

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE CREATION
OF AN ENABLING ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS
OF MANAGEMENT AT LOCAL GOVERNMENT SPHERE**

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Abstract: The facilitation and creation of an enabling environment by local government for business to prosper is one of the key factors in local economic development (LED). In this creation of an enabling environment, effective service delivery by local government is important. Local government can create this environment through good governance and transparent management. Globally however, many local governments are struggling to provide an acceptable level of management and service delivery to their communities. The study has the aim to test the hypothesis of the creation of an enabling environment leads to economic development. The geographical focus of this study is on the Vaal-Triangle region in Southern Gauteng, South Africa. The study will focus on two local municipalities namely Midvaal Local Municipality and Emfuleni Local Municipality, situated in Gauteng. The perceptions of business owners regarding the creation of an enabling environment and service delivery within this area will be analysed. A total of 150 business owners were interviewed using a quantitative questionnaire. Data were statistically analysed through descriptive analysis. The results revealed that effective municipal management relates to the creation of an enabling environment for local businesses to prosper and in turn translate to economic development. In contrast poor municipal management leads to poor service delivery and a lack of economic development.

Key words: enabling environment, local government, management, service delivery

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Introduction

According to Grootaert (1998), good governance management with effective service delivery, is the foundation for local government to provide an enabling environment for local business to prosper and facilitate economic development. An enabling environment can be defined as a set or mix of conditions to create a favourable setting for something to take place in (Konig et al., 2013). In the case of small and medium businesses, this can refer to a mix of laws, regulation, infrastructure, international trade agreements and so forth, that either facilitate or hinder the daily activities of business (USAID, 2016).

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It is the responsibility of any government to provide basic services to its businesses and citizens and these services should be provided at a high level of effectiveness, responsiveness and efficiency through good management (Johnson, 2004). Good effective service delivery also increases the attractiveness of a city (Hagyari et al., 2016). Globally, the majority of governments are faced with challenges in service delivery and management. South Africa is no exception to this (Mpehle, 2012). Manning (2006) also mentions that poor service delivery is not unique to the South African local government environment, but is a global phenomenon.

The geographical focus of the study is on the Vaal-Triangle region, which forms the southern part of the Gauteng province, South Africa. The focus is on two local municipalities in the region namely Midvaal Local Municipality and Emfuleni Local Municipality. The two municipal areas will be compared regarding perceptions of local business on the effectiveness of creation of an enabling environment and service delivery. The Midvaal Local Municipality is one of the top performing municipalities in the Province. According to De Freitas (2013) Midvaal Municipality moved up 10 places in the annual Municipal Productivity Index in 2013, which places it within the top 5 percent of all municipalities in South-Africa. Furthermore, the municipality has performed better than the other municipalities in the region such as Emfuleni Local Municipality in terms of job creation and skills development (De Freitas, 2013). Efficient delivery of basic services and management thereof is important for any local region to grow and prosper (Rhodes, 1996). Poor service delivery and management could restrict the creation of an enabling environment, contributing to high levels of poverty, inequality and unemployment.

The objective of this study is to analyse the perceptions of formal businesses regarding service delivery and the creation of an enabling environment by the two local municipalities in the region. The hypothesis of the relationship between the existence of an enabling environment and economic development will be tested. The results of the two areas will also be compared and recommendations will be made for improved management.

Literature Review

Municipalities are given the responsibility to govern and manage the municipal area in an equitable manner, in which the provisions of basic service delivery are ensured, as well as to influence the growth of economic and social development (Ababio et al., 2008). In South Africa, the White Paper for the Transformation of Public Services of 1997 defines public service delivery as *“the capacity of any local government to deliver basic services to the local communities in an effective, responsive and efficient manner”*. The main objective of the White Paper is the provision of a policy framework which is practical to implement and enhances the participation of citizens and businesses in the decision making process (Republic of South Africa, 1997; Vyas-Doorgapersad, 2009). The White Paper states that the various issues which need to be addressed in the public sector include aspects

such as administrative capacity, high productivity, transparency, accountability and quality service delivery (Ncholo, 2000). Challenges faced by local government in basic service delivery remain, which often lead to service delivery protests in various parts of South Africa (Mpehle, 2012). Many of these challenges can be resolved through improved management. According to Bachman and MacCleery, (2006), high quality municipal service delivery ensures economic development thus creating an enabling environment in many sectors. The decline in economic growth and loss of trust between the citizens and the local government could be a result of poor service delivery.

