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**Cooperative Governance and Local Economic
Development in Selected Small Towns:
A Case Study of the Western Cape Province, South Africa**

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Abstract. This article reports on a study based on cooperative governance and Local Economic Development (LED) in selected small towns in the Western Cape Province. The dearth of an integrative institutional framework to promote collaborative participation negatively influences local municipalities' ability to successfully manage LED cooperatively with relevant stakeholders. Promoting such inclusive representation and participation of all relevant stakeholders provides a viable and complementary alternative to the traditional bureaucratic governance mechanism. The study investigated the specific factors involved in designing and implementing cooperative governance for LED in selected, comparable municipalities in the Western Cape. Specifically, the study aims to determine the push and pull factors for the successful functioning of cooperative governance aimed at promoting LED in those municipalities. Data were collected through three data collection instruments, namely, document review, interviews, and focus group discussions. The document review is complemented by data from interviews and focus groups discussion. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on cooperative governance by identifying the specific cooperative governance factors, enabling the efficacy and governance of LED in small towns, aimed at positively influencing municipalities' ability to successfully manage LED cooperatively with relevant stakeholders. An in-depth understanding of the relationship and dynamics of these variables helps to offer recommendations as to how to improve the management and responsiveness to socio-economic concerns within the municipalities through improved LED governance.

Keywords: cooperative governance, LED, policy, legal framework, collaboration

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Introduction

The theory and practice of Local Economic Development (LED) have been characterized by a non-coordinated and fragmented approach of cooperative governance for LED. The dearth of an integrative institutional framework to promote collaborative participation negatively influences local municipalities' ability to successfully manage LED cooperatively with relevant stakeholders. LED presents unique collaborating opportunities epitomized by inclusive representation and participation of government, business, and civil society. Promoting such inclusive representation and participation of all relevant stakeholders provides a viable and complementary alternative to the traditional bureaucratic governance mechanism. Arguably, cooperative governance is non-negotiable if LED is to be successful in the South African context. There are successful municipalities. Others were unsuccessful in delivering on their developmental mandate. The question is – why?

Why are some municipalities successful, and others are not delivering on their developmental mandate? Are all municipalities managed the same way? Partnering the same way? Why their successes differ while using the same policy framework?

Consequently, these fragmented perspectives epitomized by a lack of cooperation and integration of development strategies, render the municipalities, particularly the smaller ones, highly susceptible to myriads of problems ranging from a lack of stakeholders' supports, inadequate capacity resources, inadequate knowledge, poor leadership, poor development planning, and implementation. These culminating into poor socio-economic conditions of the citizenry.

Despite significant effort in the Western Cape province in reviving and revitalizing local governance structures in order to promote LED, the results are still varied. The question remains – why?

It is contended why they hold speckled successes. Other scholars indicate that the solution to the multidimensional problems in LED encountered by municipalities lies in the context of resilient multi-jurisdictional initiatives of the various key LED stakeholders in both the state and non-state. Despite the overwhelming proclaimed benefits of collaboration of multi-actors for local governance, the conditions required to ensure its efficacy are challenging. An emerging need exists for a holistic understanding of the specific collaborative/cooperative governance factors involved in the efficacy and governance of LED, especially in comparable towns which are not well known and understood.

This article sought to unearth answers to the following questions: What are the variable factors relating to the success of cooperation amongst LED stakeholders in the selected six municipalities? What characterized the dynamics design and implementation of plans, policies, and procedures for cooperation that results in the success of municipalities to foster local development in the six municipalities? What are the characteristics of cooperative initiatives resulting in

the success of the municipalities in fostering LED in the selected municipalities? These issues were investigated using a case study method in six municipalities across the Western Cape province, South Africa.

A qualitative paradigm based on interpretivism/constructivists philosophies was used in the study to achieve an in-depth understanding of the participants' views and experiences on LED and cooperative government in the six chosen municipalities. A literature review and documentary analysis, individual key informant interviews and focus group interviews conducted with LED key role-players within the selected six municipalities, formed a part of the methodological approach. Data were analyzed via Atlas.ti. A thematic approach to data analysis was utilized. The study's core findings revealed some specific determinants of successful collaborative local development governance, classified into the following thematic areas: the legitimacy of purpose (Shared values and purpose); leadership characteristics; governance structure (operational policies; ground rules, accountability, decision-making process, conflict resolution mechanism); communication; role-players' characteristics; role-players learning outcome; interpersonal relation/trust and motivation/attained benefits.

