

Full Length Research Paper

Relationship between municipal performance (service delivery) and communities' rejection/acceptance of demarcations

Luvuyo Ntombana^{1*} and Thandeka Khowa²

¹Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Faculty of Humanities, Nelson Mandela University, South Africa.

²Department of Sociology and Human Settlements, Faculty of Social Science and Humanities, University of Fort Hare, South Africa.

Received 28 June, 2020; Accepted 6 July, 2020

This paper is an assessment of the relationship between perceived municipal performance (in rendering basic needs) and communities' rejection/acceptance of amalgamations. The research attempts to answer the question "is there a correlation between municipal demarcation disputes and service delivery provision". Data for this study was obtained using a quantitative approach. The findings indicate that part of the major contributor to municipal demarcation disputes is largely based on municipal performance, as communities reject amalgamation to municipalities perceived as underperforming in rendering services to their communities. Thus service delivery and municipal performance acts as the guiding principle and catalyst to many municipal demarcation disputes. What is perceived as demarcation disputes is largely the stimulus of service delivery provision disputes and underperformance of municipalities in rendering basic needs to the communities.

Key words: Demarcations, disputes, municipalities, democracy.

INTRODUCTION

In 2020, fourteen years after the incidents of Matatiele and Khutsong in South Africa, the rejection of municipal demarcation, such as the recent spills in Thlokwe and Vuwani protests against the Municipal Demarcation Board, still occur. In July 2015, the MDB announced its envisaged amalgamation of Malamulela, Tshikonelo, Mulenzhe, Piet-boy, and Khakhanwa (which is under Thulamela Municipality) as well as Masia, Mashau, Vyeboom, Tshino, Davhana, Tshimbupfe, Ramukhuba, and Masakona (which is under Makhado Municipality), to form one municipality (SABC, 2016). Community members in Vuwani rejected this coalition, which resulted

in riots and the demolishing as well as burning of government properties and schools, with traditional leaders at the forefront of arguing against re-demarcation. Little has been written on the correlation between municipal performance, service delivery, and demarcation even though literature focuses on the types of demarcation and the outbreak of demarcation disputes while arguing that communities in South Africa reject demarcations. This paper thus looks at municipal performance in terms of using service delivery as a contributing factor in the outcome status of demarcations. The article, therefore, examines the causal relationship

*Corresponding author. E-mail: Luvuyo.Ntombana2@mandela.ac.za.

between perceived municipal performance (in rendering basic needs) and the communities' rejection/acceptance of the amalgamations insight into the causal factors during disputes that could contribute towards effective management of demarcation in South Africa.

Historical overview of protests

The Apartheid government law segregated/ divided communities into different ethnic groups and thus affected the spatial patterns of South Africa. According to Griggs (1998), the post-apartheid government had to make drastic alterations and redraw new provincial and municipal boundaries. This alteration entailed the transformation from four provinces to nine provinces to ensure that the previously disadvantaged people have access to land, power, and services. Democratic South Africa's task was thus to undo past injustices by shifting from the previous bureaucratic governance system to the establishment of the three tripartite spheres of governance. This new system consists of a National, Provincial, and Local government to ensure that the citizens have a say in their development and the governance of the country, thus giving power to the people. This shift saw the establishment of the municipal demarcation board, whose sole mandate was to re-draw the spatial boundaries/ landscape of the country. The redrawing of the provincial and municipal boundaries in South Africa has resulted in a wave of disputes, as communities have rejected amalgamations to other provinces and municipalities (Cameron, 1996a). The rejections by the communities manifested around issues of service delivery and municipal provision.

The relationship between municipal performance and the demarcation disputes is interlinked and, potentially affects each other. The demarcation outcomes are influenced by municipal performance and service delivery, while the performance of municipalities and the rendering of services are affected by demarcation. Protests in South Africa have mainly been clouded by service delivery as community members express their dissatisfaction levels with municipal performances in catering for the needs of disadvantaged South African people. The Municipal Demarcation Board has been affected by municipal performance and the levels of satisfaction regarding the provision of basic services by community members. The community acceptance or rejection of demarcation merges or amalgamations has been influenced by community perceptions of municipal performance and the provision of services (Bekink, 2006). In areas such as Khutsong, Matatiele, the main rejection of demarcation was solely on how services delivery will be affected by jumping ship and joining other municipalities or provinces (Raophala, 2013).

