

**The Rationale of Violent Public Protests in South Africa's Globally-Acclaimed  
Democratic Dispensation**

**by**

**Phophi Nembambula**

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**Supervisor:** Professor Johannes Tsheola

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## **DECLARATION**

I declare that the dissertation hereby submitted to the University of Limpopo, for the degree of Masters of Development in Planning & Management on the Rationale of violent public protests in South Africa's globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation has not been submitted by me for any degree at this or any other university. This is purely my work and all material used from other scholars have been duly acknowledged.

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**Nembambula, P (Ms)**

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**Date**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this dissertation to my grandmother Ms Masindi Nembambula, My Aunt Ms Aluvhavhi Nembambula and my late grandmother Ms Denga Tshikosi.

## **ABSTRACT**

The manifestation of violence during the constitutionally protected protest action is highly questionable and unexpected feature of, the democratic dispensation in South Africa. Moreover, the right to protest is provided with strong restrictions to violence. Literature has publicised the reasons advanced for these fierce violent public protests dominating the democratic state and they are amid the lack of service delivery, maladministration and political squabbles. However, the geographic area of the protests questions the legitimacy of the so called service delivery protests. Notwithstanding, the recent statistics that show an upward increase in the accessibility of basic services by South Africans. Thus, this study dismisses the idea that the fierce public protests are as a result of a lack of service delivery, maladministration or political squabbles. Considering the location of the protests which is mostly in informal settlements close to metropolitan cities where some services have been provided. Whereas, the rural communities that receive very minimal, and to some extent no services have recorded very few protests linked to service delivery. Therefore, this study locates the violent public protests in the demonstration effect due to the geographical area and the advanced influence of media. The study used scholarship analysis to scrutinise the textual data gathered on the rationale underlying the violent public protests in South Africa's globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation.

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## CHAPTER 1

# INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND, RESEARCH DESIGN, METHODOLOGY AND LAYOUT

### 1.1. Introduction and Background

Lamenting the limiting effects of neoliberal globalisation on the freedom of state-action, Erwin (2008: 28) describes them as “profound and complex impacts” largely because of the unbridled dependence on existing economic structures and market forces as well as the propensity to; as Habib (2008: 43) puts it, circumscribe “the possibilities for a human-oriented development”. However, a democratic South Africa’s governance of service delivery planning symbolises, according to Smith (2004: 382), “a more sophisticated form of neoliberalism by virtue of how the state restructures in order to adhere to a private market logic in the provision of public services”, a conduct which is “particularly dangerous in a society that is dominated by inequalities and has a young track record in the democratisation of service delivery and its planning”. Additionally, the majority of South Africans who desire the most political consideration in service delivery are largely unfamiliar with the modern democratic developmentalism. In this context, the mushrooming of violent public protests raises questions of whether the municipalities’ legislated service delivery planning holds capabilities of establishing public accountability through public participation. Per legislation, as Mzimakwe (2010:501) puts it, the integrated development planning is designed to cultivate public accountability that would thwart the thirst for violence in the public service delivery protests by creating “a sense of ownership where citizens are given an opportunity to express their views”. For this reason, violent protests should suggest that the decisions that are made about what services to provide may

not be reflective of public needs, aspirations, uncertainties and fears, raising therefore questions of the rationale underlying the violent public protests.

Accordingly, at the dawn of democracy in 1994 the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) hoped to build citizenship through public participation in decision-making of service delivery (Smith, 2004; Tshandu, 2010; Hysing, 2015; Chamhuri, Hamdan, Ahmah & Ismail, 2015). In 1996, the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR), which became hegemonic, prioritised fiscal austerity above redistributive justice (Smith, 2004; Tshandu, 2010), thwarting therefore “the relevance of conventional social policies and the scope of local solidarity with regard to service delivery” (Jaglin, 2008: 1897). With that policy shift, municipalities came to face the dilemmas of the public-private market paralysis, with the requirement to balance “efficiency and equity (who gets what and where) objectives in service delivery” (Smith, 2004: 375). Local politics debate about service delivery came to be captivated by efficiency, at the expense of equity considerations (Jaglin, 2008; Cuadrado-Ballesteros, Garcia-Sanchez & Prado-Lorenzo, 2013), undermining the necessary political deliberations for redistributive justice provided for in the integrated development planning legislation. The capitulation of the democratic local state and, perhaps the failure to strike a judicious balance of technical planning and process-centred planning, was vividly marked by the unquestioning adoption of regulatory service delivery planning by municipalities, amidst swathes of poorly endowed communities across South Africa (Smith, 2004; Jaglin, 2008; Heravi, Coffey & Trigunarsyah, 2015; Murphy & Fox-Rogers, 2015). The effects of commercialisation of basic services, amidst stark historic inequities, allowed for the circumvention of advocacy service delivery planning, rendering the integrated development planning a

hollow process of decision-making of the elite technical planners rather than public entrepreneurs. In equal measure, municipal service delivery planning's emphasis on private market ethos undermined the significance of prioritising social objectives in the planning decisions making process (Erwin, 2008; Murphy & Fox-Rogers, 2015), with the potential for causing public apathy and despondence.

Unfettered reliance on a neo-liberal market agenda in municipal service delivery planning alone in a starkly unequal society (Jahed & Kimathi, 2007; Mukhithi, 2008; Theron & Ceasar, 2014; Cuadrado- Ballesteros et al, 2013) can be expected to undermine the social objectives and aspirations of public participation legislated in South Africa's integrated development planning. A pro-market approach to municipal service delivery planning in starkly unequal societies such as South Africa can be reasonably expected to foment popular discontent as well as attendant democratic performances of protests couched in violence. Given that public participation theoretically provides for "the determination of levels of service, budget priorities, and the acceptability of physical construction projects", as well as direction of "government programmes towards community needs, building public support, and encouraging a sense of cohesiveness within society" (Fox & Meyer, 1996: 20 in Mzimakwe, 2010: 502), the recent violent public protests in South Africa should raise questions on the genuine applicability of public participation in municipal service delivery planning. The latter can be expected to create "a sense of ownership where citizens are given an opportunity to express their views" (Mzimakwe, 2010: 501). Given that liberal democracies provide for platforms like municipal service delivery planning legislated to enforce public consultation and involvement, violent protests should suggest that

the prioritisation and decisions made about what services to provide are alien to public needs, aspirations, uncertainties and fears.

In the hope of increasing public confidence in local government, a democratic South Africa provides for public participation in service delivery planning through a variety of instruments including the 1996 Constitution, the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery of 1997, Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998, and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Other than setting commonly shared service delivery goals through on-going interactions, public participation in planning is legislated to serve as a basis for conflict management, educational campaigns about public needs and government priorities for collective welfare of the citizenry (Mzimakwe, 2010). If the municipal service delivery planning provides for public participation that promotes democracy, citizenship, empowerment and normative political dialogue, how would South Africans choose to resort to violent public protests? The study raises questions of the rationale underlying the violent public protests in a globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa. Moreover, the study relied on South Africa, which has been synonymous with violent public protests in recent years to the extent of being labelled the "Protest Capital".

## **1.2. Statement of the Research Problem**

There is cognitive convergence on the notion that municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches consist of the capabilities to promote or deter public participation because it can encourage or discourage public accountability and confidence in local government (van der Walt, 2007; Sachs, 2008; Draai & Taylor,

2009; Mzimakwe, 2010; Tshandu, 2010; Tsheola, 2012; Cruz & Marques, 2014; Galleta & Jametti, 2015). That is, the absence or presence of public participation can equally be logically traced back to the principles, processes, and practice of public participation in municipal service delivery planning. A public that is content with its influence and shaping of municipal service delivery decisions should be expected to become accountable because public opinion and priorities are taken into account, thereby inculcating a spirit of civic duty (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Tsheola, 2011, 2012; Cuadrado-Ballester, 2014). To this extent, a question of violence in the exercise of a constitutional right to protest would not arise (Tsheola, 2011, 2012). Where there is violence in the exercise of a constitutionally protected right to protest, questions need to be asked about the provisions of public participation through municipal service delivery planning.

Regarding a democratic South Africa, Letsoalo & Molele (2011: 2) acknowledge that “over the past few years there has been an increase in the number of violent public protests across the country”. The violent protests hotspots included Balfour, Ficksburg, Relela, Bronkhorstspuit and Sebokeng (Sosibo, 2011a). Bodibe (2008) blames the popular service delivery revolts on social service cost-recovery, privatisation of water, and outsourcing of electricity and commodification of housing. According to Mzimakwe (2010: 516), “citizens develop a sense of patriotism and purpose when they are allowed to make a contribution to civic affairs”. To this extent, the violent protests points to the lack of a sense of public accountability whose roots should be traceable to public decision-making in the municipal service delivery planning. The study holds that the violence in the constitutionally provided right to protest is associated with the regulatory service delivery planning processes and approaches that elevate technical

engineers' decisions above political deliberations or a matter of demonstration effect. Therefore, South Africa's experience of an alarming rate of violent public protests centred on service delivery (Tsheola, 2011, 2012; Alexander, Runciman & Ngwakwe, 2013) amidst comprehensive constitutional and legislative provisions for public participation rights (RSA, 1996, 1997, 1998, 2000, 2001) necessitates questions of the rationale underlying the violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation.

Evidently, there exist discrepancies between the constitutional and legislative provisions for public participation, on the one hand, and municipal service delivery planning practices, on the other. The study, therefore, needed to establish why amidst a globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation, South Africans would engage in violent public protest. Whereas protest is one of the rights provided for through the Constitution, the violence that has accompanied demonstrations about service delivery should necessarily raise questions of public ownership and accountability in regard to the processes of municipal planning and prioritisation of services to be delivered. In South Africa, the challenge of service delivery should, far from being a purpose of dissatisfaction of the provided service, political squabble about jobs and positions, but be examined through the lens of demonstration effect. It is in this context, that the study saw it befitting to investigate the rationale underlying violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa.

### **1.3. Research Questions**

The study's general research question is formulated as follows: Why are South Africans resorting to violent public protest amidst a globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation? This general research question is unpacked in the following specific research questions:

- What are the principles, processes and practices of public participation in municipal service delivery planning?
- How does demonstration effect influence public conduct?
- What is the provincial spatial spread of violent and non-violent protests?
- What is the association of the spatial spread of protests with provincial connectivity to metropolitan cities and countries?

### **1.4. Research Aim and Objectives**

The aim of the study is to investigate the rationale underlying violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation of South Africa. This aim is operationalized through the following objectives:

- To analyse the principles, processes and practices of public participation in municipal service delivery planning.
- To study the influence of demonstration effect on public conduct.
- To evaluate the provincial spatial spread of violent and non-violent protests.
- To examine the association of the spatial spread of protests with provincial connectivity to metropolitan cities and countries.

- To recommend measures for redressing the violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa.

### 1.5. Definition of Terms

**Municipal Service Delivery Planning:** Generally, planning is accepted as a normative, future-oriented and focused process of decision-making based on anticipation and desire to reduce future uncertainty (Theron, 2008; Murphy & Fox-Rogers, 2015). That is, planning is conceived as “an attempt to reduce the uncertainty about what will happen in the future through the management of change, in order to realize desired objectives” (Theron, 2008: 64). The study adopted the conception of planning which rejects the thinking that it involves a mere allocation of resources. To this extent the study holds that poor people too are involved in planning to reduce future uncertainties; hence, the enquiry into the violence in public protest about service delivery. In terms of the provisions of the *Constitution of the Republic of South Africa*, municipalities are required to execute specific functions with a view to realising developmental goals and objectives, by facilitating the delivery of basic public goods and services to communities (Republic of South Africa, 1996; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). The *White Paper on Local Government* refers to service delivery as a process of rendering services (Republic of South Africa, 1998; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). As Nkuna & Nemutanzhela (2012) put it, in fusing enforcement and application of power and authority over their functions, municipalities are required to provide for participatory democracy through municipal service delivery planning. It is in this fusion of power and authority over their functions that municipalities provide for principles, processes and practices of public participation in decision-making processes which describe the concept of municipal service delivery planning.

**Public Participation:** It refers to the process by which an organization or decision makers collaborate with interested or affected individuals in making decisions for problem solving with the goal of achieving better and more popularly acceptable decisions (International Association for Public Participation (IAP2), 2007). The *Strategic Frameworks for Public Participation in the SA Legislative Sector* attests to the idea that public participation is about collaboration, problem solving and decision making. In the South African context, public participation is a constitutional obligation that forms part of building and deepening South Africa's democracy by building transparency and accountability amongst community members and strengthening confidence in local government (Speakers' Forum SA, 2009). That is, public participation is dependent upon the processes and approaches that municipalities adopt for service delivery planning and decision-making.

**Demonstration effect:** is referred to as the public emulation of "expensive" consumption patterns and life styles of the metropolitan countries that cannot be supported through locally available resource (Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). This emulation of expensive consumption patterns are perpetuated through among other things, Media; Advertising; Television; Films and Tourism (Fisher, 2004). With demonstration effect, alien cultures tend to virtually substitute the local traditional norms and value in that the local traditional cultures tend to be undermined as uncivilized, undesirable and unprogressive. To some extent, demonstration effect breeds damaging consequences for local populations, and therefore increasing the tension between the state and communities. Hence, the emergence of violent public protests. Laferrere & Wolff (2006), are of the conception that demonstration effect has been applied in a variety

of contexts ranging from family to nations while at the core of the conception is the idea of “transfer decisions” as well as motives thereof.

**Democracy:** in Bassiouni (1998:5), the concept of democracy is based on the freely-expressed will of the people to determine their own political, economic, social and cultural systems and their participation in all aspects of their lives. Moreover, democracy is a basic right of citizenship to be exercised under conditions of freedom, equality, transparency and responsibility accompanied by respect for plurality of views. The existence of an active public citizenry is an essential element of democracy, their capacity and willingness to participate in democratic processes and in making governance choices cannot be taken for granted.

## **1.6. Research Design and Methodology**

This section discusses the plans, structure and strategies used in addressing the research problem and to find answers to the research questions. In addition to describing the overall scheme used, this section discussed the specific tactics and methods that were applied in gathering and analysing data.

### **1.6.1. Research Design**

The research design outlined a framework for the most appropriate assessment of the effects that different variables have on each other (Punch, 2006), which for this study, involved those of the violent public protests and a globally-acclaimed democratic state. This discussion of the research design suggests what observations were made (Punch, 2006). The study adopted a combination of the normative and desktop research designs in order to evaluate the rationale underlying violent public protests

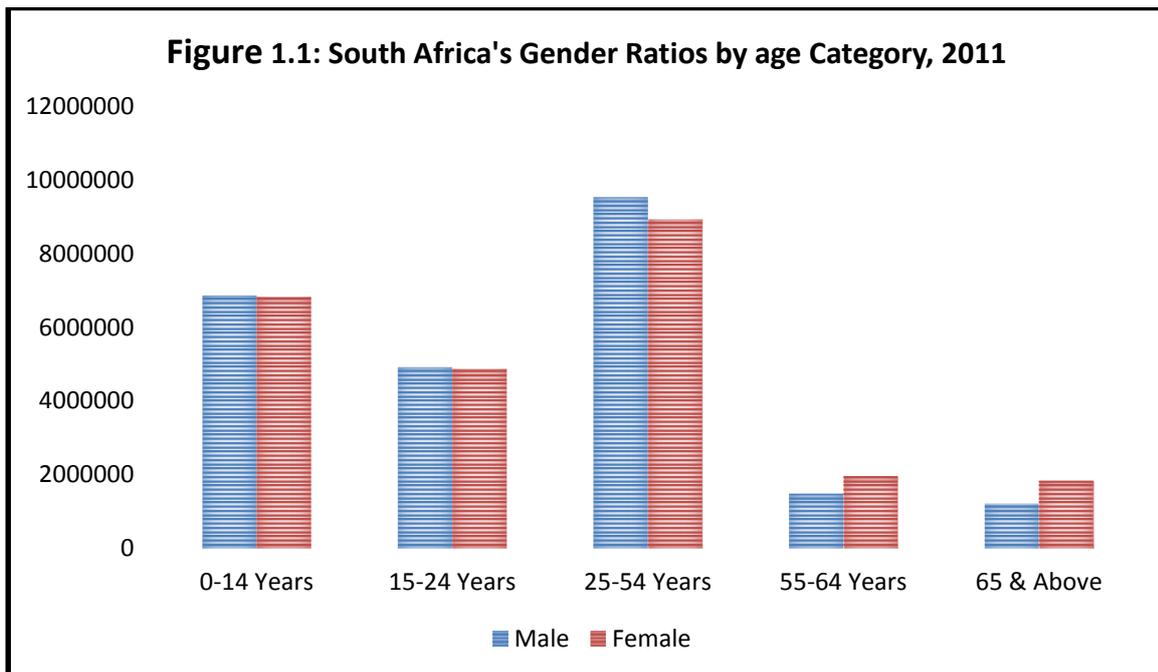
in a globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa, without attempting to control either of the two variables. Given that the two variables would be virtually impossible to control, the study was also relying on textile data in order to ensure that qualitative aspects of the investigation are adequately handled both in terms of the scheme, plan, data collection and analysis. Whereas biased towards qualitative approach, the study unavoidably involved quantification techniques in order to generate numerical statements about number of protests, violent and non-violent in South Africa per province. The latter entailed elements of a historical research design for the study. Whereas statistical measures were used for determining the incidences and rates of protests both violent and non-violent, qualitative techniques were also employed to provide descriptions of types, classifications and possible connections between the rationale underlying violent public protests in a globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa and the demonstration effect.