Literature Review

The paramount importance of LED and cooperative governance in the sphere of municipalities cannot be overemphasized. Local Economic Development is mostly associated with concerns of local control, use of local resources, and locally determined intervention designed to create employment opportunities and to promote development [1; 2]. LED contributes to the revitalization of the local economy and the enhancement of local government fiscal efficiency [3]. Put simply, LED is aimed at injecting the local economy with innovative business means such as community self-help services and entrepreneurial initiatives [4–6].

LED presents unique collaborating opportunities for inclusive representation and participation of local government, business, and civil society in addressing matters of local concerns. The South African constitution establishes 'developmental local government', rendering the LED agenda an obligatory constitutional requirement in the country [7]. Unlike in other countries, constitutionally, LED practices in South Africa are neither voluntary nor a mere initiative of local authorities but should be all-encompassing, the state, private, and the civil sectors.

Given the complexities of the 21st century, policymakers and development practitioners are increasingly perceptive to comprehend what mode of governance and forms of intervention might facilitate post-shock recovery (such as post-COVID-19 and other economic woes) and protect local economies from future economic crises and unprecedented transformation [8]. These realities have paved the way for the emergence of multi stakeholders' approach of addressing multi-dimensional challenges that cannot be addressed by municipalities alone. Given the expanded power afforded to the municipalities, they alone can simply not succeed in the quest for successful LED, but that collaborative/cooperative governance is an essential, if not irreplaceable component in this quest. Drawing from the notion of

the World Bank [9], cooperative governance is conceptualized as multi-stakeholders' initiative and practice, combining diverse actors vis-à-vis, public, private and civil society to address matters of mutual concern for better and sustainable outcomes. Fundamentally, the key stakeholders are brought together with the hopes of facilitating cooperation and exchange while meaningfully bargaining over concerns of shared ideas and values.

In contextualizing cooperative governance for LED through the lens of resilience, this study focuses mainly on the specific cooperative governance factors, enabling cooperative governance regime adaptation to dynamic contextual drivers and internal processes, and sustainably allow for new development trajectories. Put simply, the specific interrelated variables enabling the efficacy of cooperative governance in promoting shared capacity for local governance to cope with external socio-economic shocks [10]; successfully recover developmental pathways from shocks to its economy [11]; promote pluralistic adaptation to dynamic situations through mutual initiatives, and improve human ability to perceive change and influence future pathways. Arguably cooperative governance is endowed with the potential to improve system management and responsiveness to socio-economic challenges within municipalities to achieve sustainable appropriate development policy objectives aimed at sustainably developing its society. Provided this background this paper attempt to consider cooperative governance and LED as linked and nested and to integrate collaborative values in managing LED for change and sustainability.

Determinants of collaborative governance. Several antecedents and extant models and frameworks on the determinants of successful collaborative governance were reviewed. Chen [12] *Determinants of perceived effectiveness of inter-organisational*; Ales, et al. [13]; *Developing and Implementing an effective framework for Collaboration*; Bryson, et al. [14]; *Designing and implementing cross-sector collaborations*; Olson, et al. [15]; *Factors contributing to successful inter-organizational collaboration*; Franco [16] on *Factors in the success of the strategic alliance* and Emerson, et al. [17] scholarship on *Integrative framework on collaborative governance*.

Additional extant studies reviewed were that of O'Leary & Vaj [18] on the most important issues, concepts, and ideas in collaborative public management research and practice today; Kożuch & Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek [19] *Factors for effective inter-organizational collaboration*; Ysa, et al. [20] *Determinants of network outcomes* and the study of Roberts, et al. [21] on the valid measurement of collaboration within organizations as defined by Thomson, et al. [22]. Even though these frameworks may differ in certain ramifications, they have much in common in their endeavors to articulate various contextual elements presents in a collaborative environment, tending to influence the outcomes of collaboration [14; 23]. Put simply, although these were developed and based on diverse contexts, the resulting guidelines and recommendations can be applied to cooperative governance for LED aimed at improving responsiveness and system management of socio-economic concerns within the municipalities.