The provision of basic needs services is of paramount importance in South Africa, as the past colonial government had neglected black settlers, thus depriving

them of services. The democratic government had a mandate to correct the injustices of the past and to enable service delivery to the previously disadvantaged communities, mainly in rural areas and townships. Throughout the year, violent protests have erupted in different communities within South Africa, such as Diepsloot in Johannesburg, where 3000 protesters marched while demanding the delivery of basic needs. In Harrismith, in the Free State province, residents rejected the re-demarcation to the Maluti-a-Phofung Municipality, due to a lack of service delivery and communication breakdown between the residents and municipal councillors. Community members of the Phumelela Municipality, in the northern Free State area, soon started their protests as community members accused the municipal manager, the mayor, and the ward councillors of, amongst other things, poor service delivery and nepotistic behaviour. The protests soon escalated to other parts of the country as communities expressed their dissatisfaction with the municipalities regarding the delivery of services (Buhlungu et al., 2007).

In Cape Town, the Mitchells Plain residents erected burning barricades to fight against poor workmanship and the delivery of basic services. In Durban, community members in informal settlements protested, demanding houses and services. In Delmas, Mpumalanga, angry residents demanded the resignation of the municipal manager. People of Secunda, in the Emalenhle Township, protested against nepotism and poor service delivery. Protests also erupted in the Eastern Cape as in Uitenhage, angry residents took to the street while protesting against corrupt councilors. All of the protests mentioned were against poor municipal performance, which leads to lack or poorer service delivery to the communities (Dlamini, 2004).

Relationship between service delivery protests and demarcation

A different type of municipal protest took place as communities that were affected by re-demarcations, expressed their frustrations by rejecting the amalgamations. Protests against demarcation have been on a rise in South Africa, dating back to 1999. In the case of Durban's Ethekwini municipality, the demarcation process was heavily contested by the traditional authority, who believed that demarcation was nothing but a strategy to strip them of their powers (Goodenough, 2004). In 1994, the democratic government dismantled the past Homelands into the new nine provinces, which saw the amalgamation of Bushbuckridge to the Limpopo province. Soon after this announcement, the Bushbuckridge community members protested, thus rejecting the move and they were adamant that they wanted to remain under the Mpumalanga province (Bushbuckridge Local Municipality, 2009). More communities joined in, rejecting proposed demarcations

such as the Matatiele community who, in September 2005, rejected the demarcation to the Eastern Cape Province. The residents of Matatiele argued that their interests would be more effectively served by Kwa-Zulu Natal instead of the Eastern Cape Province. Residents further argued that the Eastern Cape had failed to service their communities, thus refusing to be associated with such a province.

Khutsong, in the Merafong Municipality, soon joined in the protest against re-demarcation as the residents argued against the move from Gauteng to the North West province. The residents argued that people in the North West province were hungry and poor, and they argued that the province had, in the past, failed to cater to the needs of its people, and therefore, they refused to be trapped in the same situation (Mail and Guardian, 2008, 17-23.02.06). Demarcations, therefore, seems to be impacted upon by municipal performance and service delivery. There seems to be an intertwined reciprocal causal effect, as demarcation can affect municipal performance due to the size of the municipality either increasing or decreasing with the merges. Over the past few years, concerns have emerged on the impact of demarcations on municipal performance. Arguments relate to the reconfiguration of the sizes of the municipalities, numbers, and the type of municipalities, and how this affects municipal finance, and financial performance. Processes of demarcation that were employed by the municipal demarcation board have been rejected and questioned (Ncube and Monnakgotla, 2016). In a national meeting held in 2013, the ANC expressed its concerns regarding the impact of demarcation on municipalities' performance. They argued that the Municipal Demarcation Board needs to consider the effects of the demarcations on municipal finances and performance, in line with the mandate to break racial barriers and to ensure the provision of basic needs for the people.

Two opposing schools of thought have emerged around demarcations and its role (Some scholars are for and those against consolidation). Scholars such as Slack and Bird (2013), argue that bigger is not necessarily better or cheaper. The discourse contradicts the argument by the Municipal Demarcation Board, that bigger municipalities are efficient for enabling more economic and service provision benefits. The board propels the benefits relative to saving administrative overheads, as duplications are eliminated when reducing the numbers of politicians and bureaucrats in the process, and service delivery increases as the cost per unit is lower. Evidence indicates that the impact of consolidation has mixed results. A study conducted by Dollery and Byrens, in 2006, and a similar study conducted by Boyne (1992), reviewed the United Kingdom and the United States on economies of scale after merges. The findings revealed that consolidation is associated with higher financial implications. Several

studies have been conducted, both nationally and internationally, in investigating the impact of the demarcations of municipal performances. An investigation on the impact of municipal amalgamations was conducted by Ncube and Vacu (2015/2016) in South Africa, and it indicated that amalgamations have dire financial implications and, therefore, have the potential to affect municipal performance. Using a case study sample of five Canadian municipalities, which had been consolidated in a study conducted by Vojnovic (2000) in Canada, the study sought to examine fiscal, bureaucratic specialisation, administration, equality, and accountability issues. The findings of the study revealed that the demarcation and rearrangements of municipal boundaries do not lead to fiscal accountability. The author of the study argued that other alternative means can be used to ensure equity, thus avoiding costly municipal demarcations. This finding is further advocated by Dollery and Byrens (2006).