#### 1.6.2. Study Area

The study focused on South Africa which was under apartheid rule until 1994 when it gained independence and became a democratic state. South Africa is a liberal democracy that is constitutional, and its constitution is hailed to be the best in the world with basic rights that protect the people. South Africa too, as a liberal democracy is governed by principles as stipulated in its constitution; rule of law, free and fair elections, protection of minority rights, protection of basic human rights, separation of powers, due process of law, existence of more than one political party, existence of a constitutional document or documents, government accountability, freedom of the press and independent judiciary (RSA, 1996). From general observations, when South Africa moved from apartheid to democracy, citizens had high expectations of the

provision of basic services. 20 years into democracy, the service provision did not match the expectations of South Africans in the dawn of democracy. Hence, this has resulted in the birth of impatience with the government which is evident in the public protests. Although the liberal constitution provides its citizens with channels to participate in issues of governance, the citizenry still gets impatient and violent which needs to be explained.

South Africa is made up of nine provinces, and it was for that reason that the study found it fit necessary to zoom into those provinces. The country's nine provinces being; Gauteng, KwaZulu-Natal, Free State, North-West, Eastern Cape, Western Cape, Limpopo, Mpumalanga and Northern Cape. South Africa is estimated to be at a total population of 52 981 991 with a population growth of 0.48% (StatsSA, 2011), with the consideration of its excess mortality due to AIDS. The age structure of the South African population consists of 28.3%, 20.2%, 38.2%, 7.1% and 6.3% of the 0-14, 15-24, 25-54, 55-64 and 65 and above years age groups, respectively (StatsSA, 2011). Often, the visuals show majority of youthful males at the forefront of protests, especially where violence breaks out. It is therefore necessary to understand the gender ratio of the South African population, which is largely dominated by males in the 15-54 age categories (figure 1.1). Evidently, the 25-54 age group constitutes the largest majority of all the age categories; and, males dominate this category as well. In this structure, there is a semblance of high dependency ration because the next largest category is that for the under 15 years old. The fact that almost 80% of the South African population is below 55 years old and the scourge of unemployment hovering around 25% insinuates frustration with what people see elsewhere. Given the oasis of opulence, impatience with development could become rife among people.



Source: StatsSA, 2011

The age structure assisted the study in understanding as to which group of people is said to be in majority and is mostly in the forefront when violent public protests erupt. South Africa has 7 major cities located in different provinces categorised as Johannesburg 3.844 million, Cape Town (legislative capital) 3.562 million, Ekurhuleni (East Rand) 3.357 million, Durban 3.012 million, Pretoria (capital) 1.501 million, Vereeniging 1.2 million, Bloemfontein (judicial capital) 4.680 (StatsSA, 2011). Considering the population in the major cities in South Africa assisted in establishing whether the higher the population meant more violent public protests. South Africa as a whole has been labelled as the “Protest Capital” as a result of violent public protests that are claimed to be about poor services or the lack thereof. It is in that concern that South Africa is of interest to the study.

### 1.6.3. Kinds of Data Needed

From a theoretical perspective, the study needed topic information on the debates relating to the reasons underlying public protest as well as models of demonstration effect. Data on the principles, processes and practice of public participation in municipal service delivery was needed. Moreover, data on how demonstration effect influence public conduct, the spatial spread of protests in South Africa and its association to the metropolitan cities was of vital importance. Empirically, the study also required data relating to the population, gender ratio, age groups, level of urbanisation per province and land size area.

### 1.6.4. Target Population

The target population of the study was communities in South Africa's nine provinces wherein public protests have been taking place. This target population is appropriate for soliciting the data required for the study because of the fiercely contested violent public protests that are taking place in South Africa. The views and sentiments that represented the citizens within communities of South Africa delivered accurate data to determine whether or not the rationale underlying violent public protests in the democratic South Africa are negative, positive or neutral. In addition to the experiences of municipal service delivery planning and public participation, determinations to embark on violent protests as individuals and communities equally experience life as collectives in exclusionary groups, holding specific and, sometimes, contradictory influences. It is this diversity of experiences and views that the study hoped to draw from the provinces in the target population. That is, South African municipalities (from nine provinces) presents a combination of persons of diverse demographic properties, socio-economic standings, political persuasions, as well as

religious and cultural affiliations that would generate a wealth of data for the rationale underlying the violent public protests in a democratic South Africa.

#### 1.6.5. Sampling Design

The study took information from across South Africa and given its nature there was no sampling done. Instead, existing data from the Centre for Civil Society which is based at one of the reputable universities, being the University of KwaZulu-Natal was used. Since the study was not based on a sample, more existing data was extracted from StatsSA.

#### 1.6.6. Data Collection Tools

The study used existing secondary data to survey relevant literature and compile records of the debates on violent public protests in South Africa. Additionally, legislation and regulation of municipal service delivery planning and public participation was collected for reviews and analysis. These data was collected through literature via journal articles, books, government documents, internet sources and other media outlets.

Furthermore, the study used Newspapers, Centre for Civil Society (CCS) and StatsSA to collect empirical data. CCS has a collection of material relating to social protests in South Africa since 2009 up to date and collects the information from newspaper reports and press releases (see Appendix A-G). The data that was collected from the Centre for Civil society was in textual form describing the kinds of distraction, reasons advanced for protests, nature of protest and where the protests took place and was manipulated to construct statistics. The CCS keeps records of incidents of protests in

South Africa, describing the kinds of protests, where they happened, how they happened and the perceptions behind those public protests. The protests are captured by dates as well as per province. The study was able to compile 6 sets of documents per year from 2009 to 2014 organised in dates (see Appendix A). From the captured documents, descriptions of the protests were analysed to determine if there was a trace of violence during the public protests or not and the study was able to determine between the violent and non-violent protests and also to know where the protests occurred and if whether the place was a metropolitan city or not.

#### 1.6.7. Data Analysis Techniques

The study was highly qualitative in terms of analysis. However, it used quantitative methods to understand the underlying reasons for the violent protests. Summary statistics, graphs and tables were used to interpret the meaning for the rationale underlying the protests. Moreover, the interconnections between public violence and democracy were analysed through descriptions of the context (social, economic, political, environmental, cultural and historical) and classification based on conceptual tools. The textual data that was used was analysed through scholarship analysis, meaning reading textual data in order to understand the underlying meaning and also to examine the demonstration effect to weight its cognitive applicability to South Africa's protests.

#### 1.6.8. Validity and Reliability

The conceptual framework developed in the study has already been proven to be appropriate, valid and reliable for this kind of study. There are several recent examples of analyses of the concepts in question (van Der Walt, 2007; Draai & Taylor, 2009;

Mzimakwe, 2010; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012; Tsheola, 2012; Cruz & Marques, 2014; Isufaj, 2014). Which have delivered reliable and valid results. The research design and methodology adopted provided the most valid and reliable mechanisms for examining the rationale underlying violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa. All sources of data used for the study were credible.

The Centre for Civil Society was established in 2001 with the mission of promoting the study of South African civil society as a legitimate, flourishing area of scholarly activity and is based within the highly acclaimed universities and the people heading the centre are established authors. Moreover, the centre was established to also; develop partnerships within civil society aimed at capacity-building, knowledge sharing, and generating reflection and debate. Statistics South Africa (StatsSA) a highly rated statistics website which is a government agency tasked with collecting statistics in South Africa, was also used to collect data.

### **1.7. Significance of the Dissertation**

The study is significant from both the theoretical and pragmatic perspectives. Theoretically, the study potentially affirmed the notion that regulatory municipal service delivery planning creates conditions for public despondence and lack of genuine public participation. Also, it demonstrated that public participation that allows the community to influence decisions about services is also necessary for inculcating a sense of civic duty to be accountable and responsible, highlighting therefore the root causes of the violence in service delivery protests. Importantly, the study established the possibility of determining the rationale underlying the violent public protests in a democratic South Africa. This linkage was exceedingly important as it held the key to resolving

the violence in the public protests claimed to be about service delivery or the lack thereof. Equally, understanding this relationship provided insights into the interventions that are required to revise the underlying factor in violent public protests in a democratic dispensation. The study showed potential in uncovering the causes of the discrepancy between stated intentions for municipal service delivery planning and practice. Similarly, the study discovered insights into the general citizenry despondence amidst ideals of public participation policies and legislation. From a pragmatic perspective, the study highlighted the core causes of the tensions fuelling violent public protests.

### **1.8. Ethical Considerations**

As a result of the having used existing secondary data, the study did not directly interact with communities. However, StatsSA and the CCS interacted with communities. The study ensured that the names of people mentioned in the dissertation will not instigate harm against that person.

### **1.9. Limitations of the Dissertation**

Given the nature of the study, it was virtually impossible to conduct fieldwork in provinces where public protests were taking place. And the usage of secondary existing data could have compromised the quality of the study. However, the CCS's capacity to collect data was also limited as they use information from newspaper, media briefing and press release.

## 1.10. Structure of the Dissertation

The study is divided into 5 distinctive chapters and they are laid out as follows:

- **Chapter 1: Introduction, Background, Research Design, Methodology and Layout**

This chapter introduces the study while at the same time providing the background. Moreover, the chapter focuses on the design and methodology, which talks to how the study will be conducted in terms of what kinds of data was required, how the data was collected and analysed and who will be necessary to form part of the study. Also, it reflects the ethics that the study has adopted or considered.

- **Chapter 2: Theorizing Violent Public Protests within Democratic Governance**

This chapter presents different scholarly ideas related to the study. The scholarly ideas presented in this chapter are on issues of principles, processes and practice of public participation, processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning, violent public protests within democratic governance, the spatial spread of protests with connectivity to the metropolitans and the demonstration effect model and its influence on public conduct. The chapter further, uses those scholarly ideas to conceptualise, theorise and synthesize.

- **Chapter 3: Violent Public Protests in the Globally-Acclaimed Democratic Dispensation of South Africa**

This chapter zooms into South Africa and try to find out if practices are on par with the policies in terms of public participation, municipal service delivery planning, and governance. In doing that, the chapter uses evidence from South Africa.

- **Chapter 4: The 2009-2014 protest intensity and South Africa's provincial association with metropolitan areas**

This chapter presents an analysis of the data collected in the quest to understand the rationale of violent public protests in South Africa's globally-acclaimed democratic dispensation. The results of the analysis done in this chapter can confirm the notion the study holds and/or bring in new elements to the study.

- **Chapter 5: conclusion and recommendations**

This is the last chapter in the study, which brings conclusions and based on the results or findings of the analysis recommendations are made for future related studies.

### **1.11. Conclusion**

Since there are so many views that are being expressed with regard to the underlying factors of the recent public protests in democratic dispensation of South Africa. The mere fact that a democratic dispensation state provides for regulations towards municipal service delivery planning and public participation, it is unexplainable why people would resort to violence when they have been allowed a platform to protest constitutionally. However, the fact that the recent violent public protests are mostly characterised as service delivery protests must be questioned. Thus, this study hopes to uncover the rationale underlying these violent public protests in a different angle. The next chapter will theorize the violent public protests within democratic governance.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **THEORIZING VIOLENT PUBLIC PROTESTS WITHIN A DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE**

#### **2.1. Introduction**

Different states from across the world, both developing and developed have adopted complex selections of regulations, principles, processes and approaches to public participation which have demonstrated in many occasions the difficulty to comprehend and these were adopted in an attempt leading towards municipal service delivery planning (Tsheola, 2011; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). According to Spalding-Fecher (2005:53) “a major challenge facing developing countries is how to allocate scarce capital, especially public capital, for the provision of basic services”. Public participation is, therefore, used as a measure of guaranteeing that the decision-making and prioritisation about service delivery are shaped and influenced by the public (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Tshandu, 2010). Theoretically, democratic public participation is provided for through complex principles and processes that are often overlooked (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012; Sheely, 2015) in preference of simplistic quick fixes that certainly undermine public accountability and confidence in public institutions. Democratisation is sought to increase the openness of competition and citizen participation in politics, while many new democracies are more representative-democratic transitions have paradoxically coincided with increased violence in many countries (Hoelscher, 2015).

However, the choice of the processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning as well as that for the principles and practices for the attainment of genuine

public participation remain contested, both in theory and public administration (Mitlin, 2004; Kollapen, 2008; Sachs, 2008; Cebekhulu & Steyn, 2009; Theron, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010; Sagaris, 2014). Equally, the related conceptual formulations are fraud with buzzwords such as “participatory democracy”, “consultation”, “participatory partnerships” and so on, that are generally poorly understood and barely implemented (Mitlin, 2004; Sachs, 2008; Theron, 2009). Whereas the conduct of municipal service delivery planning strives to provide for genuine public participation and shared prioritisation, the inculcation of public accountability and the planting of public confidence in local government has remained at best elusive (Mitlin, 2004; Sachs, 2008; Mzimakwe, 2010; Tshandu, 2010; Muchadenyika, 2015).

The expectation is that public participation would be rooted as part of local democracy and the developmental local governance (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012; Sagaris, 2014). Hence, a democratic state makes legislative provisions for public participation through the municipal service delivery planning. However, municipalities have tended to adopt processes and practices that do not match the policy on municipal service delivery planning. Unavoidably, the prevalence of violent public protests, allegedly motivated by the challenges about service delivery, have raised eye-brows in relation to the municipalities’ conduct on service delivery planning for public participation (Mitlin, 2004; van der Walt, 2007; Kollapen, 2008; Sachs, 2008; Cebekhulu & Steyn, 2009; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Theron, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010). The study sets out to investigate the rationality or the lack thereof underlying violent public protests in the globally-acclaimed democratic South Africa where violent public protests have been prominent in recent years. At the local scale, public participation ought to create an environment that enables the public direct involvement and participation in decision

making process in order to shape and influence the decisions and priorities made about service delivery (Tsheola, 2011, 2012). The key is in the specific principles, processes and practices of public participation in municipal service delivery planning.

## **2.2. Principles, Processes and Practices of Public Participation in Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

Over the past 30 years or so, “human-centric” or “people-centered” principles emerged from western culture and were established as part of genuine public participation in decision making processes for local government. According to Andre, Enserink, Connor & Croal (2006), there are seven operating principles of genuine public participation, namely: (a) early and sustained public involvement in decision making; (b) well-planned and focused negotiation of the aim, rule and outcomes of participation; (c) support to participants and communities in their will to participate through adequate diffusion of information; (d) tiered and optimized emphasis on public participation at the most appropriate level of decision making; (e) open and transparent access to information; (f) context-oriented respect for all affected communities and improvement of public confidence in the process and outcomes; and (g), credible and rigorous public participation facilitated by a neutral person in order to increase the confidence of the public to express their opinions and reduce tension. Whereas democratic states like South Africa have adopted these principles, questions of their practice have continued unabated. It has to be asked whether municipal service delivery planning practices are underwritten by these seven principles. Realistically, there would almost always be discrepancies between policy pronouncements and practice.

Public participation involves complexities because it attempts to integrate expertise, values and concerns of stakeholders, as well as inclusion of preferences of citizens into procedural frameworks that enable the generation of consensual policy suggestion (Renn, Webler, Rakel, Dienel & Johnson, 1993; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). Renn *et al* (1993), points out that public participation entail three consecutive steps: firstly, identification and selection of concerns; secondly, identification and measurement of impacts of the different decision options; and lastly, aggregation and weighting of expected impacts by randomly selected citizens and elicitation of citizens preferences. Additionally, a variety of conceptual formulations of public participation have been proposed, which are captured in the lexicon of “participatory development”, “participatory democracy”, “consultation”, “involvement” “stakeholder engagement”, “people-centred development”, “broad-based development”, “social process development” and “participatory partnerships” (Theron, 2009; Cliquet, 2010; Sagaris, 2014). However, the practice of public participation is yet to move beyond these conceptual buzzwords and their rhetorical recitation in the state corridors in most emerging democracies. Translating these conceptual formulations into practice has remained extraordinarily difficult due to a combination of social, economic, political and cultural factors, among other things.

The hegemonic municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches determine whether or not adoption of the latter strategies would ultimately encourage or discourage public participation. Hence, the rebellion of the public about service delivery appears to be fomented through a sense of social exclusion, anger and

frustration, which is traceable to municipal service delivery planning (Alexander, 2010, 2012). Recent violent protests wherein the public destroy the meagre services that existed, should therefore raise questions about municipal administration, service delivery planning and execution of public participation for public accountability, ownership, control and execution of service delivery processes (Bontenbal, 2009; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Tshandu, 2010; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012; Tsheola, 2011, 2012). That is, the public capacity and objective opportunity to influence decisions depends heavily on the municipal service delivery planning processes, which are themselves a slippery contested terrain, both theoretically and pragmatically (Dale, 2004; Miltlin, 2004; van der Waldt, 2007; Kollapen, 2008; Theron, 2008, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010; Tshandu, 2010; Tsheola, 2012).

Public participation appears to have remained a pipe dream, especially in the sphere of service delivery. Hence, the public protests are increasingly linked to the apparent voicelessness of people in the decision-making processes of municipal service delivery planning. The conduct of municipal public participation affect service delivery and, potentially, fuelling the attendant violent public protest. According to Madzivhandila & Asha (2012), public participation is important for the effectiveness of any development initiative including service delivery because it promotes the rights and duties of community to self-govern. Different counties have come up with legislations that outline the principle of public participation and agreements that are promoting public participation like the Rio declaration, universal declaration on human rights, international covenant on civil and political rights, agenda 21 and the Vienna declaration (Bastidas, 2004; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). The latter, have been evident in china's community participation and has produced fruits of success (Zhu, 2015).

