaction among the respondents on the failure to use to IDP and the state of service delivery in such municipalities.

Through the use of the IDP the delivery of services has improved

Literature shows that there is an undisputable link between the IDP and service delivery. All municipal services to be delivered are incorporated within the IDP and thus serves as a tool for enhancing service delivery. However, short-term deliverables can be reviewed during the IDP review process thus affecting the delivery of other municipal services. A municipal IDP which is to serve as a tool that enhances service delivery must adapt to changing environments. This study probed the improvement of service delivery through the use of the IDP.

The results indicates that there is a general agreement that the IDP has improved service delivery. This is evident by a total of all municipalities recording 9% strongly agree and 58% agree. The frequencies however varied from municipality to municipality. For example Greater Giyani Municipality had high frequencies of strongly agree and agree as it recorded 14% and 79% respectively. Although there might be a general agreement that the IDP has improved service delivery, other respondents have shown a different view with some of them undecided while others disagreed. For example Greater Tzaneen Municipality recorded 32% undecided and 10% disagree, while Greater Letaba Municipality recorded 27% undecided and 16% disagree. The high rates of responses being undecided can sometimes be attributed to people not wanting to disclose the state of municipal service delivery or not entirely sure whether the improvements can be attributed to the use of the IDP. On the basis of these findings it can therefore be concluded that if municipalities fail to implement IDP objectives there will be dissatisfaction among which over the past have led to protests against local authorities by residents demanding better services.

Municipalities have successfully implemented the IDP

The success of the IDP means the improvement of service delivery as all and most services incorporated within will be delivered to communities. According to Phago (2009), pertinent implementation of the IDP in a municipal environment ensures acceleration of service delivery. This study probed the successful implementation of the IDP in municipalities. The aim was to solicit data on the successful implementation as it relates to the acceleration of municipal services.

The results indicate that there is a general consensus on the successful appropriate implementation of the IDP and its potential to enhance service delivery. Generally the total for all municipalities recorded 25% strongly agree, 42% agree, 14% undecided, 12% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. However, there is an anomaly in the findings where some respondents are of the view that the IDP has not been

successfully implemented. For example, Mopani District Municipality recorded totals of 8% strongly agree, 46% agree, 8% undecided, 23% disagree and 8% strongly disagree. Based on the information above, it can be ascertained that the implementation of the IDP appears to be successful in local municipalities; implementation in the district municipality has not reached its full potential as this is a municipality that must take charge of various principal services such as water and electricity.

Challenges confronting the municipality in the implementation process

There are numerous challenges inhibiting municipalities to successfully implement the IDP and therefore enhance service delivery. The study probed some of the common challenges confronting municipalities to hasten the delivery of services and particularly basic services through the use of the IDP.

The results indicate that municipalities that formed the sample in this study have major financial backlogs. Generally a total of all municipalities recorded a total of 56% financial challenges, 28% structural and organisational challenges, 11% lack of support. The IDP would not be able to thrive and deliver services in municipalities that are embattled by financial constraints. Furthermore, financial resources are crucial in supporting the delivery of service objectives as incorporated in the IDP. Mopani District Municipality recorded the highest percentage (69%) on financial challenges as a major backlog inhibiting the implementation of the IDP. The problem does not only hinder the implementation of the IDP.

Services incorporated within the IDP are properly implemented and delivered to communities

Municipalities have service delivery objectives and incorporate them within the IDP which serves as a tool and reference for accelerating the delivery of such services. Every time that municipalities are to deliver services to communities, reference should be made to the IDP which serves as a guide and a business plan of the municipality. The success of the IDP would be on the basis in which it is able to deliver all the services incorporated in it. This study probed the implementation and the delivery of services incorporated in the IDP to test it as a tool that serves to improve service delivery.