Conversely, scholars such as Faguet (2004), argue in support of demarcations, while stating that bigger municipalities are said to be better in terms of both technical and financial aspects when compared to fragmented smaller municipalities, in providing an array of services. Faguet argues against bigger municipalities and states that efficiency is a challenge with bigger municipalities. Small municipalities are viewed as more efficient and responsive to the needs of their citizens while having clear accountability channels (Faguet, 2004). In a study in Canada that were conducted by Kushner and Sigel (2005), the amalgamations of the local governments improved efficiency in some municipalities while it also improved the inefficiency in others.

These scholars argue that having smaller municipalities, stimulates competition, and citizen participation is stronger with an access to authority through public hearings, meetings as well as elections, and direct contact is easier (Ncube and Monnakgotla, 2016). A similar study conducted by Fleischmann (1986) in the USA, looked at the implications of consolidation. Findings reported a great improvement in small municipalities that were amalgamated as they gain improvement in terms of service delivery. The municipality also gained in terms of new tax revenues that aided in the performance of the municipality itself, further, there were social and political gains and thus the researcher concludes that the merges were beneficial. From the above studies, there is a relationship between municipal performance and demarcations, and vice versa.

Theories desorbing link between deprivation and conflict

Relative deprivation (RD) was founded by scholars such as Samuel Stouffer, in their quest to try and explain the link between deprivation and conflict. The relative

deprivation theory reviewed the inconsistencies in people's reaction, based on what people need/ want, and the meaning and interpretations attached to these situations as well as what they gain. This theory is grounded in the human development approach while looking at the capabilities and opportunities that are granted to people (Gurr, 1970: 87). Gurr argues that people are more likely to rebel when they lose the hope of attaining the values that they feel they are deprived of. According to Saleh (2011: 234), in areas or states where there are inequalities in the standard of living on some members of different ethnic groups and where they have a limited accessibility to state resources such as wealth, land conflict is bound to arise.

Asingo (2018) tackles the issue of relative deprivation while looking at the causes of this deprivation in his work in Kenya. Asingo concludes that the most important concept within the government or local government is citizen participation (Asingo, 2018). Citizen participation or political participation is viewed as a tool that provides citizens with an opportunity to express their views and challenges, thus awarding citizens a voice and eliminating the feeling of deprivation (Verba et al., 1995: 1). Relative deprivation has two broad forms, which are the fraternalistic and egoistic forms. Fraternalistic deprivations take place at a group level as people compare themselves regarding their ethnicity, religion, etc. to another group in terms of fair treatment (Taylor, 2002). Whilst egoistic deprivation takes place at an individual level as individuals compare themselves or their situation to other individuals or groups in the same situation, and thus conclude that they are unfairly treated (Taylor, 2002; Walker and Smith, 2002). At the egoistic or individual level, there are two forms of deprivation, namely intra-personal and inter-personal deprivation. Intra-personal deprivation occurs when an individual compares their current situation to that of their previous situation. Inter-personal deprivation occurs when an individual compares their current situation to that of other people who are in the same situation as them.

Kendall (2010) argues that when comparison takes form and a judgment is made that their situation is not similar and is unfair as to others, relative deprivation takes place (Kendall, 2010: 555). Relative deprivation or comparison thus germinates a seed of dissatisfaction or discontent that later result in grievances and a change of behaviour, such as protests or riots. Thus, Gurr argues that service delivery protests are the result of relative deprivation, as communities view themselves in comparison to others and conclude that they are being unfairly treated. Gurr further argues that South Africa treats its people with equality in terms of basic needs yet provision protests will continue to be on a rise and this will hinder any form of development or transformation (Gurr, 1970). When the social contracts between the local government and the communities are dismantled, and the community believes that the agenda of the local

government is not for the "good of the people", conflict arises. In this regard, people tend to view their conditions as unfair and thus they react to disrupt social cohesion. The relative deprivation theory resonates well with the case that has been presented in the article, as most demarcation disputes refer to service delivery as the main cause of the rejection of demarcations. The relative deprivation theory thus provides the researcher with the relevant context in which to examine the role of service delivery provision and its impact on demarcations.