Hence, the final product that is delivered to the people does not represent their needs and aspirations; as a result, their frustrations and anger are demonstrated on the streets wherein meagre services that have been delivered are destroyed. In emerging economies that are democratic, such violence can be avoided by listening to the views of the people and feeding their inputs into policy formulation.

When public functionaries ignore the views of the communities they serve, they are violating one of the core values of the principles of public participation which states that public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the final decision (Siphuma, 2009; Theron & Mchunu, 2014; Sheely, 2015). There are many that advocate the “word” public participation but only a few are able to practise it. From “People shall Govern” public participation beyond slogans (GPL, 2012), deliberated on the violence that have accompanied the constitutional right to protest as a questionable act by the citizenry. Hence, some advocates of public participation advocate for the use of petition systems which is constitutionally provided to raise their concerns instead of violence. The same advocates continues to say that there are certain things that needs to be done for effective public participation which are to strengthen public participation strategies in governance processes, share knowledge and skills required to facilitate a meaningful public participation, bridge the gap between public participation theory and practise and to invest in public participation initiatives in governance processes (Auriacombe, 2010; GPL, 2012). Public participation has been a popular but poorly understood concept and practice within liberal democracies (Alexander, 2014; Hoelscher, 2015).

There are diverse forms of governance which relate differently to accountability; and, there is a well-accepted assumption that democracy provides principles and practices that are most amenable to enhanced and effective governance. Emerging economies have uniformly promoted participatory governance with their transition to democracy (Multlin, 2004; Van der Waldt, 2007; Speer, 2012). Public participation is one of the fundamental principles of democracy. Hence, it is associated with accountability both on the part of the citizenry and government (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Tsheola, Ramonyai & Segage, 2014). Participatory governance is expected “to bring about several policy benefits, including increased accountability, higher government responsiveness, and better public services” (Speer, 2012: 2379). To this extent, participatory democracy should be associated with peaceful protests. Public participation is designed to allow for the engagement of the citizenry (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Theron & Mchunu, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). Such engagement is, theoretically, expected to create the potential for “sustained accountability and confidence in governance” which could affect improved service delivery (Draai & Taylor, 2009: 112). Therefore, it is not farfetched to argue that “protests reflect disappointment with the fruits of democracy” (Alexander, 2010: 37). With different modes of participation, many emerging economies have shown to be using representative mode of participation as the most preferred (Joshi, 2013). However, representative participation has left more people frustrated and taking to the streets to practice their constitutional right to protest accompanied by violence because they feel that the representation did not represent their felt needs and aspirations (Theron, 2009; Joshi, 2013). A constitution of a democratic state justifies and provide for protest of whatever kind with restrictions to violence (Draai & Taylor, 2007; Mpehle, 2012). However, although the protests are justified and provided for by the constitution of a democratic state, the violence that

erupts during those public protests can be regarded as disappointments with what “democracy” has to offer (Booyesen, 2007; Alexander, 2010; Habib, 2013).

A democratic state is said to uphold the principle of people’s power which in itself implies participation and involvement of the citizenry in decision making processes, that is, municipal service delivery planning processes (Alexander, 2010; Mzimakwe, 2010; Tsheola *et al*, 2014). The involvement of the citizenry in municipal service delivery planning processes will curb the scope for rebellion through violent protest alleged to be about poor or lack of service delivery (Bontebal, 2009; Alexander, 2010, 2012; Mzimakwe, 2010). People’s power allows the public to take ownership and responsibility of the services to be delivered. As a result, they will refrain from destroying the meagre services available to them. Literature has shown that a democratic state is a state that places its people at the forefront of its plans and serves them at its utmost ability (Tsheola, 2012; Habib, 2013; Tsheola *et al*, 2014). Recent fierce public protests suggests that the channels of communication between the electorate and the citizenry is almost non-existent to a point where the public functionaries assume what the citizenry need without consultation and provide services that are irrelevant and do not address the needs and aspirations of the people (Draai & Taylor, 2007; Mpehle, 2012). The rationale underlying the violent public protest has been characterised as the rebellion of the poor, political squabbles and maladministration (Alexander, 2010; Habib, 2013; Mpehle, 2013). According to O’faircheallaigh (2010: 22) “participation is of value in its own right, in that people cannot develop their full potential as citizens except through participating in the works of governance”. By allowing citizens to develop a broader understanding of the municipal systems of governance and giving them insight into the interest of their

fellow citizens and of society, opens a room for improvement which can aid in the inculcation of the spirit of ownership and need for citizenry to protect public property as it is understood to be a true reflection of their needs and aspirations (Tsheola, 2012; Theron & Mchunu, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). Public hearings, citizen forums, community meetings, community outreach, citizen's advisory groups are all considered as the primary apparatus for public participation which if advocated well, can lead to a reduction in citizen's doubt towards government and stakeholders in decision making processes (Sanoff, 2000; Wang, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). Genuine execution of the primary apparatus of public participation in communities' advocates for genuine public participation which will be evident in the administrative decision making process wherein citizens are the owners and co-producers of public goods i.e. service delivery (Wang, 2001; Sagaris, 2014). Furthermore, Literature confirms that meaningful participation is evident when the public's voice is heard and incorporated in the final decisions (Wang, 2001; Theron & Mchunu, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015).

Therefore, participation in decision making leads to better understanding and satisfaction of public needs as well as building of consensus on service goals, priorities and performance expectations (Theron, 2009; Cliequet *et al*, 2010; Theron & Mchunu, 2014) . Thus, the willingness of the public functionaries in accountability for the services they provide as well as support participation by the citizenry. In a number of instances, literature has shown that public participation is one of the central principles of good public governance and effective service delivery (Booyesen, 2007; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Joshi, 2013; Markham & Doran, 2015). A constitution of a democratic state provides for public participation in affairs of governance and a platform for

members of the public to raise issues and concerns through the process of voting representatives in power (Booyesen, 2009). However, in recent years more and more people are resorting to violence in practising their constitutionally provided right to protest in the hope of their voices to be heard and their needs and frustrations to be understood by those in power (Booyesen, 2007; Alexander, 2010, 2012).

Advocates of public participation in Brazil hope that the establishment of participatory programmes will address basic social and political challenges that the country is currently confronted with and that direct participation is believed to increase citizens' knowledge, connect to a broader community and produce empowerment as they become active in making their own decisions (GPL, 2012; Hoelscher, 2015). Genuine participation allows the citizenry to better understand the management limitations which bears the possibility of mutual understanding between the citizenry and the government (Wang, 2001; Tsheola, 2012). According to Wang (2001:324) "participation improves public trust of government decision making". However, window-dressing participation has continuously brought criticism from the citizenry in that government is ineffective in service delivery, dishonest in decision making and unfair in service delivery which those criticisms manifest in violent public protests mostly alleged to be about poor or lack of service delivery. Observing from the current public participation practice in decision making processes there remains a question regarding whether or not the execution of participation processes and practise can be said to be legitimate (Cliquet *et al*, 2010).

The extent to which the principles of public participation are being applied has been questionable due to the recent violent public protests in South Africa. For it is only through genuine public participation where the citizenry will be happy and satisfied with the services delivered to them and also feel the need to protect the delivered services. Olteanu (2013), points out that genuine public participation is characterised by nothing except non-discrimination, equal treatment, proportionality, consistency, objectivity, transparency and impartiality. With the above mentioned characteristics in place there would be in no circumstance a scope for the citizenry to feel left out in decision making (O'faircheallaigh, 2010; Herrera & Post, 2014). By providing better information to citizens, ensuring transparency in government documents including strengthening the extent of participation of the citizens in decision making is considered as a core business of public administration (Olteanu, 2013; Theron & Ceasar, 2014; Zhu, 2015).

### **2.3. Processes and Approaches to Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

The goodness of the concept of planning has led to uncritical acceptance and practice, assuming the inevitability of public service delivery; yet, there exists no single monolithic planning process and approach that provides for best practice of public participation in municipal service delivery. Beyond its contestations and crisis, the concept of planning is slippery, elusive and complex (Dale, 2004; Theron, 2008; Tsheola, 2011). Being normative, future-oriented and focused on anticipation and reduction of future uncertainty, planning is conceived as “an attempt to reduce the uncertainty about what will happen in the future through the management of change, in order to realize desired objectives” (Theron, 2008: 64). To understand the variable nature and effects of planning, it is necessary to appreciate the typologies thereof.

Constructions of the typologies of planning are generally based on three criteria, viz: goals, activities and levels (Dale, 2004; Tsheola, 2012). Whereas planning goals classification distinguishes between wartime planning, anti-cyclical planning and development planning; planning activities classification emphasizes the design of the planning exercise, professional positions and role of stakeholder participation in planning to distinguish between socio-economic planning, natural (environmental) planning and engineering planning; whilst operational level of planning activities deals with the spatial scales at which planning is exercised, such as international, national, regional, town, household, family and individual planning, resulting into three operational levels of activity, sectoral and integrated-area planning (Dale, 2004; Theron, 2008). Municipal service delivery planning straddles the three criteria of planning goals, activities and operational levels. Conceptually, municipal service delivery planning is complex as it should encapsulate an integrated-area, socio-economic, environmental (natural resources) and engineering development planning, pointing to a degree of planning sophistication that the majority of poor people may not comprehend. As Nkuna & Nemutanzhela (2012) observe, the complexity of the developmental local state tends to elude public functionaries themselves.

Although there are two broad categories of municipal service delivery planning processes described as technical planning and process-centred planning (Dale, 2004; Theron, 2008; Cuadrado-Ballesteros *et al*, 2013). The complexities of planning processes and approaches is exacerbated by the multiple subdivisions and overlaps wherein policy analysis and policy planning straddle the two broad categories, whilst economic planning and physical development planning reside in the former class when the roots of interpretative (communicative) planning and collaborative planning are

firmly planted in the latter category (Dale 2004; Muchadenyika, 2015). In practice, ideal municipal service delivery planning entails judicious combinations of these different variants, which are generally contradictory. A simplistic choice of a strong bias towards one extreme would potentially frustrate public participation (Tsheola, 2012; Hysing, 2015). For instance, notwithstanding the legislative lip-servicing of public participation, municipal service delivery planning's exclusive bias towards engineering decision-making processes and approaches has led to "crisis of planning", failing public accountability, erosion of public confidence in local government and poor service delivery (Criqui, 2015; Muchadenyika, 2015). In the absence of a tenable theoretical interpretation of the recent public violence that disrupts the existing infrastructure and services clouting the perfectly constitutionally acceptable democratic performance of protest, municipal service delivery planning can be tenably blamed for thwarting the scope for political deliberations about service delivery decisions amidst emotive and stark historical inequalities (RSA, 1996; Tsheola, 2011, 2012). To be successful, municipal service delivery planning should integrate people-centred development with social learning processes, in order to prioritize the ideals of a holistic, normative and humanist approach to public participation (Theron 2008; Sheely, 2015).

There are two broad municipal service delivery planning approaches of regulatory and advocacy, respectively aligned to technical planning and process-centred planning (Goodall, 1987; Smith, 2004; Jaglin, 2008). The regulatory service delivery planning approach emphasizes the attainment of the optimal allocation of resources between all of the competing needs or uses within a society (Cuadrado-Ballestros, 2013). Whereas advocacy planning approach attempts to mobilize and channel resources to new or neglected uses in order to achieve the legitimisation of new social objectives

or a major re-alignment of existing objectives (Goodall, 1987; Criqui, 2015). Evidently, regulatory planning approach draw inspiration from private markets, whilst advocacy planning approach depends on a public entrepreneur planner representing the interests of a particular social group, with loyalties and responsibility directed solely to their needs (Goodall, 1987). Theoretically, the advocacy service delivery planning approach should allow for genuine public participation whereas regulatory planning approaches depend entirely on technical expertise of the planner that nullifies and discourages public participation.

Light on the two approaches of municipal service delivery planning will enable one to understand and have ability to judge and relate the violent public protests to the planning approaches. Advocacy planning approach instigates for the planner who represents the interest of a particular social group with allegiances and responsibility solely dedicated to its needs (Goodall, 1987). Whereas regulatory planning approach enforces reliance on private markets (Tsheola, 2012). However, the effectiveness in municipal service delivery is crucial to the attainment of better services to the public. There are different methods that are adopted to ensure that better services are provided to the people through legislations designed to ensure that community participation in issues of service delivery is not just a “buzzword” used but a reality. The approaches to effective municipal service delivery planning involves nothing inferior to the participation of citizens in decision making processes especially those that affect their daily lives (Tshandu, 2010; Herrera & Post, 2014). The establishment of the municipal systems Act of 2000 shows support to the latter, by intending to develop a culture of public participation in decision making.

A compliant and functional municipal service delivery planning is that which integrates the views and concerns of the citizenry in its planning processes, through genuine public participation which comes as highly recommended in the IDP (Integrated Development Plan). The IDP encourages for genuine public participation within municipalities wherein the public functionaries assemble with the citizenry in the hope of understanding their needs, priorities and aspirations in terms of the services, in that process the citizenry is made aware of the available public funds (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). Hence, possibilities of the citizenry violently taking their service delivery grievances to the street through their constitutionally provided right to protest will be questionable and unacceptable. The IDP also makes it known to both the public functionaries and the citizenry an element of effective municipal service delivery planning in that the citizens themselves identify the least services and impoverished areas within the municipality and also deciding on where municipal funds should be spent (Theron & Ceasar, 2014). The strength of a democratic local government is evident in the manner in which decisions are taken, wherein active participation from members of community goes without saying and the eruption of violent public protests in those local areas would be questionable. The effectiveness and efficiency in the processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning requires for transparency and accountability from public functionaries (Cuadrado-Ballesteros, 2014; Cruz & Marques, 2014). In a democratic country like South Africa, whose constitution is hailed as one of the best in the world (Van der Waldt, 2007; Mzimakwe, 2010). The Constitution is considered as the supreme law of the state, which allows for each and every member of the society to participate in decision making processes that affect them at local level (RSA, 1996;

Tshandu, 2010; Herrera & Post, 2014). Municipal service delivery planning incorporates the element of Public participation which is understood as a process of involving all members of the community in decision making and issues of local government, irrespective of colour, race, gender or level of civilisation (O'faircheallaigh, 2010; Tshandu, 2010; Herrera & Post, 2014). The processes of public participation for municipal service delivery planning should serve as a mechanism for cultivating a spirit of accountability, both for the public functionaries and citizens at local scale. However, genuine public participation has potential to curb the space for the rebellion of the citizenry by taking to the streets violently. Moreover, in achieving the objectives set out for the local government, public participation is therefore, adopted to ensure that the prioritisation of services is made by the beneficiary themselves, based on the scarcity of public funds earmarked for service delivery (Tshandu, 2010). The Local government ought to ensure genuine public participation in steering service delivery processes at local level, not because of its close proximity to the society, but due to the obligation for shared prioritisation and the inculcation of public participation (Mitlin, 2004; Sachs, 2008; Mzimakwe, 2010; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). Public participation can be seen as a process of deepening and consolidating democracy by, encouraging the participation of citizens in the process of governance which promote a responsive and accountable government whose decisions are accepted and respected by the people (Theron 2008; Sheely, 2015).

Municipal service delivery planning should be focused, future-oriented, anticipation and reduction of future uncertainty through the management of change in order to realize desired objectives (Theron, 2008), so much so, the violent public protests

would not be as fierce if municipal service delivery planning was in good practise. Sosibo & Nkosi (2011) have observed that the violent public protests are generally caused by three interlinking factors, namely basic services, a lack of access to livelihoods and the disjunction between councillors and communities. This could be supported by looking at most violent public protests that are claimed to be about services whereas in actual fact they are political squabbles of political party in-fights and communities are used as a battlefield. There are a number of legislative and policy documents which reflect governments' commitment and mandate to people centred development, these documents are intended to shape administrative processes so as to facilitate citizens' participation in public processes (Khumalo, Lotter & Khanyile, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014).

Among other things, the processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning are designed to facilitate public participation (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Cuadrado-Ballesteros *et al*, 2013; Theron, Mchunu, 2014). Participation is considered as a mode of planning. Hence, the decentralisation of service delivery planning process. The centralisation of service delivery planning at local level has potential to display genuine public participation instead of window dressing (Hiskey, 2011; Joshi, 2013; Herrera & Post, 2014). However, Markham & Doran (2015) share the same sentiments with the latter on decentralisation of decision making processes in service delivery in that, whenever municipal service delivery planning and decision making are centralised there will always be issues around inequality and discrimination. The centralisation of decision making relating to service delivery impact on the service accessibility, service use and outcomes (Smith, 2004; Jaglin, 2008). Genuine public participation inculcates the spirit of responsibility and ownership amongst the citizens

both at local and national level (Mzimakwe, 2010; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). The placement of municipal service delivery planning processes in the hands of the citizenry enables them to shape their own future which brings a sense of ownership and responsibility to protect the public property and infrastructure than destroy it (Booyesen, 2007; Theron, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010). There are different standpoints behind the violent public protests crisis (Alexander, 2010; Habib, 2013), municipal service delivery planning or the lack thereof can be located as one of the contributing factors towards this crisis together with the inter-political squabbles and administration problems at local government (Mpehle, 2012; Habib, 2013). While the local government's responsibility is to provide basic services to its citizenry and create a platform for public participation. Mpehle (2012: 213), argues that "government's failure to adequately meet communities' needs has led to the recent public protests", most of which turn violent and the meagre services provided and infrastructure are destroyed.

