

IVAN GOVENDER

Durban University of Technology, South Africa

ALFRED DLADLA

Durban University of Technology, South Africa

MONITORING AND EVALUATION OF LOCAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Abstract:

The new South African government introduced a national policy on local economic development (LED) in 2006, which seeks to bolster localities' economies through identification of their competitive advantages and exploitation thereof through mobilisation of resources locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Sadly, the policy implementation has not resulted in the desired targets of economic development and poverty alleviation in local municipalities. The aim of the study is to identify the local socio-economic development implementation challenges experienced by the local communities and municipalities in the Mzinyati District. The objectives of the study were achieved through case study research methodology that employed a mixed methods where the qualitative strand preceded the quantitative strand. The result of the study show that all four local municipalities in the UMzinyathi District have struggled with challenges related to human capital in LED, institutionalization of LED and formulation of LED policies, though they have managed to craft their LED Strategies. The municipalities pre-occupation with LED formalisation activities accentuated the preclusion of monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of the few LED projects that are currently being implemented. This is despite M&E featuring prominently on their LED Strategy Documents. The study is significant in that it identified factors that adversely affect implementation of LED interventions and the lack of project monitoring and evaluation within the UMzinyathi District. The study recommends how participatory M&E can be used to improve accountability and good governance; foster effective community engagement; enhance efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of LED interventions.

Keywords:

Monitoring and evaluation, Local economic development, poverty alleviation, Community engagement.