It is widely maintained that organizations collaborate for a variety of reasons, including the need to address complex problems, gain legitimacy, be more efficient

in their delivery, and attract resources [24]. According to Emerson, et al. [17] there are certain factors present in the contextual environment of collaboration which tends to influence collaborative performance. These factors are procedural and operational arrangements regarding the processes and organizational structures needed to manage iterative reactions over time. Given the operational arrangements, leadership roles are required to initiate and guide implementation process of the collaboration [25].

As emphasized by Davies [26], the enabling policies and legislation and the public participation structures established by the municipalities to encourage and promote public participation at the local government are not doing enough to woo the interest of the community (private and civil society) to participate meaningfully in developmental concerns of their municipalities. The crux of Davies's [26] argument was on the existence of some certain barriers which hinder the communities from engaging fruitfully in local government issues. These barriers range from power relations, participative skills, political wills, a lack of trust, a lack of accessibility, consultative structure, and insufficient financial resources at the local level, historical factors, and community disillusionment with political government ineffectiveness. Provided these barriers, the question is, "What are the specific determining factors for effective cooperative governance for LED, especially in small towns"?

Research Design and Methodology

This study adopted an interpretive research design and specifically used a case study approach. The research is located within the interpretive and constructivist paradigm, which reflects on definitions and pursues to understand the context and each case by using a range of qualitative approaches [27]. Employing interpretive research design assists the researchers to understand the dynamics of policies and legal frameworks promoting cooperative governance, that informs and fosters local economic development specific to small rural towns in the Western Cape in their natural settings, and construct meanings that individuals attached to their experiences [28–30].

In attempting to study the above-noted dynamics, a case study of six local municipalities was identified. These municipalities are Hessequa, Kannaland, Oudtshoorn, Mossel Bay, Swellendam and Theewaterskloof Municipalities. A mix of factors was taken into consideration that assisted in an informed decision on the choice of municipalities suitable for comparative study. It can be maintained that there is no significant difference in the local economies of the six selected municipalities characterized by informal small businesses. The latter was another concern in the study, relating to concerns of inclusive participation of the business, civil society, and government in the local governance and system management of LED within a municipality. The need to be able to match economic similarities between these comparing cases was another impetus for the selected municipalities.

The data collection instruments used for the investigation are key informant interviews, focus group discussions, and documentary analysis. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 24 key informants drawn from the six municipalities;

District offices (Eden and Garden route); Western Cape Department of Economic Development and Tourism (DEDAT); Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs (CoGTA); NGOs/CBOs and business chambers in the District Municipalities. Specifically, the participants were: Executive Mayors and Councillors; LED and IDP staff; Officials of South African local government association (Salga), DEDAT, CoGTA, and Representatives of business and civil society.

Focus group discussions were facilitated with sixteen (16) participants which mostly involved the participation of the Mayors and the Mayoral committees of Hessequa and Theewaterskloof municipalities, and IDP staff of Garden Route (Eden) district municipality in George. Twenty (20) documents were analyzed in the study to systematically assess the policy and legal framework that informs cooperative governance for LED in the selected six municipalities in the Western Cape. These were a mixture of relevant policy documents and implementation strategy documents retrieved from the public domain of the municipality, government department, and public agencies. The predominant numbers of these documents were the municipality's IDP and the municipality's LED strategy and implementation plan. These were a mixture of relevant policy documents and implementation strategy documents.

The method of analysis chosen for this study to analyze the transcripts and organizational documents was a data-driven inductive approach of qualitative methods of thematic analysis aimed to identify patterns in the data employing thematic codes. Atlas.ti 8.4.14™ software package was employed to extract, compare, explore, and aggregate the data to delineate the relationships amongst emerging themes.