The primary responsibility of local government is to provide services to its people as well as create an enabling environment for citizens to form part of the local government decision making processes through municipal service delivery planning (Booyesen, 2007; Mzimakwe, 2010; Mpehle, 2013; Theron & Ceasar, 2014), that is, the proper implementation of the latter will close the scope for frustrated citizenry about their needs and aspirations not being addressed. In the absence of local government fulfilling its primary responsibility, citizens have a constitutional right to protest and raise the concerns and grievances with restrictions to violence. Thus, it could be suggested that in instances where the public protests turn violent an advocacy type of planning has not been applied in addressing the needs and aspirations of the people is valid (Goodall, 1987; Draai & Taylor 2007; Alexander, 2010; Tsheola, 2012). In

cases where municipal officials assumed what the citizens needed and aspire to have and deliver services using a one glove fits all approach, there will be a stir of anger amongst the citizenry. When municipal service delivery planning involves advocacy planning, a room for unsatisfied citizenry who care less about protecting public property is created (Cliquet, Kervarec, Bogaert, Maes & Queffelec, 2010). Thus, a satisfied citizenry with a sense of belonging ensures the protection of the public property.

Embracing public involvement in issues of municipal service delivery planning creates scope for genuine public participation with the possibility of citizen satisfaction. Cliquet *et al* (2010) have observed that genuine participation is essential to the legitimacy of decision making processes in municipal service delivery planning. The role played by the public in municipal service delivery planning is largely determined by the nature of planning being executed while the final product delivered and citizenry satisfaction will serve as evidence.

#### **2.4. Provisions and Regulations for Public Participation in Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

Different states have adopted complex varieties of regulations for public administration and municipal service delivery planning, and flirted with them to enforce public participation at the local scale (Tsheola, 2011; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). The hegemonic of Public Administration discourse has uncovered that the failure of development planning largely resides with the mismatch between policy provisions and practice (Glemarec & Puppim de Oliveira, 2012; Tsheola, 2012). The question

that arises relates to the municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches, which can be determined through the hegemonic practices.

Practices of public participation by municipalities are varied, ranging from the substantive involvement of communities to disguised forum (Tsheola, 2012; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). Conventionally, municipalities have relied on physical meetings, local newspaper and community radio communication, town-hall meetings, representative fora and so on (Theron, 2009; Theron & Ceasar, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). However, some of these conventional practices have not been interactive due to domination by the local notables (van der Walt, 2007; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012), with the result that the majority merely make for statistics to legitimise decisions that favour the interests of a few. Matured democracies have however mastered the art of town-hall meetings, where locals could make their views known and actionable. The modern era has introduced non-physical contact social media that is deeply interactive allowing for unfettered public participation, far different from the editorials of the newspaper and radio (Mitlin, 2004). Already, some government agencies use sms, facebook, twitter and such other interactive social media (Theron, 2008, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010). The power of this form of public participation is that it is under no one's control and opinions tend to be raw, but in the final analysis, if public opinion does not shape and influence decisions, the spirit of participation could as well be eroded. Whereas they open the spaces for unfettered influence on decision making, some government agencies have mastered the art of inculcating or undermining genuine public participation through complex municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches (Mitlin, 2004; Sachs, 2008; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010; Tshandu, 2010; Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). The prevalence of

violent public protests has raised questions of the applicability of the processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning for public participation.

The presence of integrated governance in municipality allows for better response in the problems of local government. According to Abrahams, Fitzgerald & Cameron (2009), good governance is less about legislation and more, much more about what is done in relation to what needs to be done, how well it is done and the capacities of those doing it. With the practise of good governance, the spirit of accountability and citizenship is inculcated among members of the public (Bontebal, 2009; Mzimakwe, 2010; Speer, 2012). A question that can be asked with regard to municipal regulations and practise of public participation could be, looking at all that is going wrong and right in the public sector - should the blame be entirely on members of the public not exercising their right to participate in issues that affect them or should the focus be on the public sector not having enough employees with the required skills to run efficient administrations at the municipal level.

Theron (2009) reflects on a need to move from macro-level development planning and management towards a micro-level people centred development approach which inculcate the spirit of ownership and accountability among members of the community, and in that way they will have no reason to resort to violence when exercising their constitutional right to protest. The idea of moving from macro to micro-level development planning is challenged by McEwan (2003) who disputes the idea by saying that, entrusting the local government with the responsibility of service delivery can be interpreted in two different ways, as a negative withdrawal of the state from

taking full responsibility for the entire societal socio-economic transformation, and, as a positive potential radical model of good governance, signifying a shift from local government (the power to govern) to local governance (the act of governing). By transferring resources and power to the local government there is improvement in participation from members of the public which leads to better provision of services. Public participation was conceived on the basis that it does the following, helps the government to address the basic needs of poor community members; ensures an improved sense of ownership of community and builds self-confidence; allows active involvement of various stakeholders; it is a culture of instilling good governance at local government level and it enhances accountability and transparency among the members of the community and the public functionaries (Nyalungu, 2006; Desai, 2008; Theron, 2009; GPL, 2012; Theron & Mchunu, 2014; Muchadenyika, 2015). The current state of municipal service delivery planning raises questions about the practice and regulation of public participation at local level.

In the current century where information and communication technologies (ICT) have somehow taken over the lives of the people, the introduction of E-governance can assist in facilitating public participation (Abraham *et al*, 2009; Rahman, 2010; Krishnan, 2013). A presumption can be made in that participation that is done the traditional way (Imbizos and IDP meetings) have lost the attendance of the majority of community population. However, there seem to be an increased participation in states that have adopted E-government like United States of America, India, Malaysia and Singapore (Abraham *et al*, 2009; Krishnan, 2013). The accommodation of public participation in budget processes at all levels of governance ensures that the public is informed and meaningfully consulted about the budget process, it ensures that the

government is more accountable to the voting public and in addition this nature a sense of ownership of the budget and resulting in the budget (GPL, 2012; Criqui, 2015; Muchadenyika, 2015). Moreover, it has been noticed that the manner in which municipal budget is packaged, it is complex and it makes it hard for some members of the public to participate effectively, the good thing about public participation is that it comes with public scrutiny which can help in the reduction of corruption amongst public functionaries (GLP, 2012). Participatory budget allows for citizens to know the funds available and how those funds are distributed according to the needs of the community which means that the possibilities of unreasonable demands and expectations will never arise.

Municipal service delivery planning, as a form of local participatory democracy, entails the necessary regulations and provisions that enable and motivate citizens and public functionaries to engage in participatory democratic governance (Speer, 2012). Facilitation of public participation through municipal service delivery planning regulations and provisions is a complex and challenging enterprise (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Speer, 2012). Rarely, developing countries are able to create arrangements that operate effectively as accountability mechanisms. Genuine public participation can inculcate true sense of accountability, spirit of ownership and responsiveness amongst members of the public together with the public functionaries (Alexander, 2010; Habib, 2013). Lip-servicing participation does not address the felt needs and aspirations of the people and leads to frustration and rebellion of the citizenry (Alexander, 2010, 2012; Alexander, Runciman, Ngwakwe, 2013). Hence, the violent public protests. The golden key towards the provision of services is fairness and equity (Mpehle, 2012). Alexander (2010) concurs with the latter statement by pointing out that the sense of

injustice that arises from the realities of persistent inequality fuels the violent public protests.

Genuine public participation is influenced by the dynamic and inherent tension between the citizenry and public functionaries, whereby the public functionaries want to keep control of decision making processes which leads back to representative participation which has evidently failed through the violent public protests that destroy the existing services (O'faircheallaigh, 2010; Chamhuri *et al*, 2015; Hysing, 2015). In recent years, literature has continued to demonstrate what seem as the public functionaries running away from their social responsibilities of effectively providing services to the people instead they rely on private and non-governmental actors to take care of their social responsibilities (Cornwell & Gaventa, 2001; Booysen, 2009; GPL, 2012). In instances where there is a heavy reliance of public functionaries on private actors to take care of their social responsibilities, the participation that is to take place will in most cases be "window dressing participation". Thus, the sitting of the locals in decision making processes does not influence the final decision of the services to be provided. Although it seems like the public functionaries have left their social responsibilities in the hands of the private and non-governmental actors, Cornwell & Gaventa (2001) push forward the notion that participation must be genuine in that whoever is responsible should ensure the building of confidence of the citizenry in those responsible for providing services to them and the responsible agencies must be willing to hear rather than simply listen, nod and do what they had already thought they were going to do, which does not satisfy the needs of the citizenry but instead leave the citizenry more frustrated and angry.

The sense of alienation among the citizens can only be remedied through genuine public participation on an open and accountable decision making process which can lead to better understanding of the government and allowing citizens to be planners and decision makers in their own right rather than mere participants (Sagaris, 2014; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). In instances where violent public protests are demonstrated; while, public participation formed part of planning will be highly questionable. When the citizenry is genuinely involved in the municipal service delivery planning process it allows them to feel that they are part of the process and not alienated from the planning process which leads to a sense of ownership and understanding of the government's limitations (Isufaj, 2014; Nasution, 2014; Galletta & Jametti, 2015). The ability to ensure efficiency in service delivery lies in the decentralisation of decision making to the people who are mostly affected by the end product (Robinson, 2007; Booysen, 2009; Markham & Doran, 2015). Decentralisation of decision making process is considered to be the best practise for effective service delivery. However, Robinson (2007) raised a question about the extent to which decentralisation improves the provision of services. In democratic states, the practice of decentralisation enables the enhancement of public participation and increased accountability of public functionaries which breeds an opportunity for better delivery of services and curb the scope for frustrated citizenry (Robinson, 2007; Herrera & Post, 2014).

Different countries, both developed and underdeveloped have tried to execute the decentralisation of decision making process in trying to improve the efficiency in delivering basic services. Based on the latter statement, some states where decentralisation was implemented in decision making processes have worsened the provision of basic services (Booyesen, 2009; Joshi, 2013). Instead, there are some

states that have managed to successfully implement the decentralisation of decision making processes in that there was evidence of increased service coverage, citizen satisfaction, attention to rural areas and the poor, cost consciousness and resource mobilisation efforts (Robinson, 2007; Booyesen, 2009). Although decentralisation of decision making process is said to be the freeway towards better provision of basic services and reduction of violent public protests, Robinson (2007:15) argues that “the achievements of effective service delivery is closely related to the availability of financial resources” which explains the failure to implement the decentralisation of decision making process by some states.

## **2.5. Violent Public Protests and Democratic Governance**

A democratic government provides its citizens with rights and responsibilities. However, the mushrooming of violent public protests in recent years questions the legitimacy of the execution of democracy. In a democratic state citizens are constitutionally provided with peaceful democratic procedures and action. There is no genuine democracy that can exist if the citizenry is apathetic and indifferent to the ways of a democratic government (Van der Waldt, 2007; Tsheola, 2012; Tsheola *et al*, 2014). The demonstration effect arising from levels of consumption and lifestyles of metropolitan cities and countries encourage impatience, apathy and indifference, even in emerging economies where the citizenry is provided with “free” and “fair” elections (Fisher, 2004, Booyesen, 2009; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). The intra-community conflict and politics of interest groups have demonstrated the ability to impede the true representative and comprehensive participation of a community (Alexander, 2012; Habib, 2013). In some states the conception of violent public protests is rooted in the quality and the public representation of service delivery needs of the people (Mottiar

& Bond, n.d.; Booysen, 2007; Mpehle, 2012). In recent years, more and more reasons are surfacing underlying the citizens' grievances and frustration towards the local governance which permits for the query on the exercise of democracy. It has been observed that what is being reported during the public protests that are alleged to be about poor services or the lack thereof, has far too little to do with the actual services, in that the reasons for the protests include tales of: not being happy with the incumbent councillors of which some are often not residents of their community; corruption; occasional infighting within structures of government and at some stage these protests are invariably linked to deficits in services such as sanitation, water, electricity and housing. Hence, the act of violence is questionable when already provided services are being destroyed.

Democracy at local level should be more of direct democracy which is full public participation instead of representative democracy that in most times fail to address the needs and aspirations of the people. Buček & Smith (2000:3) are of the belief that "in both established and emerging democracies, relevant to an understanding of the democratic transition and consolidation, that is, direct democracy and participatory democracy are key to addressing local issues without the citizenry being left frustrated and angry but left with a sense of responsibility and accountability for what happens to the public property". Direct participation of the citizenry in issues of local government supports the possibility of public content and satisfaction with the services provided as they reflect their felt needs and aspiration (Buček & Smith, 2000; Robinson, 2007; Joshi, 2013). Instead, having private actors make recommendations on matters that affect the local people will always make the citizenry feel estranged from the decisions made and the product provided (GPL, 2012; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). Thus,

recommendations for effective service delivery can be made by local people themselves.

The shift from military dictatorship to new constitution in Brazil assisted in terms of public participation in 1988 (Hoelscher, 2015). The constitution of Brazil permits local government to adopt new ways of allowing citizens to participate (GPL, 2012; Hoelscher, 2015). Moreover, the Brazilian government has creatively developed multiple participatory venues to incorporate people's voices directly into policy making. With genuine democracy, it is better and ultimately more effective to take the time to listen to those who have differing political opinions, to participate in rigorous political debate that provides everyone with the opportunity to voice their opinions and share their views (Haffajee, 2014; Matola, 2014). As one of the constitutional right, a democratic state provides for protests with restrictions to violence. Hence, the protests by Nigerian woman who were not happy with the hike in market tax, decided to raise their concern by threatening to demonstrate naked without any violence in front of the state government offices if the tax was not lifted (Haffajee, 2014; Social Science Research Council (SSRC), 2014). Considering the number of protests that have taken place in the past 2 years in Uganda, Nigeria, South Africa and other countries, one can conclude that Africans have taken to the streets in large numbers to voice diverse social and political grievance. Although, they are provided with the right to protest, what constitute their protests are actions that are alien to a democratic state.

Literature continues to demonstrate that the municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches are complex; and, that most developing countries adopt

them amidst communities whose literacy rates are low to comprehend such provisions (Cuadrado-Ballesteros, 2013; Hoelscher, 2015; Murphy & Fox-Rogers, 2015). In some instances, even the public functionaries who are relatively educated tend to be unable to handle such complexity, with a result that practice does not match policy provisions. Hence, public administrations have appeared to generally opt for the simplest route out of the complexity of the municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches. Notwithstanding the hyperbolic pronouncements, practice demonstrates that the commonly preferred regulatory approach to municipal service delivery planning renders public participation inconsequential. The combination of the complexity of the planning processes and approaches as well as the low levels of literacy in developing countries can always be expected to cause public despondence. There is therefore a shared understanding among public administration planning researchers that municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches affect public participation negatively. Perhaps, this principle provides a route to uncovering the underlying factors to the violent public protests.

Questions have been raised on the efficiency of representative democracy, because in communities wherein representative democracy is applicable the citizenry always seem to be upset with the results of representation; and, as a result they take to the streets and destroy the property and infrastructure provided for them which are assumed not to be the correct reflection of their needs and aspirations (Booyesen, 2009; Alexander, 2012; Tsheola *et al*, 2014). Genuine public participation is a recipe for happy and satisfied citizenry through the decentralisation of service delivery planning and decision making processes. O'faircheallaigh (2010) and Joshi (2013) are

of the belief that decentralisation of decision making processes improves the efficiency and effectiveness of public service delivery at local government as opposed to the top-down decision making process. In Delhi where water and sanitation is largely deficient wherein water scarcity is a burning issue and the authority in charge cannot provide water in adequate quantity and quality, members of the public resort to finding alternative means of getting water instead of idling and waiting for the public authority in charge to provide the services, and in such areas violent public protests will not be a matter of just doing (Criqui, 2015; Muchadenyika, 2015).

In a democratic society where public participation is provided for and local people are able to sit in decision making forums and form part of the decision making processes, prioritise their needs and aspirations (Mitlin, 2004; Sachs, 2008; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). With the genuine execution of the latter, there would be no scope for the citizenry to take to the streets to voice out their frustrations alleged to be about services while destroying the meagre services that are already provided. Moreover, when the local citizenry resort to violent protests when there are platforms provided for participation in matters of governance, it would not be farfetched to conclude that the violent public protests have far too little to do with the actual services or the lack thereof (Booyesen, 2009). Advocates of participation have deliberated on the root of the violent public protests on a number of issues ranging from; lack of participation, window-dressing participation, and emulation of alien behavioural culture, scape goat for intra-community conflicts, inter-political parties' conflicts or genuine poor services delivery. Observations were made and it is said that these violent public protests that most states are facing, occur mainly in informal settlements that are in close proximity to metropolitan cities wherein some services are provided.

Cornwell & Gaventa (2001) believe that in situations where accountability and responsibility is lacking there would be consequences of violent public protest. In that, when participation or consultation occur without adequate attention to power and political will of the local citizenry result to voices without influence which is evident in situations where public participation is provided for yet the local citizenry still remain angry, vulnerable and frustrated (Booyesen, 2009). Lane (2005) shares the same sentiments that public participation is one of the central principles of good governance in that it is considered as a way of governing through communities which is important in ensuring that whatever services are being delivered they are in line with the needs and aspirations of the citizens as well as the good exercise of democracy. Decentralisation of decision making process goes hand in glove with the establishment of committees whose role is questionable in that some ward committees achieved very limited success and were officially reported to be active whereas the situation at the ground was contradictory (Robinson, 2007; Joshi, 2013; Isufaj, 2014; Nasution, 2014; Galletta & Jametti, 2015). The marginalisation of voices at local level in most instances bred violence in the practise of constitutionally provided right to protest. Public participation is not meaningful for as long as the control over decisions and decision making processes do not directly involve the citizens (O'faircheallaigh, 2010; Herrera & Post, 2014; Theron & Mchunu, 2014).