METHODOLOGY

The study collected quantitative data using a survey method by means of a structured interview guide. A structured interview guide sought to ensure both reliability and validity, as all participants completed the same questionnaire. The use of a survey was administered to the community members of the Vuwani Vhembe district. The research study area was selected purposively, as the Vuwani Vhembe district is currently experiencing demarcation disputes with ongoing talks between the Municipal Demarcation Board, the local government and the Vuwani community. The municipal demarcation board announced an envisaged amalgamation of a part of the Vuwani and Malamulele communities in the formation of a new Collins Chabane municipality, but this amalgamation has been rejected by the Vuwani communities. The researcher thus investigated the reasons for the rejection and its links to municipal performance in the rendering of basic needs.

The community members who participated in the study were selected using probability sampling, while utilising the simple random sampling technique to ensure that every individual has an equal chance of selection (Moore and McCabe, 2006). According to the 2011 census, the estimated population, for Vuwani, is 2791. The total sample size was calculated using the online Raosoft sample calculator at (<http://www.raosoft.com/samplesize.html>), thus allowing for a standard error of 5%, a confidence level of 95%, and a response distribution of 50%. A minimum sample of 338 was suggested for the study. Due to time and financial concerns, the study allowed for a 10% standard error, for which Raosoft suggests a minimum of 92 respondents for the study area. The structured survey questionnaire had three sections, including biographical information, to assess gender, education, race and tribe. The second section examined the perceptions and understanding of the Vuwani community members on demarcation, the Municipal Demarcation board, roles, and the reasons for demarcating Vuwani. The third section examined the reasons of the community members for rejecting the demarcation. In so doing, the researcher examines the link and the extent to which municipal performance and service delivery is the underlying cause or basis of rejecting the demarcation. The questionnaire was self-administrated.

SPSS and Microsoft excel software was used for data analysis. The study used inferential statistics, factor analysis, bivariate correlation, and chi-square as basic tools to find simple correlations and differences in means. Data analysis, in the study, is used to reduce the volume of raw data, while sifting important data and constructing a framework for communicating data findings (De Vos et al., 2012:397; Bonilha, 2012). The participants were not forced to participate, and they were informed of their rights and that they could withdraw from the study at any time if they wished to do so. Pseudonyms were used to refer to the participants to protect their identities. Each participant signed a consent form, which explained that they voluntarily participated in the study. Ethics approval for this study was granted by the Nelson Mandela University in Port

Table 1. Reliability analysis.

| Main theoretical variable | Valid N | Items used | Cronbach's α |
|--|---------|------------|---------------------|
| Re-Demarcation | 89 | 8 | 0.736** |
| Link between service delivery and re-demarcation | 85 | 11 | 0.744** |
| Municipal performance | 86 | 12 | 0.938** |
| Whole Instrument | 76 | 77 | 0.725** |

**Significantly acceptable reliability.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics for biographical variables.

| Variable | Level | df | F | Valid % |
|------------|---------------------------------|----|----|---------|
| Age (year) | ≤20 | 5 | 1 | 1.1 |
| | 21 - 30 | | 22 | 23.9 |
| | 31 - 40 | | 34 | 37 |
| | 41 - 50 | | 22 | 23.9 |
| | 51 - 60 | | 11 | 12 |
| | ≥60 | | 2 | 2.2 |
| Education | No formal education | 6 | 3 | 3.3 |
| | Primary education | | 4 | 4.3 |
| | Secondary education | | 10 | 10.9 |
| | Matric | | 29 | 31.5 |
| | Post matric certificate/diploma | | 17 | 18.5 |
| | Degree | | 16 | 17.4 |
| | Post degree qualification | | 13 | 14.1 |

N=92.

Elizabeth.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The reliability of the research instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient (Cronbach, 1951) (Dunn et al., 2013). The Cronbach's alpha for the scales, show accepted reliability coefficients for the research instrument (Table 1). Before a detailed analysis of the data was completed, basic distributions according to the study's biographical profile, was initially performed. A descriptive approach was used to describe the biographical and occupational variables of the study (Table 2).

Respondent profile

Most of the respondents were male (63%). Vuwani is a rural community that still upholds some patriarchal elements and thus there is a higher number of males who have influence in this system, when compared to females. Women in some rural areas have no rights or

say regarding land and its challenges, when compared to their male counterparts. The majority of the respondents reported that they had a level of education beyond matric, yet the rural areas in South Africa are impacted by the post-apartheid era regarding their educational aspects. The standard of education, in terms of school conditions and learning material, are still a challenge in these areas and, as such, a high number of dropouts are experienced. In addition, rural areas are impacted by rural-urban migration, with the younger generation seeking employment in the cities.