Findings and Discussions

This section of the paper presents discussions on the key findings of the study. The key findings emanating from this study fall into the following thematic areas, indicating legitimacy of purpose; leadership characteristics; governance structure; communication; partner/role-player's characteristics; Interpersonal relation/level of trust; partner/role-player's learning outcomes; and motivation. Each of these themes is further discussed below in detail.

Legitimacy of purpose. It is evident from the literature review of this paper that legitimacy of purpose as it relates to clarity of visions and shared values is a major determinant to the success of collaborative/cooperative governance endeavors. Having a legitimate sense of purpose is an essential requirement for building a collaborative culture. Legitimacy could be conceptualized as a generalized perception that the actions of a collaborating entity are desirable, proper, or within some system of norms, beliefs, and definitions [31]. Put differently, a sense of purpose assists the role-players to feel connected to the collaboration and assists to ensure that role-players present their best because they want to, not because they need to. Analytically, it suffices to learn about the source of the sense of purpose. Is it what collaboration has to offer, or is it something the role-players must bring with them? The study concluded on both answers.

Creating a sense of purpose entails, the fundamentality of self-awareness concerning role-players knowing who they are, what they care about, and who they want to become. This is not something any collaboration can provide. Collaboration can assist a sense of purpose by focusing on two aspects such as connecting the work of the role-players as articulated in their roles and responsibilities to the reason that the collaboration exists, and allowing role-players to observe the direct impact of their work. The legitimacy of collaborative purpose across the six municipalities was established fundamentally important as reflected in the following two dynamics: substantive developmental goals, and clarity of purpose. The discussions on each of these factors are presented below.

Substantive Developmental Goals

The study findings in this context revealed across the six selected municipalities that the role-players have overwhelmingly acknowledged the fundamental importance of substantive developmental goals to collaborative success. As maintained in the conceptual framework of this study, the shared vision developed at the start of the collaboration, should be constructed on concrete and attainable goals and strategies aligned with the mission, strategies, and values of the stakeholders. The study established that the role-players believed in their municipalities' developmental goals and shared purpose to improve the socio-economic conditions of individuals within the municipalities. This shared purpose catalyzes them to collaborate in realizing the communal good. About setting agenda for the collaborative platform, the study established that their agenda lacks developmental issues. This may significantly reduce the sustainability of collaborative momentum that may herald the presence of clear and substantive development goals within municipalities.

Clarity of Purpose

The purpose for creating collaboration was frequently maintained as an essential element to ensure collaboration functioning [32]. Besides the exigence for collaboration to have concrete goals and shared vision [33; 34], it must also be characterized by a strong sense of mission and clarity of purpose [35; 36]. Regarding the concern of purpose clarity, the results from the study again revealed that some of the six selected municipalities engaged in clear developmental drives and strategies. This could influence the level of buy-in from the role-players/stakeholders. Certain municipalities are progressing more than others.

Leadership characteristics. Leadership was identified in the literature of this study as one of the key determinants of effective collaboration. The study contended that effective leadership in the collaboration environment must have certain leadership attributes or characteristics. Cepiku [37] identifies the fundamentality of leadership style as one of the endogenous factors influencing the performance of network or collaboration/cooperative governance in this context. Collaborative leadership was conceived in some scholarship in a related variety interpretation that epitomizes interpersonal leadership styles and processes, characterized by inspirational, supportive, communicative, and fostering traits [38; 39]. This collaboration leadership features undermined the encompassing role desired from a

collaboration leader. A broader concept of collaboration leader was advanced by Vangen, et al. [40], indicating that leadership in this context centers on the mechanism for making things happen where the focal point is no longer on leadership delivered by individuals only.

Researchers galvanized the latter attribute by stating that leadership in a network concerns collective achievement rather than one man's property [41; 42]. What kind of leadership attributes are desirable in a collaborative environment aimed at improving system management and responsiveness to socio-economic concerns within the six selected municipalities in the context? The study findings revealed some fundamental attributes in the following thematic areas: facilitation-related attributes; knowledge-related attributes, and related behavioral attributes. Each finding is further discussed below.