Genuine public participation can potentially lead to effective service delivery and popular public acceptance (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Tsheola, 2012). Thus, when the public moot is dominated by the feeling of belonging and ownership, the scope for violent public protests is non-existent. Citizenry attain popular contend when the

predominant perception is that of “fairness and equity in the provision of services” (Mpehle, 2012: 213). Principles and practices of public participation that engender confidence in the citizenry about municipal service delivery planning can possibly create a popular spirit of belonging (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012; Joshi, 2013). However, pragmatic evidence shows that the linkages between participatory democracies, increased accountability, government responsiveness and improved service provision is positive but limited (Speer, 2012). Under circumstances where public participation is practiced as mere window-dressing, the principles of democracy are not applied to the citizenry with the result that accountability is discouraged as well as popular public apathy (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Modise, 2012; Nathan, 2013). The latter is associated with the loss of civic responsibility and duty to protect public property by the citizenry. When members of the public lack confidence in the governance of municipal service delivery planning, they are most likely to resort to public violence. In analysing the rationale underlying the violent public protests, there has been an erroneous satisfaction with symptoms because the core reason is often identified away from the planning processes and approaches. The latter are critical to creating a public moot of discontent and should therefore be blamed for the violence associated with frustration about the governance of municipal serviced delivery.

## **2.6. The Association of the Spatial Spread of Protests with Connectivity to Metropolitan Cities and Countries**

The spatial spread of recent violent public protests in a globally-acclaimed democratic state defies the logic of service delivery or the lack thereof as the core reason, whilst

simultaneously affirming the notion that that protestor's frustration and anger are drawn from the demonstration effect associated with the location of informal settlements within the proximity of metropolitan cities that are strongly connected to the metropolitan countries. Evidence of the national geographic distribution of incidence of recent public protests and the location of metropolitan cities particularly Cape Town, Durban and Johannesburg demonstrate the lack of spatial correlation of protests and under-delivery of services (Allan & Heese, n.d; Managa, 2012; Bremer & Bhuiyan, 2014). The imitation and change in behavioural patterns, culture, lifestyles and consumption patterns by people in the emerging economy is referred to as demonstration effect (Fisher, 2004; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). The spatial spread of violent public protests raise questions about the legitimacy of what people are protesting about, which in most cases it's the lack or poor services.

The rationale underlying the recent violent public protest alleged to be about the poor or lack of service delivery does not seem to be a sufficient base for the fierce public protest. Allan & Heese (n.d) have shown that in most cases, the public protests alleged to be about services, occur in informal settlements and township wherein some services have been provided. The fact that the public protests alleged to be about services occur in places where some services have been provided and are mostly lead by the youth suggests that there has to be a different contributing factor to these public protests. The spatial spread and the leading age group in the public protests points towards the demonstration effect. The manifestation of demonstration effect is largely evident in the youthful age group in terms of change in social behaviours whilst some show it through their consumption patterns. Often, the youthful age group is in the forefront of challenging traditional value system (Saldanha, 2002; Hamida & Gugler,

2009). Violent public protests are difficult to understand especially when they occur in places where the public is constitutionally provided with peaceful democratic procedures and actions. According to Modjadji & SAPA (2014:3), in places where there are protests, “there is always some sort of development in the area and that development is always a source of conflict in the community in terms of who benefits first”. The latter could be confirmed by the fact that the demonstration effect in informal settlements originates from the idea that those from the informal settlements find themselves on the outside and looking into the “good life” in the metropolitan cities (Allan & Heese, n.d). Hence, the suggestion that in most informal settlements where violent public protests occur there has been some meagre services provided but because the metropolitan cities which they look up to the services seem better, therefore, a reason to protest erupt as they look at what they have and consider it to be “unattractive” and “backwards”.

In recent years, public service delivery protests have grown to be more violent which could be the function of imitation, imitation of the public conduct in metropolitan cities by the public in townships and informal settlements. The fact that most of the service delivery protests are led by youth who are easily influenced through social media, television, films and others explains the element of imitating alien cultures, social values and behaviour in their actions (Fisher, 2004; Nganyanyuka, Martinez, Wesselink, Lungo & Georgiadou, 2014). That is, the element of violence in the democratic provided right to protest could be the manifestation of the demonstration effect in the genuine service delivery protests. Many of the protests are located in the urban, semi urban and informal settlements, wherein some services have been provided. Evidently, the recent violent public protests that have confronted the

democratic states could be as a result of demonstration effect and to some extent have nothing to do with the service delivery deficit or the lack thereof (Booyesen, 2007). Unplanned and informal settlements that have mushroomed closest to the metropolitan cities and the settlers there always aspire to the high life they see in urban areas influenced by metropolitan countries, that is, the basic service network utilities have to muddle through the socio-spatial irregularities which are created by the consumption patterns that are not supported by the available resources (Nganyuka *et al*, 2014; Criqui, 2015). A larger majority of the urban population in developing countries have little to no access to basic services and most of those are the poor living in the metropolitan outskirts in informal settlements (Nganyanyuka *et al*, 2014). Protests vary across space in accordance with a range of variables, inclusive of rurality, urbanity, level of development, industrialization and so on.

The fact that democracy is becoming more complex for the ordinary citizens can be justified based on the “subtlety of its procedure and legitimate progress of individual rights” (Booyesen, 2009). According to SSRC (2014) While Africa’s elites have many ways to influence policy by bankrolling favourite candidates and parties, evading unwelcome taxes and regulations, subverting state institutions through corruption and bribery, the poor must often resort to one of the few sources of power available to them which is public protest. Booyesen (2007) mentioned that in recent years the politics of getting services have changed gears, in that what is mostly done during protests is mostly influenced by the mass media coverage. Thus, protest in other places influence protests in other places which suggest a stimulus of demonstration effect in the service delivery protests.

According to Allan & Heese (n.d), there is clear evidence that over the years most public protests continue to occur in informal settlements in large metropolitan cities such as Johannesburg, Durban and Cape Town. Moreover, every African country has experienced some form of public protest, even in highly repressive states where demonstrators readily face violent police or military reactions in places such as Angola, Chad, Ethiopia, Gambia, Sudan, Swaziland and Zimbabwe (SSRC, 2014). The reaction from police and military can somehow perpetuate the violence in the protests. A pattern in the recent fierce public protests have dominated the settlements near the metropolitan cities where some services have been delivered has made researchers to lean towards discussions that perhaps the public have adopted alien cultural behaviours, norms and values from metropolitan countries (Joshi, 2013; Muchadenyika, 2015).

In the scrutiny, public participation has to be accepted as a necessary democratic principle and its proper execution is for enhanced citizenry confidence in governance of service delivery (DPSA, n.d; Modise, 2012: Mpehle, 2012). Therefore, the occurrence of violence, insinuates lack of accountability and loss of civic duty to protect public property, should be indicative of the maladministration of public participation in the municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches. The failure to provide genuine public participation is a function of the performance of authority. Over the years, governments have been advised and motivated to meaningfully involve the citizenry in decision making processes to reduce unpopular or questionable decisions, of which the attitude of the media towards them can influence the participation of the citizenry in making them aware of the loopholes in

their government which bred the uprising of the citizens against their local government (Wang, 2001; Cruz & Marques, 2014; Galletta & Jametti, 2015). In emerging economies, metropolitan cities are faced with a challenge of informal settlements, particularly that most of them are unplanned, although urban planners provide for the extension of electricity, water and sanitation networks to those informal settlements (Criqui, 2015; Harrison & Todes, 2015). With the effort made by the municipalities in most unplanned settlements especially the informal ones, there seem to be no ending to the uprising by the public demanding services. According to Criqui (2015:11), the latter could explain “the common violent public protests in areas where some sort of services have been provided”.

## **2.7. Demonstration Effect Model and Influence on Public Conduct**

With demonstration effect, alien cultures tend to virtually substitute the traditional norms and values (Fisher, 2004; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). Thereby, local traditional cultures tend to be undermined and considered uncivilised, undesirable and unprogressive. The consequences that arise from demonstration effect are deleterious to public property as well as the increase in tension between state and society. Respectively, demonstration effect is about the public emulating the expensive consumption patterns and lifestyle of the metropolitan countries that cannot be supported by locally available resources (Mcelroy & Albuquerque, 1986; Hamida & Gugler, 2009). In most emerging economies, demonstration effect has been perused economically, socially, politically and governmental perspectives without considering the consequences thereafter - given their limitation in resources.

Among other things, the demonstration effect is perpetuated through Media, Advertisements, Television, Films and Tourism (Fisher, 2004; Booysen, 2009). Key to demonstration effect is in the transference of information and knowledge from one society or a group of people to the other (Fisher, 2004; Pitcher, Moran & Johnson, 2009). Evidently, in the emulation of expensive consumption pattern and lifestyles of the metropolitan countries by emerging economies, patterns of behaviour are transferred from varied cultures to more economically premature cultures. That is, the host culture seek to copy alien behaviours and spending patterns of the metropolitan countries as they are believed to be advanced, sophisticated and civilised.

The manifestation of demonstration effect is commonly in the change of local consumption and behavioural patterns and invitation of alien cultures and the adoption of imported lifestyles, cultures, norms and values. Importantly, demonstration effect includes cultural change, change in behavioural patterns, consumption patterns and adoption of alien cultures (Hamida & Gugler, 2009). The local acclimatization to alien behaviours, lifestyles and consumption patterns questions the pride of local's in their own cultures, consumption patterns and lifestyles. The application of the concept of demonstration effect should be specific in respect of who demonstrate what to whom and why as well as the motive for imitation in order for the locals to deliberate on the possible consequences of imitation. The imitation of alien cultures, lifestyle and consumption patterns denies locals the ability to progress from the well-known culture of their own. In that, the locals in emerging economies who imitate the alien cultures from the "sophisticated" metropolitan countries do so - on the basis of uninformed and knowledgeable decisions and motives. The manifestation of demonstration effect occurs only when alien cultures, lifestyles, consumption patterns and behaviours are

acted upon by the locals in emerging economies, bringing into sharp focus copying theories and decision making processes (Fisher, 2004; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009).

In emerging economies the locals have come to imitate the consumption patterns, lifestyles and culture of those higher up the social scale (metropolitan countries) with the belief that it will improve their social status (Fisher, 2004). The advocates of demonstration effect argue that its manifestation shows largely in the youthful age group in terms of change in social behaviours whilst the elite demonstrate it through their consumption patterns. Mostly, the youth are at the forefront of challenging traditional value systems (Saldanha, 2002; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). The study is largely interested in a change of traditional values, behaviours, and lifestyle and consumption patterns of the locals which is spread through urbanisation, industrialisation, modernisation and globalisation. Whereas tourism allows for face-to-face contact, television, internet and social media continues to provide space for interaction of diverse cultures due to their ongoing presence in private homes (Fisher, 2004; Hamida & Gugler, 2009). The copying of alien cultures, behaviours, lifestyles, consumption patterns, norms and values is classified into three forms: accurate imitation; inaccurate imitation and social learning (Fisher, 2004). The latter, involves attempts to avoid blind imitation. Fisher (2004) added two forms of interact imitation which are deliberate and accidental. Actual and interact imitation “occurs when a failed attempt is made to imitate exactly” with the imitator being aware or unaware of the failure (Jellal & Wolff, 2000; Saldanha, 2002; Fisher, 2004). Deliberate interact imitation “occurs when it is not possible to imitate exactly” and “it can become adaptation and social learning if there is a degree of experimentation involved” (Fisher, 2004). The perception behind the demonstration effect is that people learn by experimentation and also by copying others. According to the concept of cultural circle “an individual’s behavioural pattern

is dependent on the values and processes that have been learned in the past from group cultural attachments and from personal experience” (Fisher, 2004; Laferrere & Wolff, 2006). with the informal settlements occupants aspiring to improve their living standards and be like those in the metropolitans, their demand for services broadens and expectations becomes almost impossible to meet as their consumption patterns changes towards that of the metropolitans and unofficial and illegal connections begin (Nganyanyuka *et al*, 2014; Criqui, 2015).

## **2.8. Conclusions**

From literature gathered in this chapter, it is quite surprising to have violent public protests in a democratic dispensation that provide for rights and regulation that govern the participation and how grievances and concerns are raised. However, the spatial spread of the protests raise another question of the legitimacy of the so called service delivery protests. Literature shows that majority of the violent public protests that are alleged to be about poor services or the lack therefore, occur mostly in townships and informal settlements that are in close proximity with the metropolitan cities where some services have been provided. The close proximity to metropolitan cities and countries together with the spatial spread of protests, allows the study to push the envelope towards the influence of demonstration effect in the public conduct. The next chapter will zoom directly into South Africa, the globally acclaimed democratic dispensation country and try to uncover the rationale underlying the violent public protests that have confronted its democracy.

## CHAPTER 3

### VIOLENT PUBLIC PROTESTS IN THE GLOBALLY-ACCLAIMED DEMOCRATIC DISPENSATION OF SOUTH AFRICA

#### 3.1. Introduction

A constitution of any democratic dispensation country including that of South Africa, ought and must provide for a platform that caters for public participation by members of the public in matters that directly affect them especially issues of service delivery at local level (CoGTA, 2009; Cruz & Marques, 2014; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). Different states in both emerged and emerging economies have tried to create that enabling environment for public participation. However, in most cases the policy is more of a pipe line dream due to the discrepancy in the policy and its implementation. A state like South Africa should not under any circumstances be filled with fierce public protests that undermine rights and regulations of raising issues considering its democratic dispensation. Although, literature has shown that public protests, and in particular, the violent protests, demonstrate the public's disappointments with what democracy had to offer (Alexander, 2010; Habib, 2013). Thus, the recent violent public protests alleged to be about poor service delivery that has confronted South Africa's democracy raise eyebrows about the practice of municipal service delivery planning. The question would be, if members of the public are the decision makers in local government issues – why would they destroy the services already provided to them when seeking for other services. Consequently, the violent public protests that have dominated the democratic state could be an indication of the failed public participation mandate or an effect of the demonstration effect.

### **3.2. The Systems of Public Participation in Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

Prior to 1994, South Africa was a divided country with four unequal groups, most of whom did not enjoy equal rights before the law. “The advent of democracy in 1994 abolished the status quo and South Africa became a democratic country wherein all races enjoy constitutional rights” (Siphuma, 2009:36). The South African constitution has embedded the notion of public participation in all spheres of government in Section 151 (1), obliging municipalities to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations on issues of local government. Moreover, Section 152 of the same constitution elaborates on the objectives of local government which are also to encourage communities to participate in matters of local government. Section 195 (e) of the constitution of South Africa provides for basic values and principles governing public administration in that people’s needs must be responded to and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy making process. whereas, the 1998 white paper on local government points out the four principles of public participation which are - to ensure that political leaders remain accountable and work within their mandate; allow citizens to have continuous input into local politics; allow service consumers to have inputs on the way services are to be delivered and to afford organised civil society the opportunity to enter into partnership and contract with local government in order to mobilise additional resources. Zhu (2015) is of the notion that community participation, that is local population’s voluntary involvement in community political and social affairs, is a critical component of sustainable community development. Hence, the final product represents the needs and aspirations of the public which reduces the chances of violent public protests due to an unsatisfied citizenry.

In emerging economies such as South Africa, the integrated development planning legislation has sought to translate the ideals of these concepts into reality through a

variety of practices such as public meetings, Imbizo, community forum, street and house-to-house walk-about and so on. Chapter 5 of the Local Government Municipal Systems Act outlines the requirements of an integrated development planning and provides for a systematic process that seeks to incorporate the public through “representative” entities in the forum (RSA, 2000). Chapter 4 of the *Local Government Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations* provides that in the absence of an appropriate municipal-wide structure for community participation, a municipality must establish a forum that will enhance participation in decision making (RSA, 2001; Sheerly, 2015). Whereas South Africa’s practices can be applauded, questions of their hosting for their own sake have persisted because of the negligible, if any, public influence they generate on decision making.

In South Africa’s democratic government, there seems to be a discrepancy between the policy provisions and the actual execution of the policy especially with regard to the public participation policy which is supposed to act as a glue between the government and citizenry (DPSA, n.d; Cebekhulu & Steyn, 2009; GPL, 2012). In instances wherein the citizenry is allowed to participate in issues of local government including decision makings, the citizenry is able to understand the limitations and resources of the local government and there will be no room for the citizens to be angry and frustrated about issues of local government. As a result, the room for violent public protest will not be created. Since South Africa adopted the representative mode of participation wherein community or the public is defined as a ward, with elected ward committees; hence ward committees play a central role in linking up elected institutions with the people, and other forms of communication reinforce these linkages with communities like imbizo, roadshows, ward meetings and others (DPSA, n.d; GPL,

2012; Tsheola, 2012). The Ward Councillors were established for the facilitation of representative participation. However, the recent violent public protests suggest that the representation of people's needs and aspiration has not been to the satisfaction of the people, thus the violent public protests that are alleged to be about the service delivery (DPSA, 2012). With the latter statement, there is a need for ward councillors to act as change agents with the mandate of implementing effective representation of communities in local government issues. In recent years, the "fruits" of participation have been visibly unsatisfactory through the fierce public participation. In the absence of a soul in public decision making processes the public services will wallow in bureaucratic inefficiencies in the mistaken belief that it is an end in itself (DPSA, n.d).