Perceptions and understanding of demarcations

The results on the respondent's perceptions and understanding of demarcations, as well as their purpose and the roles of the Municipal Demarcation Board, are reported. The research findings indicate that the participants had little knowledge and understanding of demarcation and the role of the Municipal Demarcation Board (78%, when asked, strongly disagreed). Thus, participants negatively viewed demarcations as a process that sought to strip people and traditional leaders of their

Table 3. Participant's response to demarcation.

| Which of the following should the demarcation board consider when demarcating a municipality? | Yes (%) |
|--|----------------|
| The ethnicity of the people in the towns/Villages involved | 73(79.3) |
| The financial capabilities of the municipality | 68(73.9) |
| The level of service delivery in the municipality | 70(76.1) |
| The poverty thresholds of the municipalities involved | 34(37.0) |
| The outstanding disputes among the ethnic groups in the municipality | 29(31.5) |
| Obtain first-hand information on the inhabitants' priorities. | 18(19.6) |

land and power. One possible explanation for this could be that Limpopo is a rural province and that it is home to many elderly people. Findings of the study revealed that most of the participants in the study are elderly people with either a primary or secondary education. The findings further reveal that, because of the number of elderly and the phenomena of illiteracy, the Vuwani community members rely on their traditional leaders, in the form of imbizos, for information sharing.

This lack of understanding raises questions on the steps that the local government and municipal demarcation board followed in ensuring that the Vuwani communities are informed and knowledgeable of demarcation and the role of the MDB, prior to demarcating. Makumbe, (1998) argues that elected officials have a mandate to decentralise information and not to make final decisions for the masses. He further argues that centralised forms of government are not transparent and that they pose control over the public at a local level, thus breeding misconceptions that, in turn, breed conflicts. Moreover, implementers and policy makers need to be transparent in dealing with rural communities, as they are sensitive and, therefore, proper structures need to be followed and clear descriptions of the objectives, aims, and mandate of demarcation, need to be clearly communicated to avoid misconceptions. Williams et al. (2015) concurs with Makumbe's argument, stating that "public participation in the post-apartheid South Africa seems to be an illusion, as it seems community participation is largely spectator politics where ordinary people have mostly become endorses of the pre-designed planning of programs". Thus, the public are often objects of administrative manipulation and planning, with policies viewing the state as bureaucratic.

Stakeholder perceptions of the reasons for demarcating Vuwani

The findings reveal that the participants shared a common understanding of the reasons that were given for demarcating Vuwani. The participants reveal that the demarcation was due to the request of the Malamulele communities who were previously under the

administration of the Makhado municipality and they had requested a new standalone municipality as they felt their needs were not being catered for, under Makhado. Geographical landmarks confirm the finding as the Malamulele communities are situated far from the Makhado municipality and, as such, their needs in terms of service delivery were limited. Such a demarcation approach is advocated for by the Municipal Demarcation Act of 1998, and by the guiding policies and principles of the Municipal Demarcation Board. Part of their operation allows communities to write in and request for the demarcation of areas that they feel are problematic, especially in catering to service delivery. Table 3 reflects the participants' responses to questions regarding demarcation (n=92).

Findings indicate that respondents rejected the validity of reasons that were provided by the Municipal Demarcation Board for demarcating their communities. Respondent findings indicate that the Municipal Demarcation Board should take issues of ethnicity into consideration, especially when demarcating provinces, such as Limpopo, that is home to different ethnic groups. The concept of tribalism has been raised in the literature discussions around Vuwani. Moloi (2016) cautions of a new pandemic form that could have far worse implications than that of apartheid.

Moloi argues that South Africa is a country that is good at dressing a wound rather than healing it. He further argues that a false notion has been promoted that, after 1994, South Africa is a one-nation country as South Africa failed in instituting proper healing. The argument is that different tribes have their own ways and methods of living, thus demarcation has the potential to affect these tribes. Therefore, amalgamations in such provinces need to be handled properly to avoid conflicts (Moloi, 2016:01). Findings further reveal that service delivery is a major concern, as respondent had fears in terms of service delivery provision and the performance of the municipality in catering to their needs. The impacts of amalgamation on municipal performance have been challenged by scholars such as Byrnes and Doller (2002). They have argued that amalgamation can have both positive and negative impacts on municipal performance, especially in rendering services. Table 4 reflects the level of