The results as per the respondents' responses indicate that municipalities are delivering services to communities through the use of the IDP with a total of all municipalities recording a total of 11% strongly agree, 43% agree, 14%

undecided, 21% disagree and 10% strongly disagree. There is however an inconsistency in the findings which proves that although local municipalities are delivering services to communities through the IDP, Mopani District Municipality is still behind. For example, the district municipality recorded totals of 8% strongly agree, 15% agree, 8% undecided, 38% disagree and 31% strongly disagree. This finding clearly indicates that the district municipality is dismally failing to deliver services as incorporated in the IDP. It can thus be concluded that Mopani District Municipality lack capacity to use their planning tools to improve services and address service delivery backlogs confronting the district such as water shortages.

Gaps in the Integrated Development Plan and service delivery

At times, municipalities experience phenomenal gaps in the IDP and its implementation in relation to service delivery. The study probed the IDP and the gaps that exists in the implementation and how it impacts on service delivery. These gaps prevent the delivery and the acceleration of municipal services thus failing the IDP. Although these gaps were not identified, this study probed their impact in the implementation of the IDP.

The results indicate that there are major challenges in the implementation of the IDP and thus affecting the capacity of municipalities in enhancing service delivery. Generally, all municipalities recorded a total of 22% strongly agree, 59% agree, 8% undecided, 7% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. Greater Letaba Municipality showed a slightly different trend and recorded 38% strongly agree, 22% agree, 5% undecided, 22% disagree and 11% strongly disagree. This finding might be because the municipality does not experience major gaps in the implementation of the IDP in its relation to service delivery enhancement when compared with other municipalities. It can therefore be concluded that phenomenal gaps in the implementation of the IDPs in municipalities affect the state of service delivery and the attempt to hasten it.

Strategies and objectives outlined in the IDP are implemented accurately to address challenges of service delivery within communities

In terms of the IDPs of all the municipalities selected in this study, there are major service delivery backlogs particularly with regard to basic services such as refuse removal, water and sanitation (Mopani District Municipality IDP, 2011-2016). However, municipalities prioritise the delivery of such services as they are mentioned as objectives to be delivered through the IDP which is a strategic tool. After assessing the municipal existing situation, the municipality must formulate

intervention strategies that will be used to address service delivery challenges identified in the analysis phase (Manyaka & Madzivhandila, 2013). This study probed the precise implementation of strategies and objectives for addressing service delivery challenges in municipal communities.

The results indicate that strategic objectives listed in the IDP as deliverables are accurately implemented and delivered to municipal communities with all municipalities recording a total of 11% strongly agree, 41% agree, 12% undecided, 29% disagree and 8% strongly disagree. However, the distribution of frequency across local municipalities indicates that there are respondents who are of the view that strategic objectives are not entirely accurately implemented for the purposes of correcting service delivery challenges. Respondents from Mopani District Municipality are of the view that strategic objectives are not accurately implemented, thus the IDP as a tool fails to correct service delivery challenges. For instance, the municipality recorded a total of 0% strongly agree, 15% agree, 23% undecided, 46% disagree and 15% strongly disagree. It can therefore be concluded that failure to implement strategic objectives of the IDP have adverse effects on an attempt to address service delivery challenges within municipalities.

The state of service delivery in the municipality is satisfactory

There is no doubt that not only municipalities within the Mopani district municipality area are confronted with service delivery challenges. Majority of South African municipalities are at the helm of service delivery backlogs (Seemela, 2008; Manyaka & Madzivhandila, 2013; Mathebula, 2014). This study probed the state of service delivery in municipalities with a view to test how the IDP can be used to correct such a state. This study sought to consolidate and determine the quality and lack thereof of service delivery.

The results indicate that the state of service delivery challenges in municipalities is not satisfactory with a total of all municipalities recording a total of 7% strongly agree, 36% agree, 21% undecided, 24% disagree and 12% strongly disagree. There is also an anomaly in the distribution of frequencies across local municipalities. For example, Greater Tzaneen Municipality recorded a total of 0% strongly agree, 32% agree, 37% undecided, 26% disagree and 5% strongly disagree while Greater Letaba Municipality recorded a total of 5% strongly agree, 38% agree, 33% undecided, 16% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. These findings indicate that the state of service delivery is very poor and thus can be generalised to all municipalities in the province in South Africa in general. If the

IDP is to be utilised as a planning tool and its objectives are implemented into deliverable, the state of service delivery can be improved in municipalities.

