

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AND NEEDS AS AN INPUT TOOL FOR LOCAL GOVERNMENT QUALITY MANAGEMENT

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Abstract

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Citizen participation, which is at the interface between the public and government, directly impacts accountability and the governance process. The purpose of this paper is to focus on the relevance of citizen participation as source of input for local government in its quality management system. Quality management for local government, with reference to ISO 18091:2104, is a recent attempt to construct a quality management system specifically targeting the requirements of local government. Using a qualitative approach, the paper examines ISO 18091: 2014 and its contribution to strengthening local governance. Further, the importance of citizen participation at the input stage in the ISO quality management framework is reviewed. This is supported by literature pertaining to the requirements that are necessary to promote the value of citizen input, in ensuring the continued success of local government in achieving the desired results, with respect to fulfilling citizen needs. The paper highlights that citizen participation provides the most significant feedback on needs and challenges facing service delivery at the input stage. Such an avenue for citizen participation in a quality management system is relevant for local government to explore, if it is committed to continuous improvement in service delivery. The author considers citizen participation as necessary, if local government is to respond appropriately to their needs. However, citizen participation has to be managed as a process within the quality management framework, if it is produce the desired and reliable results. The paper proposes that such a process has to consider several quality management indicators from the perspective of citizen capacity, local government capacity and overall capacity to manage the process of citizen participation. Overall, insight is provided on how these elements can enhance local government quality management.

Keywords: Citizen Participation, Local Government, Quality Management, Customer Satisfaction, Accountability

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizational success is largely dependent on systemic management, underpinned by a management system that is driven by continual improvement in the interest of serving the needs and expectations of stakeholders as far as possible. Within the local government context, public participation based on irregular and reactive community meetings initiated by local municipalities without a strategy are generally ineffective. Often this accrues to mere lip service, using a top-down approach. The research aims to highlight through a qualitative methodology, that a well managed

system that incorporates citizen participation as part of the local governance system can produce higher levels of performance directed towards addressing citizen needs.

ISO (the International Organization for Standardization) is a worldwide federation of national standards bodies who are ISO members, which has developed various quality management guidelines for organisations, to assist management towards higher standards of performance. The generic and foundational ISO 9001:2008 is the world's most established quality framework, currently being used over 1.5 million organizations in 191 countries. In an attempt to strengthen the

quality of governance, ISO 18091 was developed to provide quality guidelines for local government (Gadsden and Finn, 2014: 2). In addition, ISO 9004 provides added value for local governments, by focusing on continual improvement for success as the end goal. If local government adheres to high standards of quality, then it can significantly contribute toward creating sustainable and responsible government in other spheres.

The basic principles of quality management include: a systems approach to management, focus on leadership, customer focus, involvement of people, a process approach, continual improvement, factual approach to decision making, and mutually beneficial supplier relationships. While it is important that these principles are underpinned by policies, goals, objectives, diverse work methods, resource availability and administrative processes and procedures specific for each local government, it is equally important that the quality management system produces effective, sustainable and reliable results aligned to citizen needs. In this regard, Sobol (2008:194) argues that participation explicitly depends on the activities and attitude of the local elected representatives who are working in local government institutions. ISO18091 provides guidelines to local governments throughout the world for understanding and implementing a quality management system that meets the requirements of ISO 9001:2008, in order to meet the needs and expectations of its citizens.

The participation of citizens at the input stage is examined, to highlight that genuine participation is a reliable tool for local government to access reliable information on citizen needs and priorities. Aghion, Algan, Cahuc and Shleifer (2008:9) argue in favour of this in their claim that unilateral government regulation is strongly and negatively correlated with the creation of social capital such as trust in government. Benefits of citizen participation include efficiency; accountability; fair distribution of wealth and enhanced good governance; opportunity for citizens voices to be heard; and the promotion of open minded discussions (Baiocchi, 2003:53; Handley and Howell-Moroney, 2010:602). Additionally, participation through networking and information sharing minimizes the risk of exclusion and non representation of isolated groups (Small and Newman, 2001:30). For these reasons, participation in local government provides the platform for local government opportunities to influence government for the common good of all.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Continued success through quality management

Governments have to consistently maintain the confidence of citizens and their institutions at all levels. At the local government level, sustainable local communities are dependent on the quality management of systems by local government in a coordinated and coherent way with other levels of government as well. In doing so, citizen's expectations regarding quality public services can be optimally fulfilled.