According to the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO, 2008) the various factors contributing to the creation of an enabling environment include well maintained road infrastructure, adequate levels of bureaucracy and a functional educational system. Meyer (2014) identified 12 factors that have an influence on the creation of an enabling environment within a local community. These include: 1) *The formation of partnerships*: Partnership formation can be defined as local government, the private sector, the non-profit organisations as well as the local communities working together in order to improve the quality of life for all (Marais, 2012); 2) *Policies, initiatives, capacity and structures within local government*: The regulations within local government need to be more accommodating in order to promote business development; 3) *Political leadership*: According to Masciulli et al., (2009), successful leaders demonstrate the ability to move their thoughts and vision in the directions that are clearly supportive of their “grand design”; 4) *Social development initiatives and poverty alleviation*: According to the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2014a) poverty reduction involves sustainable growth and equality in favour of the poor (“pro-poor growth”); 5) *Economic development initiatives*: Human et al. (2008) argue that the creation of new businesses is needed in order to achieve high economic growth; 6) *Infrastructure development*: A well maintained infrastructure could result in the creation of an enabling environment; 7) *The development of human resources*: Marketing, entrepreneurial development, a skilled labour force and the protection of workers are needed in order to balance the flexible labour regulations in a country and subsequently, the development of human capital may lead to a better formal economy within the various sectors (Davis, 2004); 8) *The development of entrepreneurship and SMME’s*: The development of small enterprises may assist in strengthening the entrepreneurial management skills of any organisation; 9) *Access to transport and opportunities*: Transport infrastructure is regarded as important for promoting development and growth (Banerjee et al., 2012); 10) *Safety and security*: High levels of crime negatively impact on society, local businesses and the environment (Republic of South Africa, 2015); 11) *Agricultural development actions*: The agricultural sector is a major generator of employment as one of the job drivers of the NGP that also assists in poverty reduction and food security (The Presidency, 2012); 12) *Environmental and spatial development*

actions: Clean, quality physical environments attract economic development where sound environmental management is practised (The Presidency, 2012).

In terms of the creation of an enabling environment, local economic development enables the communities to improve their economic status as well as improving their overall living standards. It is therefore essential that local government identifies the relevant needs of local communities (Meyer, 2013).

Methodology

Research Area

Both the local municipalities included in the study, namely Emfuleni and Midvaal Local Municipalities forms part of the Sedibeng District Municipality and are located to the south of Johannesburg, South Africa. The area was selected as the study area because of the contrast that exists between the two municipalities. Midvaal Local Municipality has constantly performed well in Gauteng province in terms of management and service delivery while Emfuleni Municipality has experienced high levels of service delivery protests due to poor service delivery. The Midvaal Municipality is ranked 6th in South Africa according to the Municipal Productivity Index while Emfuleni Municipality has a much lower ranking (Moriarty, 2015). Table 1 presents a summary of key socio-economic statistics of the two municipalities with an overall comparison with South Africa.

Table 1. Socio-economic comparison (*Global Insight, 2016*)

Indicator	South Africa		Emfuleni		Midvaal		
	2000	2015	2015	2000	2015	2000	2015
Population Growth Rate	1.2%	1.5%	2.1%	0.5%	0.9%	2.8%	2.6%
Household Size	4.0	3.6	3.2	3.6	3.3	3.1	3.2
Population Density*	36.6	44.9	95.9	660.2	757.7	36.5	60.7
Level of Urbanisation	56.4%	62.5%	97.6%	97.4%	97.1%	57.3%	56.7%
Human Development Index	0.54	0.65	0.67	0.59	0.68	0.63	0.73
Poverty Levels**	66.2%	44.6%	40.2%	56.4%	41.7%	37.4%	26.5%
Infrastructure Basic Index	0.64	0.73	0.84	0.79	0.86	0.73	0.77
% of Households in Informal Housing	29.1%	22.0%	12.3%	18.5%	17.8%	17.7%	29.9%
Crime Index****	159.6	105.4	131.2	184.0	93.5	311.0	127.8
Economically Active Population	35.1%	37.5%	47.2%	40.1%	45.0%	47.1%	47.9%
Unemployment	26.6%	25.3%	28.1%	34.8%	44.9%	12.9%	23.5%
GDP Growth Rate	3.6%	1.2%	0.4%	4.2%	-1.4%	2.4%	1.2%
Trade Surplus per Capita (R1 000)	1.4	-1.6	0.2	-20.8	-4.0	3.7	1.8
Average Income per Household (x1000)	59.8	182.9	190.8	60.6	165.6	89.1	307.9
Tress Index	41.2	39.9	50.0	61.9	54.4	45.9	37.7