Facilitation Related Attributes

The study participants overwhelmingly endorsed certain facilitation enhancement and its related skills as must have (sought-after) attributes for collaborative leaders. The study established the following facilitation attributes as useful: listening skills; facilitating skills; connecting skills; championing skills; strong negotiation skills; relationship and team-building capabilities; influencing skills. The following responses reflected this theory: "Collaboration requires individuals with strong negotiating and facilitation, influencing skills, understanding mandates of various institutions" [D14].

The study findings were consonant with Huxham & Vangen [43; 44] concerning leadership features emphasizing facilitation and a focus on interactions as strong qualities for collaboration and leadership characteristics.

Knowledge Related Attributes

The cognitive capacity of collaborative leaders concerning their level of critical theory and reasoning was established in the study to be a force to be considered as another determining leadership attribute for effective collaboration. These knowledge-related factors are understanding mandates and other institutions; economic development know-how; local knowledge of the environment; good analysis and decision-making. The study findings corroborate with the hypothesis that achieving collaborative advantage is a product of leadership that conceptualizes and constructs relational connections and management approaches to achieve desirable synergies for change [45]. It can be deduced that collaborative leaders require the cognitive ability to conceptualize the requirements of their mandates and contextualize them with local dynamics to produced enhanced collaborative leadership and collaboration perceived outcomes.

Behavioral Attributes

The study established certain behavioral qualities as fundamentally desirable to effective leadership for a collaboration terrain. Such behavioral powered attributes are integrity; honesty and openness; flexibility; compliance to legislation

and institutional arrangement; respect and non-autocratic behavior. Bolden [46] maintains that the significant nature of social relations in leadership is based on the notion that leadership is more of an interpersonal process. Keast & Mandell [45] contest that emergent leadership is presented as an interaction of a group of individuals, rather than arising from an individualistic phenomenon or context. This galvanizes the imperativeness of behavioral traits required for collaborative leadership to enhance the interpersonal aspects of collaboration. The following extracts from the interview can attest to this theory:

“Leadership should be flexible and adhere to legislation and institutional arrangement” [D23].

“Leadership that keeps away from autocratic behavior, respect for each other in person and for each other’s time and the fact that business struggle with funding” [D15].

The interview data also revealed the perceived leadership role of the municipality in a collaborative regime where the municipality plays the role of a facilitator, ensuring the balance of powers between the role-players. To this end, one may simply ask: Has there been a balance of powers between municipality and role-players in a collaborative endeavor, specifically LED and its related fora? The concern of power imbalance was established as prevalent across the six selected municipalities, as aforementioned. In a related development, most participants echoed that the success of any collaboration is a function of the leader’s political and administrative personality.

Governance structure. It can be maintained that inviting role-players to participate in spaces where decisions were already made while lacking substantive local development concerns to deliberate upon, may result in role-players losing confidence in local government and collaborative arrangements. An institution should respond effectively to socio-economic challenges within the municipality. From the literature of this study, a good combination of governance structures could indicate success for collaborative efforts. The governance structure described as network management is observed as a key driver of network interaction and network performance [47]. Cepiku & Giordano [48] describe it as the structural arrangement/institutional design and the processes of network management strategies, influencing network performance.

According to Provan & Kenis [49], the structural design of a network could result in a stronger or weaker performance depending on how appropriate they are to the network characteristics. The network strategy employed often characterized the network/collaboration management processes and can result in improved collaborative outcomes [45; 50; 51]. The study findings revealed the following fundamental elements of cooperative/collaborative governance structure as an essential pull and push factor for the success of LED and cooperative governance within the six selected municipalities: operational policies; ground rules; accountability; decision-making process, and conflicts resolution. The discussion on each of these elements is presented below.

Operational Policies

Working policies governing the collaborative process were identified in the study as a key requirement for an effective governance collaboration structure,

aimed at improving system management for the collective decision-making process on matters of development within the municipalities. These policies are becoming fundamental as determining factors for effective collaboration, especially when providing the effect to the policy principles of participatory development. According to Agranoff [52], multiple partnering organizations need to actively articulate and execute policies and processes. The study identified flaws in some municipalities concerning the implementation of these policies/strategies, especially concerning establishing meeting agenda. Since the operational policies/implementation strategies of municipalities were derived from the national legal policy and framework documents, the study established it as outdated. The continued use of these operational policies/implementation strategies within the six selected municipalities to resolve contemporary development is a concern.