A quality management system based on ISO 18091 can provide the following benefits: Improve performance and measurement, support the

achievement of strategic objectives, provide a factual approach to decision making, reduce duplication through lean management, optimize efficiencies and effectiveness, strengthen service delivery, provide a framework for continual improvement, enhance citizen, customer and stakeholder satisfaction (Gadsden and Finn, 2014: 3). If governments want to remain in business, they are obligated to continuously serve their citizens at higher levels of customer satisfaction, in the face of shrinking resources. Providing quality services requires adherence to guidelines provided by acceptable and relevant quality management systems, to ensure public confidence in government.

ISO 9001, as an acclaimed quality management standard, provides a tried and tested framework for managing organizational processes and activities in the private sector. Similarly, ISO 18091 is envisaged to help government for the same reason it helps large businesses, by providing management control of diverse operations through the communication of clear and transparent objectives, enhancing the cascading and visibility of information for management, and integrating processes to achieve better service delivery and customer satisfaction (ISO 2014: v). Therefore, improving the governance of service provision according to the needs and expectations of citizens at the grassroots level, requires efficient and effective management by local government. Ensuring efficient and effective management by local government is dependent on a robust quality management system which includes citizen participation. This can be achieved by considering all elements of citizen participation, which include: public participation within the administrative decision making process; bidirectional and interactive communication which provides information between organizations and people; an established process that organizes the involvement of citizens; ensuring citizen participation has impact and influence on the decision (Creighton 2005:8). Such elements of citizen participation provide the impetus for meaningful participation and engagement in evidence-based advocacy by citizens.

ISO 18091 is the first ISO standard providing guidelines for the implementation of ISO 9001 in local government. ISO 18091 aims to: empower both citizens and governments; ensure effectiveness and legitimacy; provide a clearly understood between politicians and technicians; foster comparability across countries and other local governments; serve the local population by making politically viable those things that are technically indispensable; ensure reliability and sustainability; and provide a useful tool to achieve the goals and objectives for a sustainable world and smart cities (ISO 2014: vi). According to the convener of the technical team that developed ISO 18091, Carlos Gadsden, the ISO for local government is a valuable instrument for "local governments to reassure citizens that their needs and expectations are fully understood and met on a consistent basis and in a timely manner" (ISO 2014: vi). The adoption of ISO 18091 by local governments will be indicative of their commitment to global guidelines and standards that reinforce accountability to communities being served. Further, ISO 9004 expands on ISO 9001, by specifically focusing on responding to all stakeholder needs for

purposes of continued success and higher levels of performance, which can be applied to local government as well. While ISO 18091 broadly offers benefits for local government, contextual factors must be considered if the optimal benefits are to be seized. This may require adapting and reframing components within the quality management system, more detailed processes and higher levels of monitoring and evaluation.

Process approach and quality management

Being a series of actions or activities taken to transform an input into an output, the process approach as promoted by ISO 9001 seeks to identify and manage activities using resources within an organization.

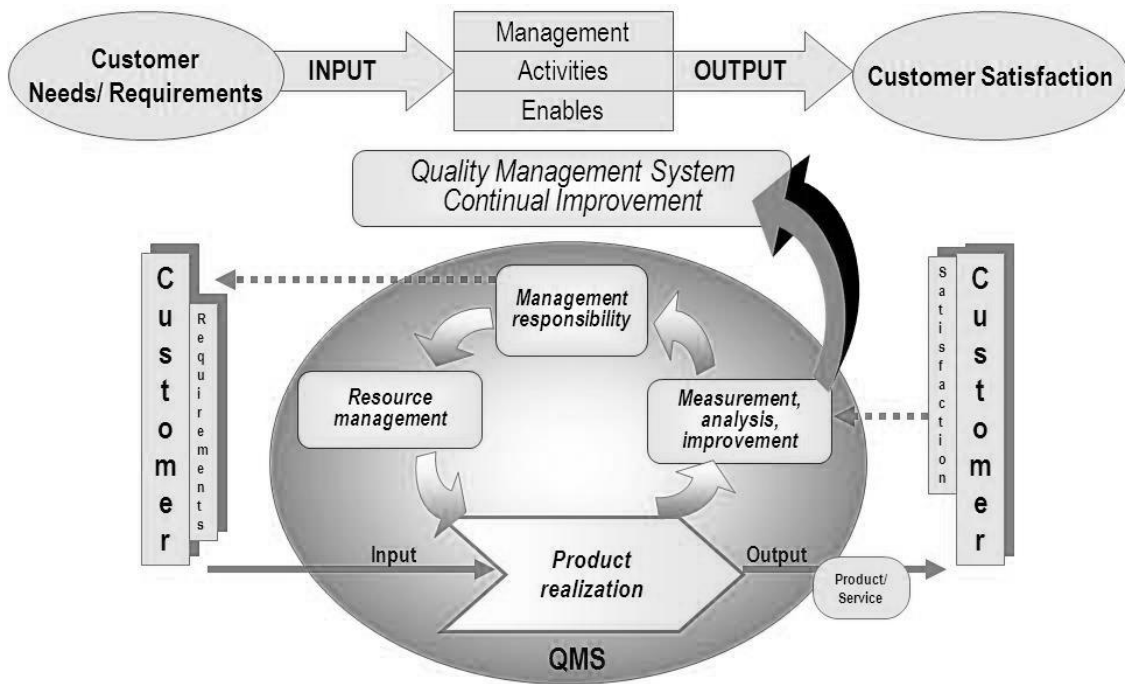
The realization of customer needs is the core of a process approach. For any organization to optimize its performance, it has to effectively manage various linked activities within its system in order to produce the expected outcomes of acceptable standards. If local government aims to enhance citizen satisfaction, then it must manage the system of processes within it and the interaction of various processes within the system.