*Number of people per km² ** Share below upper poverty line ***Functional literacy: age 15+, completed grade 7 or higher ****Weighted average / 100 000 people

From the Table 1 it is clear that the socio-economic indicators of the Midvaal municipal area are far more favourable than those in the Emfuleni area for 2015. In terms of Human Development Index (HDI), Midvaal has an index of 0.73 compared to 0.68 for Emfuleni which is a significant difference. Also the poverty levels differs drastically between the two areas with Midvaal with a 26.5% poverty rate and Emfuleni 41.7%. The unemployment rate in Midvaal is also much lower than in the Emfuleni area with rates of 23.5% and 44.9% for Midvaal and Emfuleni respectively. GDP growth rates also indicates that Midvaal has much better economic conditions with a growth rate of 1.2% compared to a rate of -1.4% for the Emfuleni area. Also in terms of international trade, the Midvaal area has a positive trade balance if compared to the Emfuleni area. Per capita income in the Midvaal area is nearly double that of the Emfuleni area. Lastly, in terms of the diversification of the economy, Midvaal has a tress index of 37.7 compared to 54.4 for Emfuleni. This means that the Midvaal economy is more diverse with a more evenly spread on the contribution between economic sectors if compared to Emfuleni. Overall it is clear that the Midvaal area has much more positive socio-economic indicators if compared to Emfuleni. Against this background, the perceptions of local business owners regarding the provision of an enabling environment and service delivery will be tested. The hypothesis will be confirmed or rejected regarding the relationship between an enabling environment and economic development.

Measuring Instrument, Sample and Data Collection Method

The methodology utilised is a quantitative study approach. Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questions mainly addressed local businesses' perceptions on service delivery and the factors which contributed to the creation of an enabling environment by local government. Formal businesses in the Emfuleni (100 businesses) and Midvaal Local Municipal area (50 businesses) were the main participants of the study.

A self-administered questionnaire was designed to gather information. Its main sections included the following: general background information on the business, public services perceptions and the factors contributing to the creation of an enabling environment. A five-point Likert scale (where 1=very poor, 2=poor, 3=acceptable, 4=good and 5=very good) was used for two parts of the questionnaire – public service delivery aspects (5 items) and enabling environment factors (12 items). This was done to obtain the level of agreement business owners reported with certain statements regarding the research topic (Uebersax, 2006).

Businesses were randomly selected for the survey with a total of 150 business owners interviewed. The data from the survey was analysed using SPSS. Although the questionnaire was designed in a self-administering format, trained fieldworkers made appointments with the business owners and discussed or explained any uncertainty or confusion regarding the specific question asked.

Analysis, Results and Discussion

The study includes an analysis of the perceptions of business owners regarding the creation of an enabling environment and the level of service delivery in the area. The results as obtained from the survey were compared with the economic development data as listed in Table 1.

Factors for the Creation of an Enabling Environment

Table 2 presents the perceptions of local business owners regarding the factors contributing to the creation of an enabling environment.

Table 2. Comparison of enabling environment factors

Factor	Emfuleni area: Total average score	Midvaal area: Total average score
Improvement and access to transportation	2.72	3.30
Entrepreneurship and small business development	2.63	2.80
Institutional and organizational structures, policy and capacity	2.62	3.42
Economic development initiatives (LED)	2.59	3.39
Partnership formation	2.59	3.38
Environment management and spatial planning	2.55	3.30
Infrastructural development	2.50	3.18
Agricultural development	2.49	2.76
Safety and security	2.48	2.78
Local leadership and local champions	2.44	3.41
Human resource development	2.31	3.12
Poverty alleviation and social-welfare initiatives	2.28	3.40
Total average score	2.52	3.19