The IDP has addressed issues of service delivery challenges confronting municipalities

The IDP should not be viewed as a document to fulfil a legislative requirement but as a strategic planning tool. When the IDPs were first introduced, the purpose was to address service delivery challenges confronting municipalities as inherited from the apartheid government. In the past, services were delivered on the principle of separate development. This study probed whether the IDP has address service delivery challenges in municipalities.

Figure 1: IDP addressed service delivery challenges

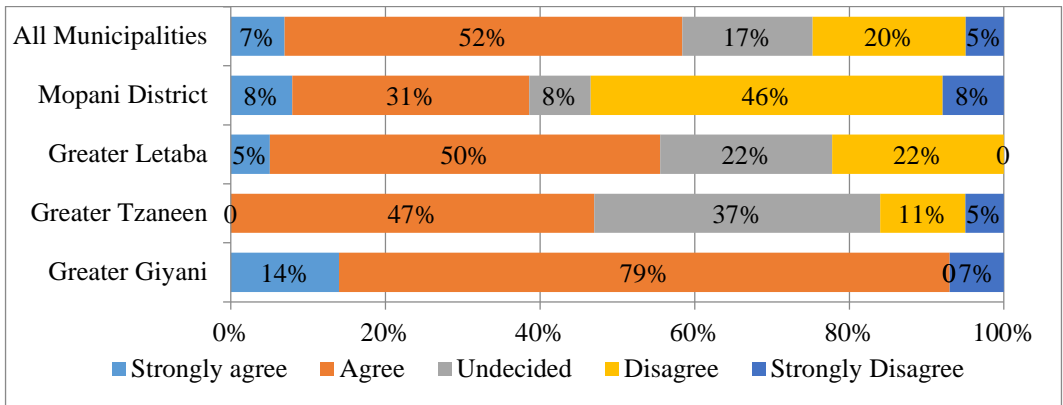


Figure 1 above indicates that the IDP has addressed service delivery challenges in municipalities. Generally, all municipalities recorded a total of 7% strongly agree, 52% agree, 17% undecided, 20% disagree and 5% strongly disagree. However, in Mopani District Municipality the IDP has not addressed service delivery challenges with the municipality recording totals of 8% strongly agree, 21% agree, 8% undecided, 46% disagree and 8% strongly disagree. This anomaly can be attributed to a lot of factors. Firstly, the municipality has financial challenges where there is a tendency of non-payment of salaries. Secondly, the municipality caters for a very large population which comparatively cannot be fully serviced. There might also be other factors prevalent to the municipality which the study could not observe.

6. CONCLUSION

This paper aimed to assess the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) as a management planning tool and how it could be used to improve service delivery in municipalities, using selected municipalities within the Mopani District municipality area as a case study. Through the data analysis and interpretation the paper successfully determined the application of the IDP as a planning tool in relation to service delivery. In this regard, the research made the following findings:

- Through the biographic details, it was discovered that gender disparities that exists in South African municipalities and the public sector in general also extends to municipalities within the Mopani District municipality area.
- Most municipal employees do not have an understanding of the IDP and how it is implemented. Obviously, this will impact on the proper implementation of the IDP and the adverse consequences on service delivery.
- Municipalities have a challenge of including municipal residents in the participatory processes of management planning and the formulation and the implementation of the IDP. This has a tendency of resulting in the planning process with predetermined service delivery objectives other than those to be implemented in terms of the needs of the citizenry.
- Financial, structural and organizational support in the implementation of the IDP is a major challenge for municipalities thus resulting in municipalities failing to implement all the services as incorporated in the IDP.
- The state of service delivery in municipalities is unsatisfactory while the IDP has not proven to be successful in that regard for the past five years of implementation.

In view of all this, the paper recommends for the effective and rigorous application and implementation of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP) for effective service delivery within selected municipalities of the Mopani District municipality area, Limpopo Province.

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