Ground Rules

The conceptual framework of the study established the imperativeness of ground rules in collaboration. The ground rule contains the do and do not, aimed at regulating the behavioral conduct of role-players in multi-stakeholder engagements. The ground rules should amongst other things, define the roles and responsibilities of key role-players, institutional structure, and how meetings and reporting need to be conducted. Scholars argue that ground rules could help to create improved conditions for interaction in a network to achieving good collaborative outcomes [51; 53].

Accordingly, the study findings across the six municipalities and the spectrum of role-players (municipality, private and civil society), revealed that role-players endorsed the catalytic contribution of well-established ground rules to the success of the collaborative arrangement, particularly where roles and responsibilities of role-players were articulated. Most municipalities employ specific mechanisms, such as TOR, MoU, or partnership agreements. Others do not have any formal ground rules. Concerning the question of articulation of roles and responsibilities in the ground rules, the study established that several municipalities were found wanting. This may be the reason for the mediocre performance of some municipalities in LED fora and other associated institutional arrangements. The following responses can attest to this observed claim.

“Not quite such an agreement between the members that articulates [53] their roles and responsibilities in the setup. There has been no such agreement between us and them” [D9].

Accountability

From the study’s conceptual framework, it is evident that accountability is one of the factors considered to be a powerful determinant of successful collaboration. The study findings indicated that formidable ground rules which deeply articulate and incorporate the respective roles and responsibilities of the participating role-players and accurate reporting and ongoing interaction with key players, assist in promoting transparency in collaborative or cooperative governance. The study maintained in the conceptual framework that collaborative

governance accountability improves when the decision-making process is open and inclusive. Dialogue consistently addresses and represents the interests and desires of individuals in the locality. They are the primary beneficiaries of the goods and services produced through shared governance.

The fairer the process of collecting input from various parties, the more constructive the relationship becomes in achieving a shared goal. To buttress the aforementioned assertions with the scholarship of Pethe, et al. [54], the scholars maintained that such a self-organizing system would require the creation of space and channels for communication and feedbacks between agents within the said organizations and citizens as the ultimate beneficiaries of any improvement in the system. The question is: Did these municipalities have in place the appropriate mechanisms for credible reporting and continuous engagement? More details are provided later in the context of communication.

Decision-making process

As the literature indicated, the way of decisions at any collective arrangement is critically important to its success. The study revealed that most respondents recognized the imperatives of shared power and inclusiveness as a determinant of collaborative success. The decision-making process is an interaction system constituting an essential element of collaboration [53]. The study identified lapses in decision-making powers in the selected six municipalities, as the decision-making powers were not usually equitably shared between the role-players and the concerns of inclusiveness. The following responses reflect this theory:

“There is always the challenge of inclusiveness. The handful number of NGOs recognized by the municipality are non-inclusive. Certain type of individuals tends to be more favored than others” [D24].

“As I’m telling you, this is a difficult one, I can’t provide you an answer, but all I’d say is that the process is bureaucratic” [D6].

This sentiment was equally shared by the non-state role-players, especially the civil society. When decision-making power remains concentrated in municipalities, and other players are expected to meet their obligations to achieve the desired goals, the apprehensive attitude of non-state actors towards collaborative agreements increased. That would also expose a ‘dark side’ concerning growing inequality and a lack of internal democracy and accountability [55–57].

Conflicts Resolution Mechanism

The emergence of the second generation of network studies emphasized that networks are inherently full of conflict and tensions Provan & Kenis [49], deficient, and may produce unfavorable outcomes [58]. The concern of resolving emerging conflicts between collaborating role-players is conveyed in this context. The study findings indicated no formal mechanism in place in municipalities to resolve emerging conflicts between role-players in collaborative arrangements, especially in LED fora, where participation/representation is based on voluntary will. This

does not dilute or negate the importance of conflict management in collaborative endeavors.