Each factor was ranked using the mean (maximum 5). In terms of the overall perception of business owners regarding the provision of an enabling environment, Midvaal area obtained a superior overall average score as assessed by local business owners if compared to the Emfuleni area. The Midvaal Municipality obtained an overall average score of 3.19, compared to the score of 2.52 obtained by Emfuleni Municipality. The Emfuleni area was evaluated by local business owners at a lower rate regarding all 12 factors as part of the enabling environment scale. The Emfuleni area did best regarding access to transportation (2.72) and in entrepreneurship development (2.63), while the worst performing factors were poverty alleviation actions (2.28) and human resource development (2.31). The Midvaal area did best in institutional and organizational structures (3.42) and local leadership (3.41), while it did worst in agricultural development actions (2.76) and safety and security (2.78). These results indicate that more attention is required for skills in the region (ILO, 2014b) and more focus should be placed

on agricultural development, while safety and security (Todaro and Smith, 2011) needs additional attention within the municipal area.

Service Delivery Results

The general service delivery perceptions of the business owners within the study area were also measured – Table 3.

Table 3. Service delivery analysis

Factor	Emfuleni area	Midvaal area
Water and sewer provision	3.65	4.36
Effectiveness of municipal accounts	3.44	4.12
Town planning and zoning regulations	3.05	3.18
Electricity provision	3.01	3.74
Roads provision	2.32	3.56
Total score	3.09	3.79

In terms of the overall perception of business owners regarding the provision of basic services, Midvaal area again, obtained a superior overall average score as assessed by local business owners if compared to the Emfuleni area. The Midvaal Municipality obtained an overall average score of 3.79, compared to the score of 3.09 obtained by Emfuleni Municipality. Both municipalities however, obtained a score of more than the average of 2.5 in terms of the scale. The Emfuleni area was evaluated by local business owners at a lower rate regarding all 6 factors as part of the basic service delivery scale. The Emfuleni area did best regarding water and sewer provision (3.65), while the worst performing factor the provision and maintenance of roads (2.32). The Midvaal area did best in water and sewer provision (4.36), while it did worst in town planning and land use (zoning) regulations (3.18).

Finally, the hypothesis could be accepted, that the creation of an enabling environment and service delivery leads to economic development if the two municipal areas are compared. From the literature review and the statistical analysis, the case of the Midvaal Local Municipality indicates that good governance and management, and therefore effective service delivery, will make a significant contribution to the creation of an enabling environment and eventually economic development.

Table 1 provides an indication of how good governance, service delivery and the creation of an enabling environment leads to local economic development. Midvaal Municipality with its proven track record of good governance and management has much better socio-economic indicators than the Emfuleni Municipality.

Recommendations and Conclusion

The overall purpose of the study was to analyse the perceptions of local business owners regarding the level of service delivery and the creation of an enabling environment by the relevant local government. This research is relevant in that the majority of municipalities in South Africa are struggling to deliver services at an acceptable level. This poor service delivery also impacts negatively on the potential of local government to provide an enabling environment for local businesses to prosper.

The research indicated that good governance and quality service delivery assists in the creation of an enabling environment (Pretorius and Schurink, 2007). In addition, the statistics in the research also suggest that if a positive enabling environment is created, the possibility exists that it will lead to economic development (Blakely and Leigh, 2013). It is interesting to note that local business owners were more than satisfied with local service delivery of essential services and rated the level of service delivery as “good” for the Midvaal Municipality at 3.79, while the Emfuleni area was rated much lower at 3.09. Regarding the creation of an enabling environment, the majority of the local business owners also agreed that the Midvaal municipality is providing an “acceptable” level of enabling environment with a score of 3.19 (maximum score was 5), while Emfuleni was rated lower at 2.52. The result for Midvaal Municipality is an excellent achievement taking into account the state of local government in South Africa, with frequent service delivery protest marches countrywide. Local business owners rated institutional and organizational structures as well as leadership as the most important enabling factors, implemented well by the municipality, while safety and security were the worst implemented of all 12 of the factors.