Literature has shown that recent violent public protests are as a result of public participation meetings held after decisions have already been taken, or a plain ignorance of the communities' views that leads to non-implementation. That is, the public feel that their right to participate is being undermined which might be true for the democratic South Africa. Again, the ignorance or not taking into consideration the communities views in public participation process results in future non-attendance by members of the community in such meetings as they realise that such meetings are just another talk shop (Siphuma, 2009). South Africa has adopted a representative democracy, where members of the community elect people to represent them (ward councillors). The tension between participatory and representative democracy needs to be resolved for it has an effect on how people participate in local government affairs. Dr Sidney Mufamadi emphasises that citizens must know that they are not guaranteed good governance, they must demand it by participating in public affairs which is an indication of their public interest. The latter suggests that the failure in governance at

local level should and can be blamed on the public for not participating in local affairs since they are not guaranteed good governance by public functionaries. However, the question is whether the public is given the platform to participate in local affairs, for there is a vast discrepancy in the policy and implementation of public participation? The Gauteng provincial legislature passed a petition Act, which provides for the right to submit a petition to the legislative (GPL, 2012). Moreover, Honourable Jacob Khwane continues to say that petitions are also an effective contributor to long term planning based on and understanding the will of the people.

Zuma (2014) mentioned that a democratic government supports the constitutional right of citizens to express themselves through protests as long as the expressions are done peacefully and unarmed. However, the latter is challenged in what has been happening in South Africa wherein almost all protests are reported to turn violent at some stage during their existence which is considered as undermining the very democracy that upholds the right to protest. However, the violent protests reflect disappointment with the fruits of democracy (Alexander, 2010). The Batho Pele handbook points out that citizens should be treated as “customers” implying: listening to and taking account of their views and paying heed to their needs when deciding what services should be provided (consultation); ensuring that they are able to access the services provided easily and comfortably (access); treating them with consideration and respect (courtesy); providing them with good information of the services available to them (information); allowing them to ask questions and responding to their queries honestly and frankly (openness and transparency); responding swiftly and sympathetically when the standard of service falls below the promised level (redress) and adding value to their lives (value for money). One of the

issues that bedevilled service delivery planning in the public service is the difficulty in bridging the gap between “Knowing” and “Doing” (DPSA, n.d). Public participation is considered one of the key tenets of democratic governance; South Africa’s municipal councils are obliged to develop a culture of municipal governance that shifts from strict representative government to participatory governance and must for this purpose encourage and create conditions for residents and communities to participate in local affairs.

When public participation seem to have not delivered the felt needs and aspirations of the people, the citizenry resort to their constitutionally provided right to protest and accompany that right with violence. The sense of apathy and despondency that the citizens manifest in their protests and the breeding of violence is to some extent fuelled by the reaction from police services, mayors, councillors and managers where bureaucratic manner is used to address the angry and frustrated citizens. The National Planning Commission (2012) encourages for active citizenry wherein every member of a community must contribute and work towards realising a vision and showing inspirational leadership at all levels of society. Active citizenry also encourages for the inculcation of the spirit of responsible citizenry and solidarity which enables the local people to understand that they will have to wait sometimes and sacrifices may be necessary (National Planning Commission, 2012).

Unavoidably, in South Africa “the choice of which goods are provided, and which are not, is primarily political, even ideological, decision” (Goodall, 1987: 383), but the dominant municipal service delivery planning has placed decision-making in the hands of technical engineers (Smith, 2004; Jaglin, 2008; Tsheola, 2012). Local government in a democratic state is directly mandated by the constitution and other legislations to

render services to communities and ensure that such services are sufficient and sustainable (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012). Recently South Africa has been labelled a “protest nation” on the bases that barely a day goes by without an outbreak of public protests allegedly around frustrations and anger of the public with the provision of services or the lack thereof (ENCA, 2014)

According to Zuma (2014), the fact that the dominant narratives in the cases of protests in South Africa have been to attribute them to alleged failures of government which is not necessarily the case. However, the protests are not simply “failures” of government he said, but also the success in delivering basic services since members of the community feel they cannot wait a moment longer after their fellow neighbours who have received services. Wild (2014) attest to the latter statement by saying that public protests have been labelled as attempts by political factions to destabilise the government since some services have been provided. Municipal service delivery planning has to be an all-inclusive process that involves all members of the public regardless of race, gender or social status. However, in communities where members of the public are excluded from municipal service delivery planning, the probability of seeing the public taking to the streets complaining about the planning process is highly expected as it would not have addressed their needs and aspirations. In a democratic dispensation country like South Africa it appears as if the citizenry is more familiar with protests as the only way of raising issues, especially protests that are accompanied by violence - something they could have acquired during the days of apartheid or through media (Booyesen, 2007; Seale, 2012). The nine constitutional principles are intended to guide transformation of public services from being a rule-bound, bureaucratic entity, concerned with the administration of rules and regulations, to a

dynamic, result driven organisation committed to delivering appropriate services to the people (DPSA, n.d; Alexander, 2010).

Public service provisions or lack thereof impacts on the lives of the people as well as influence the manner in which the public reacts towards the public functionaries and this being the case, members of the public rather than the public services are the custodians of services and without them there can be no service delivery (DPSA, n.d; Cuadrado-Ballesteros *et al*, 2013; Hysing, 2015). The public interface of service delivery can make a mockery of excellent planning and democracy (DPSA, n.d). The constitution of the Republic of South Africa insists that public functionaries should commit to providing services of a standard that meet the needs and aspiration of customers (DPSA, n.d). South Africa is said to be an extremely unequal society and faces a massive backlog in service delivery in that out of 284 municipalities only about 203 are able to provide basic services to its people (Nathan, 2013). Concerns have been raised about municipal service delivery in post '94 in the quality of services and particularly the level of variation in service delivery. Hence, the recent waves of violent public protests (National Planning Commission, 2011). Recently, South Africa's ruling party's (ANC) Gauteng general secretary Mr David Makhura highlighted that the violent public protests that are alleged to be about poor service delivery do not imply that services are not being provided to the public, because in areas where there are violent public protests there are some sort of development taking place and there are assumptions that development is the source of conflict in communities in that who must benefit first especially in townships and informal settlements (Zuma, 2014).

Even though these violent public protests are said to be about developments related to service delivery, the public's grievances are about the standards of those developments. Thus, they take to the streets and destroy the meagre services available (Moeng, 2014). There are assertions that some of the public protests happening in South African communities have nothing to do with service delivery or the lack thereof but about councillors not being able to hold public meetings – which is a requirement in a democratic country for the governance of local government in assisting the public functionaries to know the real needs and aspirations of the community (Joshi, 2013; Sifile, 2014). A recent study conducted by the Institute for Security Studies (2014) shows that though in South Africa there are different public protests, those relating to crime, education, election, labour, political causes, transport, vigilantism, xenophobia, service delivery, environmental related, individual and those that are related to service delivery are said to be ranked in the highest in terms of occurrence and most of them occur in places where some services have been rendered and those place are most likely to have close proximity with the metropolitan cities and countries. However, the same constitution goes on to say that people's needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy and decision making processes. Thus public administration must be accountable and transparency must be fostered by providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. It also suggests reviewing the way municipalities are funded and the levels of services they should provide in light of the difficulties that poor communities face. In places like informal settlements where municipal service delivery is weak that is where there is more of the rebellion of the poor (Alexander, 2012).

Zhu (2015:47) has mentioned that at the local level, “stronger degree of informal social control is associated with increased likelihood for individuals to participate in community affairs”; presence of more communal spaces within a neighbourhood is positively associated to the local population’s community participation and the effects of neighbourhood communal space on community participation are mediated by neighbourhood-based social capital and neighbourhood attachment. Wang (2001:333) is of the belief that “the existence of participation mechanisms appear to be a preliminary and necessary condition to achieve participation goals in the satisfaction of public needs, consensus building and public trust”.

South Africa too, has adopted complex varieties of regulations for public participation in service delivery. The different regulations adopted for the governance of public participation in South Africa are as follows: the constitution of the republic; South African Local Government Association (SALGA); the Bill of Responsibility; Local Government’s Municipal structures act no.117 of 1998, municipal systems act no. 32 of 2000; and, the National Development Plan 2030. All the above regulations share a common goal which is participation by members of the community to ensure effective service delivery. The constitution of the republic of South Africa (RSA) 1996 provides for a broadly representative constitutional democracy, place legislatures wherein the involvement of the public is facilitated in the legislative and other processes of the assembly and that the local government conduct its business in an open manner, and hold its sittings in public (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). However, the same constitution goes on to say that people’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in policy and decision making processes. Thus public administration must be accountable and transparency must be fostered by

providing the public with timely, accessible and accurate information. In acknowledging the service delivery challenges faced by local municipalities, it is suggested in Chapter 13 of the National Development Plan 2030 that there should be ways in which municipal performance can be improved to ensure service delivery. It also suggests reviewing the way municipalities are funded and the levels of services they should provide in light of the difficulties that those serving mainly poor communities face. The reason for coming up with the 1994 Reconstruction and development programme (RDP) was to build citizenship through public participation in decision making of service delivery, but was virtually superseded by the 1996 growth, employment and redistribution (GEAR) which was pushing a different mandate from that of building citizenship (Tshandu, 2010).

If the integrated development plan (IDP) was well executed in terms of providing for public participation that promotes democracy, citizenship, empowerment and accountability in issues concerning service delivery, the public would have no ground to resort to violent protests denying their local public functionaries and politicians space for political deliberations (Tsheola, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). Furthermore, Tsheola (2012) continues to allude on public participation as central to a democratic developmental state, which would suggest that delivery of public services is dependent upon the full exercise of citizenship. Chapter 4 of the municipal planning and performance management regulation (RSA, 2001) states that in the absence of an appropriate municipal-wide structure for community participation, a municipality must establish a forum that will enhance community participation in the drafting and implementation of the municipality's integrated development plan (IDP). The latter will be attested to by saying indeed if the public is not involved in the drafting and

implementing of the IDP it simply means that their felt needs, desires and aspirations will not be captured in the IDP, which is why we see them practising their constitutional right to protest and in most cases becoming violent because of the belief that violence is the only language understood by public functionaries (Alexander, 2013; Moeng, 2014). The freedom charter of 1955 states that “only a democratic state based on the will of the people can secure to all their birth right without regard to colour, race, sex or belief and all people shall be entitled to take part in the administration of the country and that all bodies of minority rule, advisory board, councils and authorities shall be replaced by democratic organs of self-government”. Which suggests that in local government affairs including administration, members of the public have a right to give inputs and influence the decision making process. In most IDP representative meeting setup, what is done is that participants or beneficiaries are expected to endorse decisions that already have been taken by ward councillors and politicians rather than taking inputs from beneficiaries (Siphuma, 2009; Theron & Ceasar, 2014).

### **3.3. Procedures to Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

The choice of approaches to municipal service delivery planning is therefore a determination about the encouragement or discouragement of public participation. It can be expected that the choice of municipal service delivery planning processes and approaches would equally explain the core determinant of public’s impatience, apathetic, frustration, anger and despondence in regard to participation (Tsheola, 2011, 2012). When the atmosphere amid members of the public is dominated with impatience, frustration and anger they resort to their constitutional right to protest which in most cases turn violent due to; the broken promise and the lack of a meaningful response from government, intimidation from police action during protests,

the fact that during peaceful protest they are neglected and their voices are not listened to (Booyesen, 2007; Alexander, 2010, 2013).

A global study which examined protests in 87 countries including South Africa; discovered that South Africa has seen an increase in public protests under the Zuma administration and has a long history of protests going back to the old anti-apartheid marches that predated its democracy until it was labelled the “protest nation”. The Alleged public service delivery Protests in South Africa are traced as far back as 2004 (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012). Many of the public protests in South Africa originate in communities like the townships and informal settlements in the metropolitan cities and have increased to more than 5 protests a day as well as the increase in police brutality wherein people are killed allegedly in the hands of police during the protests. The fierce violent public protests and police brutality in a globally acclaimed democratic South Africa questions the applicability of the processes and approaches of municipal service delivery planning.

There are several issues around the violent public protests in South Africa; service delivery, water and sanitation, housing and representation of the public’s views in issues of local government wherein the people are unhappy with the way their public representatives are putting forward their cases is not satisfactory to them (Mottiar & Bond, n.d; Alexander, 2010; Cruz & Marques, 2014). Thus, during the public protests properties belonging to the representatives are set alight. Although recent violent public protests are said to be about services, there are other factors contributing to the public violence being, unemployment, crime, domestic violence and the quality of democracy in post-apartheid society (Mottiar & Bond, n.d; Alexander, 2008; Moeng,

2014; Sifile, 2014). The proper applicability of the processes and approaches to municipal service delivery planning would not create scope for bureaucratic response from public functionaries' instead sympathetic response when the public is frustrated about local issues. The reaction of public functionaries during public protests is said to instigate the violence as members of the public get a sense of intolerance from government officials. That is, Zuma (2014) concludes that people who protest are unruly elements trying to undermine the authenticity or genuineness of their grievances. During public protest members of the public question the legitimacy of democracy in South Africa on the bases that their elected office bearers (representatives) who are supposed to have lived in the struggle of the local people - put a deaf ear on the ground and forgot how hard life is on the ground for local people (Moeng, 2014). The latter statement, is evident in the situation where the prominent Mr Tokyo Sexwale who grew up in Soweto and is expected to understand the struggles of local people as he has lived the experience (DPSA, n.d; Moeng, 2014). However, after being elected into office by the people he struggled with in the township of Soweto, it appears that he has drastically forgotten how the situation is in townships to such an extent that he come around to Diepsloot to spend 4 hours in a shack and then turn to say "I know how people lived" when he grew up in such a situation (DPSA, n.d). Public Protests seem to be related to the fact that local people in South Africa are being promised heaven and earth prior to elections and post-election there is a lack of delivery on the promises. In some instances, communities nominate candidates for the position of councillor and eventually the councillor that they get is an imposed councillor to them (Yende, 2014).

A democratic country provides for participatory governance as a public right (Theron & Mchunu, 2014). However, the implementation of the participatory governance in the democratic dispensation of South Africa has been questionable especially in issues of local government including its budgeting wherein the constitutional right to protest has been manifested with foreign elements (violence) to the democratic dispensation that supports and advocate for transparency, participation and accountability of which in absentia a spirit of rebellion is cultivated among members of the public (Alexander, 2010; GPL, 2012; Chamhuri *et al*, 2015; Hysing, 2015). The latter is evident in the processes of tenderpreneurships where service providers who do not prioritise the interests, needs and aspirations of the community and not intending to do so are often given the task to facilitate the development of IDPs and municipal budget (Tsheola, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014; Galletta & Jametti, 2015). The service delivery charter, a statement that a department or component makes towards service delivery is a good written statement which most South African municipalities fail to implement. Thus, the violent public protests alleged to be about services (DPSA, n.d). The people that are mostly affected by insufficient and costly service delivery, corruption and municipal mismanagement of funds is the working class and poor people who then resort to protest against poor and costly service delivery (Nathan, 2013). The ability and willingness of South Africa's democratic government to provide adequate services to all its citizens is not simply a question of having the "right" political party or sufficiently skilled people in power nor simply a question of having good policies or the adequate administrative means of technical capacity to implement (Nathan, 2013), but a matter of effectively using the participatory governance in municipal service delivery planning. The results of the erosion of accountability, sees citizens resorting to violent protest action, to draw attention of the public functionaries to their demands. However, the

former demonstrates that many citizens are not only frustrated but also feel their voices are not being heard through formal channels (NPC, 2011; Habib, 2013).

Whereas in most instances protests are alleged to be about municipal service delivery planning and the lack thereof, some of them are demonstrations of angry people over incorporation into a different province while others are people who think they should not be paying services rendered to them such as water and electricity (Moeng, 2014). Although not all protests are recorded as violent, the majority of public protests are said to turn violent and the underlying factor for the violence is said to be personal rivalries and accusations of being a sell-out (Alexander *et al*, 2013; Moeng, 2014). A trend in South Africa's recent protests was analysed by (Alexander, 2010; Matola, 2014; Moeng, 2014) whereby residents in Bronkhorstpruit were demanding lower electricity bills and in the process a library and a private home were burnt. Moreover, in Majakaneng (Brits) residents were protesting against water disruption and for an improvement in municipal service delivery. While in Koster the public was demanding the same as in Majakaneng. Whereas, residents in Hebron and Boiketlong were demanding the removal of their councillor, the fixing of roads and better housing. Notwithstanding the trend of protests occurring in places very close to the metropolitan cities and in places where some services have been provided thus, the ability to destroy some of the services that have already been provided while seeking other services that are lacking in the area. This practice raises eyebrows about the democratic dispensation. The violence in the process of practicing the constitutional right to protest suggest that the citizenry have lost faith in their right to vote (power of the ballot box) in that they refuse to have voters registration stations within their communities and the question is how is the municipal service delivery planning

process carried out (Haffajee, 2014; Matola, 2014). Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa said that during public protests the police are brought in to protect lives, property and to keep the peace. However, their duties during protests are questionable as a result of, the people that they are supposed to be protecting are dying and the police are the first suspects in the deaths that occur during protests (Yende, 2014).

Due to the close proximity of the local government to the society, the constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996) sets out objectives for the government to in section 152(1) which states that the objectives are to provide democratic and accountable local government for local communities; ensure the provision of services to communities in a sustainable manner; promote social and economic development; and encourage the involvement of communities and organisations in matters of local government. In acknowledging the service delivery challenges faced by local municipalities, it is suggested in Chapter 13 of the National Development Plan 2030 that there should be ways in which municipal performance can be improved to ensure service delivery (National Planning Commission, 2012).

#### **3.4. Regulations provided for Public Participation in Municipal Service Delivery Planning**

In improving functions of the local government, the South African government has put in place an amendment of the municipal systems act with an intention to improve capacity of municipalities to deliver public services, deploying qualified and experienced personnel to municipalities and also to strengthen existing forums of people's participation and enable the people themselves to play a greater role in development which includes service delivery (Zuma, 2014). The apartheid era left

South African's with contrasting widespread feeling of passivity and dependence. However, a passive recipient mind-set continued, with expectation from new government to deliver services which is an approach of participation that evolved from the apartheid era, rather than supporting the people in achieving their own development (Moeng, 2014; Yende, 2014; Zuma, 2014).