Table 4. Process followed in demarcating Vuwani.

| Process | SD | D | A | SA | | |
|---|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------|--------|
| I was part of the discussion proposing demarcation of Vuwani | 18 (20.0%) | 34 (37.8%) | 27 (30.0%) | 11 (12.2%) | 13.556 | 0.004* |
| MDB together with municipality consulted and explained the process of demarcation to the community members. | 14 (15.4%) | 36 (39.6%) | 24 (26.4%) | 17 (18.7%) | 12.604 | 0.006* |
| MDB followed all the good governance principles when demarcating Vuwani | 10 (11.1%) | 37 (41.1%) | 23 (25.6%) | 20 (21.7%) | 16.578 | 0.001* |
| The community had an opportunity to voice out their concerns about demarcating Vuwani | 13 (14.3%) | 37 (40.7%) | 22 (24.2%) | 19 (20.9%) | 13.747 | 0.003* |

Table 5. Reasons and causes for rejecting the demarcation (n=92).

| Which of the following are likely to cause demarcation disputes in this municipality? | Yes (%) |
|---|----------|
| Demarcating land without consultation | 76(82.6) |
| Demarcating without recourse to tribe, lineage or ethnic ties | 65(70.7) |
| Demarcation that deny us of service delivery | 87(94.5) |

Table 6. Basic needs of Vuwani (n=92).

| Which of these service deliveries are mostly needed by the people? | Yes (%) |
|--|----------|
| Clinics/hospitals | 66(71.7) |
| Electricity/energy | 66(71.7) |
| Schools/employment opportunities | 70(76.1) |
| Water and sanitation | 76(82.6) |
| Roads and transportation | 59(64.1) |
| Liquid and solid waste management | 19(20.7) |
| Food, market/trade, poverty alleviation projects | 27(29.3) |

agreement regarding the demarcation process.

Findings within the study indicate that several good governance principles were omitted in the demarcation of Vuwani. The lack of consultation (transparency) seems to be a major catalyst to the rejection of the demarcation by the Vuwani communities. Participants argue that they were never informed and that no meetings were held. The promotion of Access to Information Act 2 (2000) grounded on the transparency good governance principle, argued for the need for access and knowledge sharing, regarding the operations of the government, with all stakeholders, as this promotes less corruption and a higher accountability adherence within the government.

The rule of the law and equality principle was infringed upon, as consultations were conducted with the Malamulele communities on the demarcation process. Yet, in Vuwani, participants argued that there were no consultations conducted and findings reveal a lack of accountability and responsiveness from the MDB. The relative deprivation theory explains this phenomenon clearly, as it argues that when people are not treated

fairly or equally, this creates a sense of betrayal and results in a change in behavior, thus resulting in protests or riots (Walker, 1984). The Republic of South Africa's Constitution states the mandate and processes that are to be followed by the municipal demarcation board in redrawing the spatial boundaries of the country. The Constitution further advocates that the practices by the local government and municipal demarcation board should be guided by good governance principles, which is the adherence to the practice of fair, efficient, effective, accountable, and transparent governance while respecting the rights of its people. Table 5 displays the non-parametric Chi-square results on the perception of respondents on the reasoning link between service delivery and re-demarcation using the collapsed scale. Findings reveal that service delivery is a major contributor to demarcation disputes. Respondents fears issues of service provision and municipal performance.

Table 6 shows overwhelming evidence, from the respondents, that there is a lack of service delivery in the areas of Clinics/Hospitals (n=66; 71.7%), electricity/energy

Table 7. Service delivery and amalgamation (n=92).

| Do you agree with the following statements | Disagree | Agree | Chi-square |
|--|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|
| My worry is that the new proposed municipality will not cater to my needs | 20(21.7%) | 72(78.2%) | 1.899 |
| I fear demarcation will affect municipal performance especially provision of basic services to our communities | 30(32.6%) | 62(67.3%) | 0.538 |
| As far as service delivery is concerned , do you believe that residents rejection of amalgamation is the driving force | 15(16.3%) | 77(83.7%) | 1.330 |

(n = 66; 71.7%) and schools/employment opportunities (n = 70; 76.1%), as these are the service delivery aspects that are mostly needed within the municipality. A fair number (n = 59; 64.1%) indicated that roads and transportation are service delivery aspects that are mostly needed by the municipality residents. Liquid and solid waste management (n = 19; 20.7%) as well as food, market/trade, and poverty alleviation projects (n = 27; 29.3%) were not regarded as under service delivery as they are mostly needed by the majority of the respondents.