Since local governance plays an important role in providing and consistently improving service quality, the involvement of citizens in ensuring this is equally important as they can provide valuable information regarding the identification of community needs. Citizen participation can constitute one of the activities in a wide range of interconnected processes within a local government quality management system.

The advantage of using the process approach within a quality management process for local government include: understanding and meeting requirements; adding value through control; obtaining results of process performance and effectiveness; and continual improvement of processes based on objective measurement (ISO 2014: XI). By using a process approach, the identification and understanding of the interaction and sequence between the main processes and activities within local government are identified. Within local government, various processes with connecting loops linked to, for example finance; human resources; facilities management; legislation and stakeholder interests, interact. Management has to ensure that such processes are linked to a quality management system, if the goal is to maximize citizen satisfaction.

Maximizing citizen satisfaction requires the quality management of citizen needs, which entails a process as well. Equally important is the identification of processes to implement strategy and policy into quantifiable objectives., while ensuring that measures are in place to manage anticipated risks. The aforementioned prerequisites are vital to avoid “fuzzy institutional arrangements, ill-defined responsibilities and ambiguous political objectives and priorities” (Swyngedouw 2005:1999). Therefore, Bula and Espejo (2012: 342) argue that organizational systems are important, since they create, regulate and produce the meanings that people experience in their life world. To this end, citizen participation as a process in the quality management system needs to be managed in a well coordinated manner to avoid a fragmentation of the process as illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Quality management between input and output



Source: Adapted from *The World of “Q”* (2016)

The World of “Q” (2016) recommends the incorporation of the following activities in the

process approach, which allows for adaptability to local government, with respect to the identification

of processes linked to citizen participation at the input stage:

- Top management defines the quality policy, purpose and the requirements for the local government quality management system that is consistent with applicable statutory and regulatory stipulations
- Design a manual that addresses the requirements of the quality management system, while guiding decision making.
- Document the processes, activities and resources required to identify citizen needs and expectations.
- Determine the process flow, sequence of interactions and timing of input from citizens.
- Create flow charts to map interconnections between other entities in the process.
- Assign responsibilities for each step to ensure implementation of the process.
- Identify monitoring and measuring mechanisms to be used for processes.
- Determine corrective and preventive actions required to improve the quality of input from citizens.
- Management of effective reviews for purposes of continual improvement.
- Establishment of communication tools to be used for all interested parties.