Pieterse (2002:8) points out that "public participation seeks to empower the marginalised and excluded groups within the communities". Furthermore, Literature shows that public participation in post-apartheid South Africa exists in an uneasy state of tension, which reflects how negatively the legacy of apartheid has affected public participation (Wild, 2014; Zuma, 2014). It is quite surprising that South Africa, a globally celebrated democratic country with so many regulations and legislation that govern public participation is faced with challenges of an unsatisfied citizenry who resort to public violence. Legislations governing public participation includes municipalities that are required to apply genuine public participation policies which in turn promotes effective local governance and ensure the ultimate power of community's voice in development and service delivery at ward level (Siphuma, 2009; Theron & Mchunu, 2014). Public participation in terms of Democracy means that the functioning of public institutions be established in such a way that allows and encourages public participation by all members of the public.

Public participation in South Africa is the principle upon which democracy is founded and it has been firmly and deep-rooted by legal frameworks such as the White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery of 1997, Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, Municipal Structures Act No. 117 of 1998, Municipal Systems Act No. 32 of

2000, Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations. With the above mentioned frameworks in place, it is believed that if formal structures for public participation like the IDP and others fail, a frustrated citizenry is most likely to engage in violent public protests (Theron, 2008; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). That is, the existing assumption that violent public protest open doors to public participation could be true. Participatory municipal budget in South Africa can occur in three different stages which are: budget formulation analysis, expenditure monitoring and tracking as well as monitoring of public service delivery (GPL, 2012), although the need for civil society organisation is still needed. Recent service delivery protests suggest that municipal officials lack understanding of their role in ensuring participatory budgeting, which brings out the truth in the idea that they also lack the understanding that the right of communities to participate is prescribed by legislation (Booyesen, 2009; GPL, 2012).

There is a need for South Africa to move from being a passive client state services to an active citizen in determining its own future. South Africa is one country with a progressive constitution and body of laws designed to protect and advance citizens' rights, which public participation is one of those rights yet there is often a significant gap between the disparities set out in the official policy and what happens on the ground where the public is located (National Planning Commission, 2011). Municipalities are taken to be democratic and participatory spaces where ordinary people can contribute in the decision making processes and elect new officials should the current officials not be seen to be representing the people's interest (Nathan, 2013; Moeng, 2014; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). The ward system in particular is highly undemocratic in that ward committees often hand-pick the members they would like to participate in decision making process. Over and above this, most officials at

municipal level are actually unelected while other officials are appointed by the party in power not the people they are supposed to be representing (Alexander, 2012; Alexander *et al*, 2012; Nathan, 2013). South Africa is a democratic state that encourages public participation in local government for local people to raise their concerns and give inputs in decision making processes of municipal service delivery planning. However, the hierarchical structures of the democratic state also means that policy-making cannot be democratic and that ordinary people cannot properly participate in its structures, and the implication is that the state can never give the masses what they really want (Nathan, 2013). The purpose of the popular formation of structures like the community based organisations (CBOs) and the non-government organisations (NGOs) is not to pressure government to render public services but structures that will enable the government to understand from societal point of view and their representatives challenges, popular participation in influencing decisions and choices of government is an essential part of the societal formation, public contend and a true reflection of democracy. The latter could be because the ward councillors and ward representatives have disappointed the public quit a few times (GPL, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014).

Improving the consistency of public sector performance requires effective mechanisms for ensuring accountability of public functionaries to their managers, political principles and the citizens they serve. Yet accountability mechanism are frequently not implemented as managers avoid taking responsibilities while being reluctant to devolve authority to those below them (National Planning Commission, 2011). During public protests, communities destroy public property such as clinics, mobile police stations, libraries, community halls and other municipal and private

properties which suggest that there was no consultation with the people and people were not involved in municipal service delivery planning when such services were delivered (Moeng, 2014; Sifile, 2014) and, for the services that the public destroys millions are needed to rebuild which delays the process for new services to be delivered. Even in public protests that are not directly about the problems of municipal service delivery planning, public property is still destroyed. Considering the protests in Relela Village that were about the return of the body parts of a murdered and mutilated teenager, whereby a police satellite station was set alight, private property destroyed as well as police vans damaged. The Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa went on and mentioned that the public cannot expect the Policing Department to deal with matters of witchcraft as it seemed to be the case in Relela Village (Matola, 2014; Yende, 2014). According to the South African police Services, during public protests police are supposed to use rubber bullets to calm the protestors but in real cases police end up using live ammunition which precipitates the violence from members of the public as they feel that their constitutional right to protest is being undermined (Alexander, 2010; Alexander *et al*, 2013). The assumption is that when the public decides to violently take to the streets to demonstrate their grievances about the municipal service delivery planning or the lack thereof, the assumption would be that all peaceful means of communication have been exhausted like Izimbizo, Local Councils, community representative meetings or even the president's hotline (Wild, 2014). In 2014 alone, since January more than 7 people were shot dead by police during service delivery protests which questions the execution of the police force's task during protests, which is to protect public property and calm the members of the public engaging in the protests at that given point and time (Censorbugbear, 2014; ISSAfrica, 2014). It is

said that during violent public protest innocent people including spectators and those passing by the street, allegedly lose their lives in the hands of police (Alexander, 2012).

Whereas the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa (RSA, 1996), together with the *Local Government Municipal Structures Act* (RSA, 1998), make provision for the improvement of the match between practice and policy, discrepancies in execution have remained wide. The Constitution, together with a variety of legislative instruments such as the *White Paper on Transforming Service Delivery* (RSA, 1997), *Local Government Municipal Structures Act* (RSA, 1998) *Local Government Municipal Systems Act* (RSA, 2000) and the *Local Government Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations* (RSA, 2001) seek to close the gap between planning policy pronouncements and practice, with specific reference to the promotion of public participation. These legislative regulations entailed public participation promotion through municipal service delivery planning in order to enhance local democracy and to establish developmental local government (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012). Public administration regulations, policies, actions and practices adopted in South Africa affirm the state's aim of developing public value, accountability through municipal service delivery planning (Draai & Taylor, 2009; Auriacombe, 2010; National Planning Commission, 2012).

One of municipal regulations for the effective practise of public participation is an IDP, of which for the majority of local municipalities it has become business as usual rather than an enabling instrument for public participation (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012). Hence, for most local municipalities the IDP is no longer serving its purpose. There is a discrepancy in the practises of integrated development planning process, in that

municipalities do not conduct the process as stated in the legislation. The transformation of service delivery initiatives which focuses the attention on community-felt needs and priorities is expected from the execution of legislations that are put in place. Yes, the IDP is there but does it really reflect the felt needs, priorities and ambitions of the public and does it incorporate community participation at the centre stage for people to identify their most urgent needs and prioritise those needs (Madzivhandila & Asha, 2012; Theron & Ceasar, 2014). The public functionaries should regulate public participation by ensuring that it is an all-inclusive process and formal structure of participation including committee meetings, Imbizos and IDP meeting.

### **3.5. The exercise of constitutional rights in a democratic state**

The recognition, importance and the appreciation of plurality, diversity and different voices within communities can encourage the need for a meaningful public participation. The first clause of the freedom charter of 1955 states that the “people shall govern” which means that people need to be in charge of their development by participating in decision making processes being it at the municipal level or otherwise. However, in South Africa the clause has become more of a slogan than reality. Peacock (2012) mentions that local communities are not light bulbs to be switched on at election time, or even for that matter, immediately before community meetings, communities deserve and expect much more from government and the legislative framework is absolutely clear on the people’s rights and responsibilities.

Seale (2012:140) is of the view that “participation and extension participatory practices, have been seen as a response to challenges of representative democracy’

and it is in that line that the National Development Plan supports participatory governance at local level (National Planning Commission, 2012). Local governments are faced with a challenge of “rebellion by the poor” during which the police need to intervene to make arrests or need to use force when there is a risk to safety or possible damage to property which is mostly in practise because in reality police mostly use force even when there is no sign of threat to property (Alexander, 2010, 2012). The Batho Pele Handbook points out that despite government’s commitment to public service delivery, its promise of a better life for all would not happen unless a culture of service delivery, which places the public first, could be inculcated throughout the entire public service. Complete efficient and effective public service can be achieved by encouraging public functionaries to consult their customers on the services they need and the standards they can expect by helping them to consider problems of access to those services and urging them to communicate effectively with customers which can prepare ground and lay the foundation of truly humane (DPSA, n.d; Draai & Taylor, 2009; Modise, 2014). To help the public functionaries rise to these challenges of transformation, government has passed a body of enabling legislation, known as the regulatory framework and through government structures; a new public service management framework has been introduced aimed at making municipal service delivery a reality for every citizen (DPSA, n.d; Joshi, 2013).

Even though public participation is provided for by the democratic constitution of the republic of South Africa there are several factors combined to help explain why services are not delivered to the citizens. The structure of municipalities (regardless of the party in power), privatisation of basic services, pervasive corruption and mismanagement including the under-spending of budget and the overspending on

state managers salaries and conclusively it has been compounded by the fact that the poor people themselves have little say in determining how services ought to be delivered (Nathan, 2013). Modise (2012) questions where the responsibilities of setting community service delivery and development agenda lies. And her question was based on the presumption that the agendas as should be set by the public itself as all efforts on the suggested service delivery address the community needs. The latter seem to be a pipe dream for most communities in that if the public was able to influence the municipal service delivery planning processes then the public will have no reason to resort to violent protests that poses threats on the services that have already been delivered. South Africa has different methodologies to effect public participation and they are: presidential Izimbizos; ministerial Izimbizo, exco meets the people; citizens satisfaction surveys, ward committees; community development workers; integrated development planning forums; and, premier excellence awards and media related initiatives such as radio talk shows and television programmes (Hoelscher, 2015). An example of the effective public participation is that of Brazil and India where citizens hold community forums that meet regularly to address community issues such as poverty, hunger and homelessness and members of the fellow citizens and they are organised by NGOs, CBOs and trade unions to participate in issues of local government. Community leaders then ensure that issues raised at community level reach government authority that have the power to influence and address them and feedback sessions are organised to allow flow of information between government and the citizens (DPSA, n.d). Lead SA calls to all South Africans to stand up and be active citizens in their community instead of sitting and waiting for things to happen. According to Hoelscher (2015:31), a more restrained mechanism linking competition and violence is that political actors do not overtly use the threat of public violence, but

rather undermine state institutions by using them to their own ends rather than in the public interest. Recently it is evident that municipal service delivery planning is used as a platform for political inter-party conflict and political squabbles in that other parties will even provide protesters with tires for burning in the streets and also to use in the violence (Yende, 2014). South Africa has been labelled a protest nation since not a single day goes by without service delivery protests erupting. Hence, a number of incidents taking place in a space of a month such as in Bronkhospruit which remained on the edge, when a cement delivery truck was torched and police officials were given an ultimatum (Yende, 2014). The political institutional context are important in explaining the rates of public violence in that there are political parties that find opportunist in the violence protest by incentivising the violence (Hoelscher, 2015).

Municipal planning processes must be aligned to the public participation policy to ensure effective and informed decision making processes which infuse the spirit of citizen's involvement, ownership and responsibility. The greatest challenge facing South Africa is poverty and basic service delivery to the people mainly due to lack of accountability from the public functionaries. The national development plan has envisaged the need for South African citizens to become actioners rather than just beneficiaries of the state services which could result in less violent public protests. The IDP was seen as a mechanism to enable prioritisation and integration in municipal planning processes but the lack of coordination between different spheres of government has become a major obstacle in implementing the IDPs and Local Economic Development (LED) strategies at municipal level (Theron & Ceasar, 2014). A lack of clarity about powers and functions of local government impedes progress in service delivery across a range of municipalities, and the inability of municipalities to

attract and retain appropriately qualified personnel (National Planning Commission, 2012). The South African Local Government Association (SALGA) has identified several key factors affecting how well municipalities perform in the area of service delivery, which include the ability to attract and retain skilled staff; the existence of appropriate information system (IT), financial and other systems; inculcating a culture of satisfactory service delivery; and good working relationships between political and administrative leaderships with clear delineation of their respective roles (Rahman, 2010; Krishman, 2013). A constructive working relationship between political and administrative leaders can have a significant influence on municipal effectiveness in terms of service delivery and their ability to meet their broader developmental mandate (National Planning Commission, 2011). According to the national planning commission, provincial and municipal government are in the front line of service delivery and devolution provides the mechanism for them to be held accountable at the local level both through the ballot box and public protests.

Alexander (2012) mentioned that the South African police service's crowd management statistics show that south Africa really is the protest capital of the world to a point that the Police Minister Nathi Mthethwa had to inform parliament of the number of "crowd management incidents" that had occurred. Habib (2013) attest to that notion. The realisation of the government in challenges of service delivery at local level, the government's attempt to improve service delivery has not been sufficient to assuage the frustration and anger of poor people in South Africa. The new South African government that was elected to power in 1994 has a special mandate to provide appropriate services to all the people of the country especially those who were marginalised prior to '94. The new democratic government made a promise to the

South Africans that they will be served without discrimination, the dignity of the people will be respected, ensuring that the needs of the majority population are met efficiently and effectively (DPSA, n.d; GPL, 2012). Even after the 20 years of democracy, the promise made to the people of South Africa is still to be fulfilled. Hence, the current attitude by the people towards the government and the fierce violence perpetrated towards public and private property. Responding to the challenges presented by the legacy of the past and having to rise to the legitimate demands of citizens to be treated as customers, as opposed to mere users of public service (DPSA, n.d). The existence of corruption is often put down to a lack of effective anti-corruption policies, laws and checks and balances that fail to make officials accountable to the national state or the public at large of which the statement can be attested to by saying that since the establishment of strategies to fight corruption, there has been minimal reduction in corruption in the public sector, in fact corruption has actually increased (Nkuna & Nemutanzhela, 2012; Nathan, 2013). Ordinary people have no control over corruption because they are never given information or control over how the money in municipalities is spent. Whereas, with the effective implementation of municipal budget planning and participation, ordinary members of the public will be able to participate in local government issues with scrutiny which shows potential of reducing corruption at local government that result in citizen satisfaction (Nathan, 2013).

There are nine main service delivery and development challenges facing South Africa as per the National Planning Commission and they are: highly limited number of working people which means that a large proportion is receiving grants; quality and standard of education for the low income household is not at an acceptable level; infrastructure that is able to support the level of economic growth is insufficient; social

and economic exclusion of the poor in opportunities; an overly resource intensive economy; lack, insufficient and /or poor quality of public service and the need to facilitate and foster social cohesion and a united South Africa (Mpehle, 2012; Modise, 2012). The diagnostic report of 2011 also points out that the provision of decent municipal services is therefore an important means of addressing gender as well as racial inequalities which are some of the challenges that South Africa is battling with (National Planning Commission, 2011). The tension between politicians and administrative heads is fuelled by the deployment of cadre to post of which they are unqualified for and the intervention of politicians in operational matters which compromises the final product delivered which in most cases are the services (National Planning Commission, 2011). The Department of Public Services and Administration showed that the public service is short of skilled professionals, especially in health, policing, infrastructure planning, engineering, finance and information technology (IT) (DPSA, n.d; National Planning Commission, 2011; GPL, 2012). Skills deficit has an adverse impact not only on the front-line service delivery but also on the ability of government to engage in long term planning, coordination cross institutions and run efficient operations (National Planning Commission, 2011).

A lack of clarity about the powers and functions of local government exacerbate the financial problems faced by municipalities and is a critical factor impeding progress in municipal service delivery (National Planning Commission, 2011; Cruz & Marques, 2014). Corruption is one of the most striking back draws in accountability although it occurs in both private and public sector. It is particularly damaging good relations between citizens and the state and eventually undermines confidence in the democratic system (National Planning Commission, 2011, 2012). The advent of

democracy has enabled much greater coverage of instances of corruption and the national planning commission interacting with agencies tasked with investigating cases of corruption have made it clear that the level of corruption are worryingly high. South Africa is ranked 54<sup>th</sup> out of 178 countries in transparency international's corruption perception index (National Planning Commission, 2011). Corruption undermines the state's legitimacy and service delivery, weakens government's ability to deliver adequate and sufficient services, increase social mobility and makes it difficult to overcome inequalities (Mottiar, & Bond, n.d; National Planning Commission, 2011; Moeng, 2014). Violent public protests in South Africa are not merely about service delivery, they are more of residents being fed up with promises made by political parties when they occupy certain positions and when campaigning for votes during election time for example the protests that took place in Boiketlong near Sebokeng, south of Johannesburg in South Africa (Ratsatsi, 2014).

Hoelscher (2015) mentioned that social violence is increasingly acknowledged as a threat to development in that it involves eroding social capital; constraining access to employment, education, health services; deterring public service provision and investment; and encouraging repressive governance or policing policies. The latter is evident in South Africa's recent public protest. The rate at which violent protests take place in a democratic South Africa somehow threatens the democracy that currently exists (Moeng, 2014; Yende, 2014). The citizens newspaper channels the people's frustrations to the leadership of the country which goes down to the leadership at the local government in that the people need leadership that connects with the people, understand their grievances and channel their energies (Ratsatsi, 2014). The crime in the alleged service delivery protests questions the legitimacy of the (e)rationale

underlying the protests as there are instances whereby protestors hijacked a truck delivering cement and helped themselves with cement from the burned cement truck (Moeng, 2014; Sifile, 2014) and in other instances shops are looted as an opportunity for protestors to help themselves with the goods from the shops. The question then is what does a cement truck has to do with service delivery or the lack thereof.