Link between municipal performance on service delivery and cause for demarcation disputes

The study sought to examine the link between service delivery and demarcations, and this was achieved by scrutinizing the correlation between how a municipality is perceived regarding the provision of services and the willingness or rejection of amalgamation. Non-parametric Chi-square results on the perception of the respondents on the reasoning link between service delivery and re-demarcation using the collapsed scale are reflected in Table 7.

Most of the respondents agreed that services delivery was, and is, the contributor in demarcation, as many acknowledged that they take into consideration how the demarcations will affect service delivery. The respondents fear that the demarcations will affect the provision of service delivery, and thus they view demarcations as an enemy to any development. Ncube and Monnakgotla (2016) affirms this by arguing that the processes of demarcation, that are employed by the Municipal Demarcation Board, have been rejected or questioned mainly because of the financial and administrative impacts of the amalgamations on municipal performances (Ncube and Monnakgotla, 2016). Municipal performance has been a major contributor regarding the rejection of both municipal and provincial demarcation processes. Areas such as Matatiel have also rejected the amalgamation from the Kwa Zulu Natal province to the Eastern Cape as they argued that their needs would not be taken care of due to the Eastern Cape Province being viewed as disadvantaged and not providing for its own people. Towns such as Kutsong

also rejected the move from the Gauteng Province to the North West by arguing that they are better off with the Gauteng province instead of the North West Province as they are perceived to be lacking in service delivery (Buhlungu et al., 2007).

Conclusion

The local government is a crucial sphere that ensures the transformation and development of communities and people. It is fundamental to correct past injustices done to previously disadvantaged communities. Demarcation has been labeled as the starting point in transforming and redrawing the landscape and in ensuring the provision of basic needs to the people of South Africa by readjusting and redrawing municipal boundaries in enhancing municipal performance, finance, and administration. The findings reveal that there is a causal relationship between municipal performance and demarcation disputes. Most of what is perceived as demarcation disputes can be attributed to the stimulus of service delivery disputes and the underperformance of municipalities in rendering basic needs to their communities. Thus, the communities' status of demarcation is largely influenced by the perceived notion of the municipal and provincial performance in rendering basic needs to its people. As such, most of what is perceived as demarcation disputes forms the basis of service delivery protests.

The Vuwani people reject the demarcation due to their fears regarding service delivery or whether their needs will be met by the new municipality. The Vuwani participants believe that they are better off under the administration of the Makhado municipality by stating, "the devil I know is better". Several misconceptions have affected the demarcation process of Vuwani, which also coupled with a lack of adherence to good governance principles. The study advocates for better practice when demarcating and re-drawing the spatial boundaries of the country. The Municipal Demarcation Board must comply with the good governance principles and legislations or policies guiding the Board, thus ensuring smooth, nonviolent, demarcations in the future. Open dialogues with the Vuwani community are essential to unearth the root cause and to start the healing process. The recommendations suggested in the study would, therefore,

help to resolve the demarcation disputes in Vuwani while also shedding light on issues and possible solutions regarding the demarcation of South African boundaries.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

The authors have not declared any conflict of interests.