Communication. Another cogent determinant of effective collaboration is communication. Communication with role-players in collaborations should be conducted regularly, efficiently, and effectively to achieve its objectives. Various communication resources could be employed to communicate with the role-players depending on the context of realities. The study findings revealed that the six municipalities embraced the importance of maintaining a good stakeholder relationship through effective communication for improved collaborative outcomes. Each municipality employed a combination of various communication resources for this purpose such as newsletters, emails, print media, electronic media, fact sheets, and meetings. None of the selected municipalities had a formalized communication plan. The findings suggested employing a communication plan.

Role-players' characteristics. In this context, the study pursued to examine the importance of role-player characteristics to the adequate performance of LED-based cooperative governance. This includes their strengths and capabilities to contribute to achieving municipal development goals in the selected six municipalities. The study findings revealed the presence of a variety of skills and expertise within the local community that can contribute to their local development goals through collaborative/cooperative governance. This research identified a value to hold the right composition of partners in a collaboration. The study findings support the argument of O'Leary & Vij [31] that membership in a collaboration should include individuals and organizations who can contribute to accomplishing the collaboration's goals. Capacity, such as skills, resources, expertise, experience, knowledge and cultural background, and values, is, therefore, becoming relevant in this context.

Given the perspectives of resource dependence, it was maintained that organizations enter partnership alliances where partners can demonstrate commitment through, amongst other things, the contribution of resources [59]. It should be maintained that caution is needed to ensure that the capacity of alliance partners to contribute or contributions to the alliance, is complementary. The study suggests that where partner resource capacity is disproportionate, such practice could create distortions in power and authorities balance amongst role-players. Those with more resources wield more power and authority to themselves to the detriment of others from a less privileged background. However, this does not dispel an all-inclusive participatory local governance of development in municipalities. Liu & Kuo [60] contend that where the complementarity of resources is built up between partners, a mutual complementary effect may be created to solve the challenge of insufficient partners' resources.

Role-players' learning outcomes. Provided the conceptual framework of this study, role-player's learning outcomes derived through involvement in collaborations could generate more information and knowledge, employed to develop a better-localized solution to societal challenges. The study findings revealed that participants acknowledged that based on the fora, there was an exchange of knowledge and information through collaboration to enhance their

understanding. The involvement of municipalities, private and civil society in collaboration (described in this context as cooperative governance), enhances the exchange of information in developing enriched knowledge to improve system management and responsiveness to socio-economic concerns within the municipalities.

The study findings corroborated with the findings of Gazley & Brudney [61] who indicate that previous collaborations experience between organizations assists in building knowledge towards the effective development and system management of the relationship. From the perspective of an organizational learning theory, the primary motive of collaboration is learning and joint knowledge production, which entails participants' learning (accumulation of knowledge) and experience that may contribute to innovation and improved economic performance in subsequent collaborative initiatives. The extent of learning outcomes (knowledge capital) generated because of collaboration, is a function of the efficiency of the collaboration.

Level of trust. From the conceptual framework of the study, trust is an interactional variable, constituting one of the determinants for the success of a collaboration. It was widely maintained in the literature that trust affects collaborative culture and collaborative culture influences trust [62]. San Martín-Rodríguez, et al. [63] established on the determinants of collaboration in the healthcare team, the success of the initiative to develop and consolidate collaborative practices amongst teams' members depends on factors based on, amongst other things, interpersonal processes or interactional determinants, such as mutual trust and respect.

This study established that collaborators may be eager to cooperate in a situation where they assume mutual good intentions based on reciprocity of trust and respect to boost their confidence in the expected performance outcomes of the initiative [64]. The study findings relating to the current level of trust within the municipalities were mixed. The level of trust in the six municipalities was established as in dire need of an improvement, apart from TKM and MBM, holding a good working relationship and understanding between role-players. This can also assist in galvanizing the reasons why the two municipalities succeed in LED-based collaborations.