In recent violent public protests, police services have contributed to the hike in violence in that it appears as if they have forgotten their mandate which is to protect the people and public property, unlike what happened in Boiketlong early 2014 where police witnessed a shooting that left at least one person dead and a gun was taken from the culprit and later returned after removing the cartridge and no warrant for arrest for murder was issued (Sifile, 2014). Tshwane Mayor Kgosientso Ramokgopa said that the members of the community have inherited the culture of non-payment for municipal service delivery and municipalities are left to deal with the debt for the unpaid services. Hence, it is impossible to meet service delivery targets without revenues (Moeng, 2014; Ratsatsi, 2014). The public have uttered words like “we are tired of empty promises” (Moeng, 2014; Wild, 2014). Post-apartheid era in South Africans have moved away from the ballot box and have adopted the violent protest politics (Wild, 2014).

COGTA locates the failure of local government service delivery in political parties that undermine the integrity and functioning of municipal councils through intra and inter-party conflicts. Moreover, the inappropriate interference in councils and administration also fuels the eruption of violent service delivery protests (Tsheola, 2012). Police Commissioner Riah Phiyega has stated that the reason why police opt for the usage

of live ammunition is in fear for their lives which results in the use of deadly force against protestors carrying a stone. This raises the question of who is supposed to carry out police duties in such instances if the police are scared (Matola, 2014; Tau, 2014). There is anger and frustration with broken promises and the lack of meaningful response from government. Police action sometimes provokes violence in that the public feels that it would be useless for them to protest peacefully and still feel neglected (Alexander *et al*, 2013). (Alexander *et.al*, 2013; Sifile, 2014) argued that repression is not the answer it merely intensifies people's bitterness and alienation. For people to get services they need to take to the streets and perform and to some extent those performances become violent.

In South Africa's public protests it appears that the motivation has always been to exert democratic rights and entitlements. To this extent, the applicable forms of demonstration effect to South Africa's public protests involve a combination of "exact imitation", "deliberate inexact imitation" and "accidental inexact imitation" (Fisher, 2004; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). The latter three forms have appeared to breed violence in the constitutional right to protest. It is important to understand the motives underlying the public's decision to imitate in order to gain insight into the applicability of the concept of demonstration effect in South Africa's violent public protests claimed to be about service delivery or the lack thereof. Hence, the reason that most protestors have emphasise the notion that it is the only language that the state would understand and evidently, the imitation of diversified liberal demonstration in protest concoct a combination of deliberate and accidental exact imitation (Hamida & Gugler, 2009). The reasons advanced by members of the public during violent protests claimed to be about service delivery vary, the National Planning Commission (2011) states that the

provincial and municipal governments are in the front line of service delivery and devolution provides the mechanism for them to be held accountable at the local level both through the ballot box and, informally through service delivery protests. With that, the people are angered by the unaccountability of the local government and they feel that since they have lost their power they have violently taken to the streets to reclaim it.

### **3.6. The relation between metropolitan cities and countries and the geographical spatial spread of protests**

Hoelscher (2015) holds the notion that public violence will be evident in certain places due to the following: in municipalities where political contestation is more competitive; during election years, in municipalities where there is concentration of power and lastly where competition for power and concentration of power are either relatively low or relatively high. The trend and the spatial spread of public protests in South Africa insinuate some sort of truth in the above mentioned observations.

The spatial spread of violent public protests alleged to be about lack of services in South Africa questions the legitimacy of those protests considering their relation to the metropolitan cities and countries of which they aspire to in terms of behaviours and consumption patterns and lifestyle for example Ukraine, Brazil, USA, UK and Australia without full understanding of such actions. However, spread of public protests in emerging economies is evident in informal settlements imitating what and how things are done in the metropolitan cities close to them. That is, most of the public protests in South Africa in recent years show a trend of violent public protests arising in informal settlements i.e. Diepsloot, Balfour, Piet Retief, Thokoza, Sebokeng, Bekkersdal,

Bronkhorstspuit, Majakaneng, Koster, Cape Flats and Hebron which are informal settlements close to the metros. According to Allan & Heese (n.d), there is clear evidence that most protests in 2014 continued to occur in informal settlements in the large metros in cities like Johannesburg, Ekurhuleni and Cape Town (see appendix B-G). The element of violence in the public protests could be the manifestation of the demonstration effect in the genuine cry of the public. And in most public protests, the people who allegedly lose their lives in the hands of police are said to be the youth as they are the ones in the forefront challenging the cultural norms and values for example Andries Tatane in Ficksburg, Osiah Rahube in Brits, Tshepo Babuseng in Roodepoort and Lerata Tladi in Sebokeng and most of them are males.

Time and time again communities are promised heaven and earth during election campaigns and rarely have those promises been met. Consequently, the people mostly in the informal settlements have less hope of their problems being addressed and eventually violently take to the streets. Managa (2012:2) suggests that “population growth and urbanisation are the determining factors linked to the recent public protests dominating the informal settlements”. Thus, high influx of poor migrants who are unable to benefit from the social, economic and political advantages in the metropolitan cities and living in close proximity to the metropolitan areas merely makes the situation even worse (Mottiar & Bond, n.d; Managa, 2012).

In the South African context, the recent spatial spread of protests challenges the logic of service delivery as the core reason for the violence in the constitutional right to protest. Whilst, simultaneously upholding the view that though the protesters frustration and anger might be legit, most of them draw from the demonstration effect

associated with the location of informal settlements within the proximity of metropolitan cities that are strongly connected to those in the emerged economies (Campos & Zapata, 2014). Despite its intuitive connection, demonstration effect is multidimensional, complex and vague (Fisher, 2004). These reasons should be used to argue that the South African public protests are functions of deliberate and accidental exact imitation for these protests are filled with alien elements in a democratic dispensation. According to the information cascade “people imitate others because they assume that others have more information” (Jellal & Wolff, 2000; Fisher, 2004). According to Fisher (2004:433), people learn by observing others even if what they “learn” is not in their best interest. The mushrooming of violent protests across South Africa appears to suggest that once the first inapplicable self-selection of violence was made, it became self-reinforcing and understandable wherein protests become violent and because protesters are angry and frustrated (Fisher, 2004; Hamida & Gugler, 2009). The demonstration effect in emerging economies can cause a breakdown in societies due to the strain in the societal fabric, therefore leading to general sense of impatience with the process of development whereby the public expect overnight fixes. Evidently, Zuma (2014) mentioned that the recent violent public protests in South Africa are due to the sense of impatience that has developed amongst members of the public wherein, seeing people get services on the side of the road makes them want services now as well. Tau (2014) share the same sentiments about South Africans being impatient.

In recent years ideas have shown that most of the recent violent public protests are emanating from informal settlements and townships that have very close influence of the metropolitan cities which are better resourced in terms of service delivery (Mottiar

& Bond, n.d; Booysen, 2009; Alexander, 2010). In Alexander (2010) the location of recent violent protests is in the lack of accountability by local councillors, water, sanitation, electricity, housing, infrastructure, and lack of employment, business opportunity which in recent times has led to xenophobic attacks wherein foreign owned shops in informal settlements were looted and burned down. Moreover, Most of the public protests in South Africa in recent years show a trend of violence in informal settlements for example Diepsloot, Balfour, Piet Retief, Thokoza, Sebokeng, Bekkersdal, Bronkhorstspuit, Majakeneng, Koster and Hebron which are informal settlements close to the metropolitan cities.

### **3.7. South Africa and Global Imitation**

With demonstration effect, people imitate those that they think are better off and most likely the urbanised, advanced and better informed even though those people might be from the same cultural group as they are. The activeness of the imitation whether deliberate or accidental, is also a function of cultural dissimilarities because people cannot properly understand other's behaviour when they are culturally different (Fisher, 2004; Hamida & Gugler, 2009; Mitrut & Wolff, 2009). South Africa's violent protests have become fashionable, replacing the hyperbolic constitutional dispensation of the third decade of democracy (Habib, 2008, 2013). It appears that South Africa's sudden resort to public violent protests comes into fashion and fashion pattern could insinuate the applicability of the "rubbish theory" to the South African evolution since 1994.

The violent protests in the democratic dispensation of South Africa are characterised by amongst others barricading roads, burning tyres, singing, dancing, chanting,

'toyitoying', stone throwing, looting, destruction of property, vandalising, physical assault, chasing, striking, littering, marching, demonstration, picketing, petition, memorandum, ultimatum, intimidation, threats, threatening behaviour, disruption and use of weapons (Mottiar & Bond, n.d). Observing from the 2010 students protests in London wherein the protest turned violent and students were smashing windows, clashing with police, carrying sticks and bottles, a mixture of police and protestors getting injured and the destruction of property/vandalising (*The Guardian*, 2010). Another example of violent protests in metropolitan countries is that of Ukraine in early 2014 which left a score of people dead allegedly in the hands of the police and protestors being beaten (*The week*, 2014). The activities that are involved during the violent protests in the democratic acclaimed South Africa are evidently not different from those that transpire in the metropolitan countries as imitated by the metropolitan cities and transferred to the informal settlements.

Zuma (2014) highlighted that the violent public protests in a democratic South Africa are fuelled by public's sense of impatient wherein people see services being delivered on the other side of the road and start protesting for services and destroy the meagre services that already exists. Therefore, the spirit of responsible citizenry and solidarity is needed to be cultivated in members of the public in a democratic country. Research conducted by the social change research unit at the University of Johannesburg in 2014, shows that there has been a sharp increase in the number of people killed in public protests which could be assumed to be the works of demonstration effect in local communities. Notwithstanding the fact that in a democratic dispensation like South Africa during public protests, people are expected to flee from the scene of protests especially when the police service arrives. However, in recent years public

protests are dominated by violence wherein members of the public fight back with the police. The latter is presumed to be an imitation of what the locals see on the news, television, films and observe from metropolitan cities as most of them spend the day there looking for employment opportunities. The interaction between authorities and communities plays a vital role in how members of the public react to the governance of local government. In circumstances wherein authorities listen and respond to communities bureaucratically as opposed to sympathetically and repression is not the answer but it usually intensifies the public's bitterness (Alexander *et al*, 2013).

The sense of imitation in the democratic dispensation of South Africa is not only evident in the public's conduct during public services but also in household decision making and people's lifestyle and consumption patterns. South Africa has adopted policies and regulations from metropolitan countries of which even after 20 years into democracy they have failed to effectively execute. Evidently, South Africa's political structure is an exact imitation of the politics in metropolitan countries. Notwithstanding the democratic country's education system that has been inconsistent with the assessments, from NSC to OBE and then CAPS which were adopted from metropolitan countries on the basis that their best education system is more advanced and the imitation was done with little knowledge. South Africa has some of the best policies. However, the implementation of the policies has been a nightmare for most public functionaries as there is no depth understanding of the adopted policies. Hence, the violent public protest in a democratic dispensation as people are angry and frustrated about public functionaries not following legislations to address issues at local government.

The rise in the number of protest since 2004 (8004 protests recoded) increased to 10 437 in 2005 and between 2006 and 2009 they have slightly decreased. However, in 2012 when Jacob Zuma became president the service delivery protests rose steeply unlike during the Thabo Mbeki administration era (Habib, 2013). The rise in violent public protests that are alleged to be about service delivery strongly suggests that what is delivered to the people does not reflect the publics' felt needs and aspirations. Hence, it arguably means that members of the public might have been present to participate but did not influence the decision making process or that their views were not considered. During the ANC door to door campaign in Soshanguve, residents cried to the president of the state because they are not getting any services in their area, yet they have elected a representative who is not serving them. In that, when they tell her they need water she responds by saying that "she is not the office and does not open taps". Moreover, the representative who is the councillor has personalised the branch as *hers*, and if during meetings you do not agree with her she removes you from the position you occupy in that branch (ENCA, 2014). The people who show their dissatisfaction about their representative, they are given the opportunity to vote and elect someone else to represent them, but in most cases they still vote for the same people they are not satisfied with.

A democratic government that understands its democratic state and democracy provides its citizenry different platforms of voicing out their grievances either by protesting or the ballot box. South Africans need to be reminded of the power of peaceful protest and negotiations. And above all, that tolerance for the opinions and rights of others who may hold different views and opinions to their own, unlike the representative in "Soshanguve" who removes people from their positions when they

hold different views from theirs. Questions should be raised if South Africans have forgotten the example of tolerance that former president Nelson Mandela showed to the nation (Haffajee, 2014). Haffajee (2014) further deliberates on the South African democracy as the country prepares to commemorate two decades of democratic freedom; there are still those who choose to resort to the threat of physical violence and violent protests as a means of defending personal views or getting their voices heard. Although violence is something that was used during the apartheid era it is also something that the local people are adopting from metropolitan countries as they observe via media. Haffajee (2014), further asked “haven’t people learnt anything over the past 20 years, don’t people know that there are other methods that can be used for people to get their voices heard like peaceful dialogue and negotiations instead of using weapons, aggression and violence”. An example of powerful public protest of 1956 in South Africa before gaining its democratic freedom, woman marched to the Union Buildings in Pretoria to protest against the *dompas*, on the occasion no weapons were carried and no rocks were thrown. The only weapons that were used where words, petitions, persuasive and intelligent arguments and a steely determination and the woman’s voices were heard without any violence (Haffajee, 2014). Currently in the democratic South Africa, the citizenry still resort to violence which in most cases does not change their situation or improve their situation but worsens it. In a South African context Batho Pele which refers to “people first” is not a “bolt-on” activity, but a way of delivering public services that places the citizens at the centre of public service planning and operations (DPSA, n.d). The competence of the auditor general is recognised internationally and South Africa was recently voted as having the most transparent budgeting system in the world which is somewhat questionable in how do people demand certain things at local government and to be told there is no money,

how does that happened if the budget system is so transparent (National Planning Commission, 2011). There are significant changes in community expectations from public sector organisations in that now in the post-apartheid era citizens do not tolerate poor services, cannot endure inefficient administration, they now expect quality in service delivery and they have started to hold elected representatives increasingly accountable when their expectations are not met (Moeng, 2014).

It is becoming evidently clear that the number of voters is continuously declining, this is despite the millions of people who register to vote, but only a few actually show up to vote. The reasons advanced by the public for not voting is because the government has failed them so many times by being unresponsive and ineffective. That is, the people would rather not vote but instead take to the street violently and the government will listen (Haffajee, 2014; Zuma, 2014). Furthermore, there is a need to incorporate participation in representative democracy. The apparent service delivery protests in the teething stages of South Africa's democracy are based on the allegations that the representatives are forgetting their mandate once they are in power and that the people feel like they are powerless and voiceless. Though the South African government allows for them to vote for whoever they want, even with those powers to vote the citizenry still feel powerless and voiceless which is ironic looking at the slogan in South Africa that says "power to the people". The powerlessness and voicelessness of the public bred public violence especially when the rule of law is ignored by the public functionaries belonging to a certain political party that do not seem to have any competition in the area (Hoelscher, 2015).

With more and more members of the public continuously feeling powerless and voiceless in local governance they have resorted to taking to the streets to reclaim their power and voice, which suggests that the people no longer have faith in the electoral system that is supposed to reflect the peoples will in its outcomes (Ratsatsi, 2014). Although there are different ways for the public to voice out their concerns, in South Africa it has come to a point where the ballot box is not efficient but some politicians encourage people to protest as it is the constitutional right and the violence in practising their constitutional right is said to be the language that is well understood by public functionaries (Moeng, 2014). In the year 2014 North West (Brits) had service delivery challenges particularly water and reports show members of the public took to the streets to showcase their grievances and there was no intervention from government until two people were shot dead when the protests become violent. The year 2014 marked South Africa's 20<sup>th</sup> year in democracy, and Gauteng alone had 569 protests in a space of three months, 122 of them were violent and at least nine people were killed seven of them by police (*Citizen*, February 07, 2014). When President Zuma took office in 2009 he was ushered in by protests, now residents feel like the leadership does not care about their votes in that during protests they expect the president to come and address them but instead he was said to be "relaxing at home" when the country is up in flames on the streets (*Citizen*, February 07, 2014). South Africa has in recent years seen more bloodshed during service delivery protests wherein the police service which is meant to keep the people and property safe as well as protect them, have been allegedly labelled as the brutal killing machines as an increasing number of people allegedly lose their lives at the hands of the police.

Police brutality during public protests indicates the undermining of the public's constitutional right to protest as the brutality instigates retaliation accompanied by violence from members of the public. During public protests, when members of the public lose their lives allegedly at the hands of police proves the usage of police brutality in dispersing the crowds. Police personnel need to change the way they react during public protests because the reaction used when addressing the public during protests determines whether the protests will turn violent or remain peaceful. The most powerful tool for people to receive municipal services at local level is no longer through the ballot which is democratically and constitutionally provided for but through a brick (Haffajee, 2014).

### **3.8. Conclusion**

From this chapter it is evident that really there is more to the dominating violent public protests than the alleged poor or lack of services. This chapter has revealed the spatial spread of protests which raises questions in that public protests are mainly taking place in the townships and informal settlements where some services have been provided and have close connection with the metropolitan cities and countries. South Africa's imitation of the global states in its legislatures, regulations, policies, politics, approaches and principles has led to dire consequences evident in the public protests that incorporate alien behaviour of violence in a democratic dispensation. Therefore, since the imitation cannot be accurate in such instances the democratic country may seem to have shot itself in the foot. The next chapter will analyse the violent public protest in a democratic South Africa and hopefully bring firm confirmation of what this chapter has discovered and more.