REFERENCES

- Asingo P (2018). Relative deprivation, protests, and voting in Kenya. *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics* 56(1):65-83. DOI: 10.1080/14662043.2017.1351071.
- Bekink B (2006). Demarcation of new local government boundaries (doctoral thesis). The University of Pretoria.
- Bonilha AL (2012). Reflections on analysis in qualitative research. *Revista Gaúcha de Enfermagem* 33(1):8-10. <http://www.scielo.br/pdf/rge/v33n1/en-aO1v33n1.pdf>
- Boyne G (1992). Local government structure and performance: Lessons from America? *Public Administration* 70(3):333-357.
- Buhlungu S, Daniel J, Southhall R, Lutchman J (2007). *State of the Nation South Africa*. Pretoria, HSRC press.
- Bushbuckridge Local Municipality (2009). *Bushbuckridge Local Municipality Water Dialogues Synthesis Report*. Bushbuckridge: Bushbuckridge Local Municipality.
- Byrnes JD, Doller BE (2002). Do economies of scale exist in Australian local government? A review of the research evidence. *Urban Policy and Research* 20(4):391-414.
- Cameron R (1996a). The Democratisation of South African Local Government. *Local Government Studies* 22(1):19-39.
- Cronbach LJ (1951). Coefficient alpha and the internal structure of tests. *Psychometrika* 16:297-334 (28,307 citations in Google Scholar as of 4/1/2016). fault lines. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, 2.
- De Vos AS, Strydom H, Fouché CB, Delpont CSL (2012). *Research at grassroots for the social sciences and human services professions*. (4th edition). Pretoria: Van Schaik.
- Dlamini N (2004). The race to house Diepsloot. Available at http://www.joburg.org.za/2004/july/july27_diepsloot.stm
- Dollery B, Byrnes J (2006). Alternatives to amalgamation in Australian local government the case of Walkerville. *Journal of Economic and Social Policy* 11(1):1-20.
- Dunn T, Baguley T, Brunnsden V (2013). From alpha to omega: A practical solution to the pervasive problem of internal consistency estimation. *British Journal of Psychology* 105(3). 10.1111/bjop.12046.
- Faguet JP (2004). Does decentralization increase government responsiveness to local needs? Evidence from Bolivia. *Journal of Public Economics* 88(3-4):867-893.
- Fleischmann A (1986). The goals and strategies of local boundary change: Government organization or private gain? *Journal of Urban Affairs* 8(4):63-76.
- Goodenough C (2004). *Shaping South Africa: Reflections on the first term of the municipal demarcation board*. Pretoria: Municipal Demarcation Board.
- Griggs R (1998). The security costs of party political boundary demarcations: The case of South Africa. *African Security Review* 7(2):22-32.
- Gurr TR (1970). *Why men rebel*. Princeton, New Jersey: Published for the Center of International Studies, Princeton University [by Princeton University Press.
- Kendall D (2010). *Sociology in Our times: The essentials*. Belmont, CA: Wardsworth.
- Kushner J, Siegel D (2005). Citizens' attitudes towards municipal amalgamation in three Ontario municipalities. *Canadian Public Administration* 48(2):251-267.
- Mail and Guardian (2008). 17 October 2008, found at <http://mg.co.za/print/2008-10-17-matatiele-calm-after-demarcation-violence>, Accessed 23 January 2018.
- Makumbe JM (1998). *Democracy and development in Zimbabwe: Constraints of decentralisation*. Sapes Books.
- Moloi T (2016). Tribalism in new apartheid, news24-2016/07/06. <https://ondermynende.wordpress.com/2020/01/16/>
- Moore DS, McCabe GP (2006). *Introduction to the Practice of Statistics*, fifth edition. New York: W.H. Freeman and Co. P. 219. The same definition appears on P. 196 of Moore, David S. (2007), *The Basic Practice of Statistics*, fourth edition, Freeman.
- Ncube M, Vacu N (2015). *The Impact of Demarcations on the Financial Performance and Sustainability of Municipalities* (Chapter 12). Submission to the 2015/16 Division of Revenue.
- Ncube M, Monnagotla J (2016). Amalgamation of South Africa's rural municipalities: Is it a good idea? *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance* pp. 75-95. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5130/cjlg.v0i19.5487>
- Raophala MH (2013). *Municipal service delivery in Greater Tzaneen local municipality in Limpopo province: A case of Lenyenye Township*. Masters Dissertation: University of Limpopo.
- Saleh A (2011). Broadening the Concept of Security: Identity and Societal Security. *Geopolitics Quarterly* 6(4):228-241.
- SABC (2016). Vuwani villagers urged to object to 'new municipality'. <http://www.sabc.co.za/news/a/7c623600493e664b9918dd5b793dc0bc/ChiefundefinedMasiaundefinedurgesundefinedvillagersundefinedto undefinedobjectundefinednewmunicipality-20152607> Accessed 04/03/2019.
- Slack E, Bird RM (2013). *Merging municipalities: is bigger better?* IMFG Paper No. 14.
- Taylor M (2002). Fraternal deprivation, collective threat, and racial resentment: Perspectives on white racism. In I. Walker and H. Smith (Eds.), *Relative deprivation: Specification, development, and integration*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, pp. 13-40.
- Verba S, Kay S, Brady H (1995). *Voice and equality: Civic voluntarism in America*. London: Harvard University Press.
- Vojnovic I (2000). Municipal consolidation, regional planning and fiscal accountability: the recent experience in two maritime provinces. *The Canadian Journal of Regional Science* 23(1):49-72.
- Walker I (1984). *Relative deprivation theory: An overview and conceptual critique*. First published: November 1984. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8309.1984.tb00645.x>
- Walker I, Smith HJ (Eds.). (2002). *Relative deprivation: Specification, development, and integration*. Cambridge University Press.
- Williams CC, Horodnic IA, Windebank J (2015). Explaining participation in the informal economy: An institutional incongruence perspective. *International Sociology* 30(3):294-313. ISSN 0268-5809.