Motivation. The conceptual framework of this study maintained that collaborations are powered by a shared purpose amongst the stakeholders to address societal challenges that cannot be solved single-handedly by one stakeholder/role-player. The organization collaborates seeking to achieve their organizational benefits. It can be maintained that an overarching reason to collaborate exists; this could also be motivationally related. The achievement or failure to achieve these organizational benefits determines the strength and weakness for future collaboration. Although there may be several reasons for an organization to join a network, the trade-off between the resources invested and the benefits gained should be positive for all network members [48]. The study findings revealed that the role-players within the six municipalities acquire the motivation to participate in LED-powered cooperative governance, based on the premise of attaining perceived organizational benefits, such as organizational benefits derived from resource pooling

(resource/capacity benefits) and business promotion. This sentiment was shared across the spectrum of the role-players, the state, and non-state roles.

Resource/capacity Benefits

As aforementioned, resource or capacity benefits constitute certain types of motivation laden benefits, notably, an enhanced capacity to be derived from the pooling of resources by participating organizations, improved capabilities from sharing of good practices, knowledge, and information (enhanced role-player/partner's learning outcome) and early alerts on potential concerns possibly causing dissatisfaction detected timeously to prevent a surge.

Business Promotion

The study established that some role-players, specifically from the business sector and the civil society across the six municipalities, are concerned about the ability of collaborative governance to establish solutions concerning red tape in the structure and focus on real, local concerns to promote business operations within their municipalities. They stated they might be encouraged to participate if the red tape can be eliminated from the process.

Conclusion

The study's main objective was to assess the specific factors involved in designing and implementing cooperative governance for LED in selected, comparable municipalities in the Western Cape. The study discussed the two concepts, LED and cooperative governance, providing the operationalization of both concepts to assess the extent of implementing these practices, identifying problems and constraints encountered during implementation. This assisted to comprehend the circumstance and how cooperative governance can contribute to improving system management and responsiveness to socio-economic concerns within municipalities. The study explored the phenomenon of LED and cooperative governance from the perspectives of the LED key role-players/stakeholders within the six municipalities.

The study has established the specific pull and push factors responsible for the successes and failures of cooperative governance (process) in LED matters in the six selected municipalities. These factors characterized the dynamics design and implementation of plans, policies, and procedures for cooperation that results in the success of municipalities to foster local development in the six selected municipalities. These factors are classified within the following thematic areas: the legitimacy of purpose; governance; communication; leadership; characteristics of role-players/partners; learning outcomes of partners/role-players; level of trust; and motivation. Future research can be conducted to determine whether the methodology exhibited in this study would produce the desired results when evaluated in comparable towns. Moreover, future research should be conducted to develop an effective model for improving the efficacy of cooperative governance in LED topics in local government.

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Совместное управление и местное экономическое развитие в отдельных малых городах: на примере провинции Западный Кейп, Южная Африка

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Аннотация. В статье представлены результаты исследования, основанного на анализе совместного управления и местного экономического развития в отдельных небольших городах

провинции Западный берег (ЮАР). В работе отмечается отсутствие интеграционной институциональной основы для содействия совместному участию, что отрицательно влияет на способность местных муниципалитетов успешно управлять местное экономическое развитие (МЭР) совместно с соответствующими заинтересованными сторонами. Содействие такому инклюзивному представительству и участию всех заинтересованных сторон обеспечивает альтернативу традиционному бюрократическому механизму управления. В исследовании изучались конкретные факторы, влияющие на разработку и внедрение совместного управления для МЭР в выбранных сопоставимых муниципалитетах провинции. В частности, исследование направлено на определение факторов, влияющих на успешное функционирование кооперативного управления, направленного на продвижение местного экономического развития в рассмотренных муниципалитетах. Данные были собраны с помощью трех методов, а именно: обзор документов, интервью и обсуждение в фокус-группах. Исследование вносит вклад в совокупность знаний о совместном управлении, определяя конкретные факторы данного подхода, обеспечивающие эффективность управления МЭР в малых городах и способность муниципалитетов успешно управлять местным экономическим развитием совместно с соответствующими заинтересованными сторонами. Углубленное понимание взаимосвязи и динамики этих переменных помогает предложить рекомендации о том, как улучшить качество управления и реагировать на социально-экономические проблемы в муниципалитетах за счет улучшения управления в рамках МЭР.

Ключевые слова: совместное управление, местное экономическое развитие, политика, правовые рамки, сотрудничество, социально-экономическая сфера

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