The following recommendations are listed as best practice principles as found in the study area: 1) Local government should prioritise economic development as one of its main priorities, with business development and support, entrepreneurship development and the creation of job opportunities as the objectives; 2) Skills training for small business, especially in technical skills are required; 3) A balance should be allowed between pro-developmental and pro-poor initiatives in order to allow both the formal business sector and the informal sector to prosper; 4) Partnership formation between the local government, businesses and the community is important and should be strengthened in order to be aware of possible problematic areas as well as the active engagement of structures and policies; 5) Active leadership and “local champions” comprise the most important factor for any local government to succeed. Governments should have political stability and leadership; 6) Structures and policies within the local government should be directed towards sustained economic growth; in other words, such a government should aim to improve employment opportunities, extending infrastructure capacity as well as improving the capacity for growth in both the formal and the informal sector.

The research conducted could assist local governments, not only in South Africa but globally, to assess their level of service delivery and the creation of an enabling environment. It may well also assist in allowing comparative assessments of municipalities and aid re-assessment of local developmental policy and priorities. Future research should include comparative studies of various local municipalities in rural and urban areas.

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ZWIĄZEK POMIĘDZY TWORZENIEM SPRZYJAJĄCYCH WARUNKÓW A ROZWOJEM EKONOMICZNYM: ANALIZA PORÓWNAWCZA ZARZĄDZANIA W SFERZE SAMORZĄDU LOKALNEGO

Streszczenie: Ułatwianie i tworzenie sprzyjającego otoczenia dla biznesu przez samorząd lokalny, jest jednym z kluczowych czynników w lokalnym rozwoju gospodarczym (ang. LED). W tworzeniu sprzyjających warunków, ważne jest skuteczne świadczenie usług, do których samorząd jest zobowiązany. Władze lokalne mogą stworzyć pozytywne środowisko poprzez prawidłowe i przejrzyste zarządzanie. W praktyce wiele samorządów ma trudności

z zapewnieniem wystarczającego poziomu zarządzania i świadczenia usług dla ich społeczności. Badania zawarte w niniejszym artykule mają na celu sprawdzenie hipotezy dotyczącej stworzenia sprzyjającego otoczenia prowadzącego do rozwoju gospodarczego. Geograficznie niniejszy artykuł poświęcony został regionowi Vaal-Triangle w południowej części prowincji Gauteng, Republika Południowej Afryki. Badania skupiają się na dwóch lokalnych gminach, Midvaal i Emfuleni, położonych w prowincji Gauteng. W artykule analizowane są: postrzeganie właścicieli firm w zakresie tworzenia sprzyjającego otoczenia oraz świadczenie usług w ramach omawianego terytorium. Podstawą analiz są wywiady przeprowadzone u 150 właścicieli firm za pomocą kwestionariusza ilościowego. Dane poddano analizie statystycznej za pomocą analizy opisowej. Wyniki wykazały, że skuteczne zarządzanie w samorządzie lokalnym dotyczy stworzenia sprzyjającego otoczenia dla prosperowania lokalnych firm, a to z kolei przekłada się na rozwój gospodarczy. W odróżnieniu, słaba administracja samorządowa prowadzi do świadczenia niskiej jakości usług i braku rozwoju gospodarczego.

Słowa kluczowe: sprzyjające otoczenie, samorząd lokalny, zarządzanie, świadczenie usług

創建環境與經濟發展之間的關係：地方政府領域管理的比較分析

摘要：地方政府為促進企業繁榮創造有利環境是地方經濟發展（LED）的關鍵因素之一。在創造有利環境的過程中，地方政府提供有效的服務很重要。地方政府可以通過善治和透明的管理創造這種環境。然而，在全球，許多地方政府正在努力為其社區提供可接受的管理水平和服務提供。該研究的目的是測試創造有利環境導致經濟發展的假設。本研究的地理重點是南非豪登省的Vaal-

Triangle地區。研究將集中在兩個地方城市，即Midvaal地方市政府和

Emfuleni地方市政府，位於豪登省。將分析企業主對在這一領域創造有利環境和提供服務的看法。使用定量調查問卷對150名企業主進行了面試。通過描述性分析對數據進行統計分析。結果表明，有效的市政管理涉及創造一個有利的環境，使當地企業繁榮，反過來轉化為經濟發展。相反，市政管理不善導致服務提供不足和經濟發展不足。

關鍵詞：扶持環境，地方政府，管理，服務提供