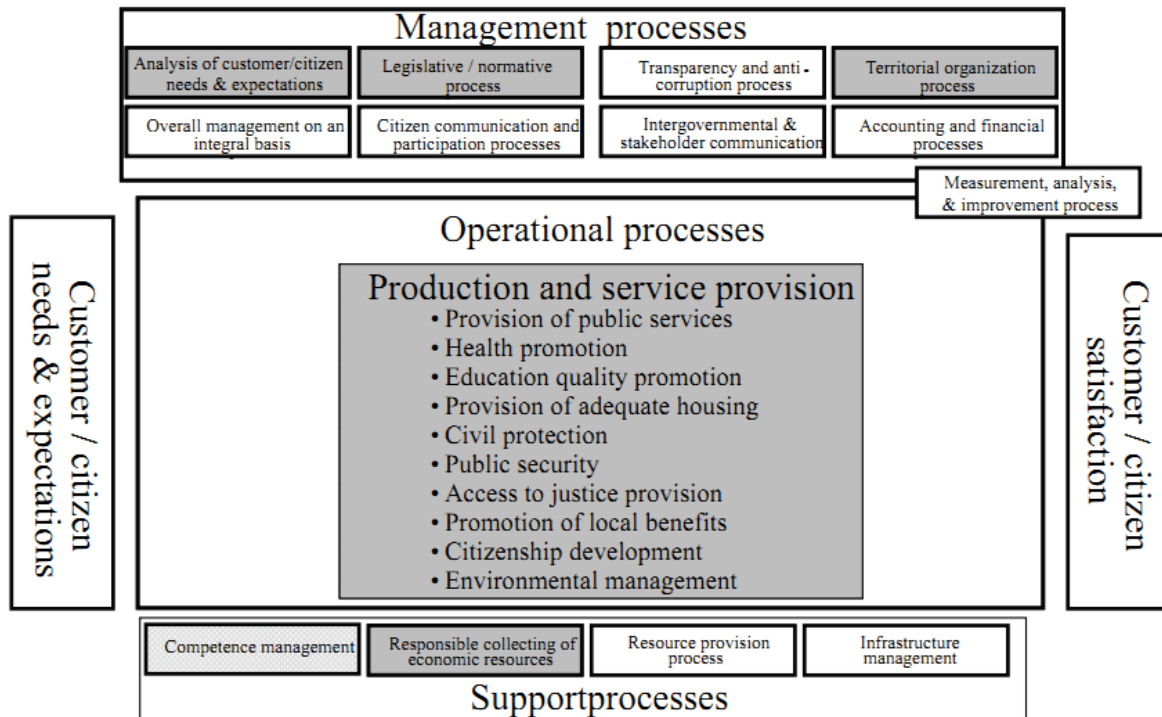
Citizen participation as a process

The quality and availability of essential public services are a key measure of governance. Public services, which underpin the social contract between states and citizens, reflect the well being and health of a society (Akinboade, Mokwena and

Kinfaack 2013:458). The continuous provision and improvement of public services is a global challenge. Since the market is not an effective mechanism for identifying needs at the local level, local governments have to devise intervention mechanisms to correctly identify citizen needs.

Citizen participation can offer an innovative and reliable means of ensuring appropriate service delivery, while possibly sowing the seed for enhanced “openness, inclusion and empowerment of hitherto excluded or marginalised social groups” (Swyngedouw 2005: 1993). Citizens from diverse milieus can play an influential role in directing citizen interests as a collective. This is consistent with the argument by Tomkins, Herian and Hoppe (2010:5) that more systematic opportunities for broad citizen participation can make government responsive to the actual needs, priorities and preferred modes of service delivery of citizens, rather than what government imagines it to be. Despite the rhetoric of participation, literature alludes to the assertion that participation does not necessarily guarantee an increase in the influence of citizens on decision making (Woodford and Preston 2013: 349). The degree of citizen influence depends on the commitment of local government officials to genuinely consider participation input, which is beyond the control of citizens. This is important in promoting pluralistic local governance. As illustrated in Figure 2, by linking citizen participation to management and operational processes with commensurate support processes, an integrated quality management system is adopted to ensure that the desired output is achieved.

Figure 2. Processes for integrated quality of management of local government



Source: Adapted from ISO (2014)

As the elected representative of citizens' interests, local government through a quality management system can define the conditions for the license to operate; and constrain or enable

initiatives to ensure that citizen participation is well managed (Crane, Matten and Moon 2004:114). Therefore, using citizen participation as a process at the input stage to identify their needs, requires local government to develop a process for this activity and identify how this process will be controlled as part of its standard operating procedures.

Various processes to engage directly or indirectly with citizens must be identified. Nygugen, Le, Tran and Bryant (2013:38) refer to cooperative participation such as contribution of opinions by citizens and confrontational participation such as complaints as important ways of accessing input about the needs of citizens. Such processes are important in not only identifying needs, but also the geographical location of needs; emerging new needs; and recurring and new challenges facing the satisfaction of citizen needs. This has to be reinforced by a vision and mission of local government that is linked to citizen participation as an integral component in local government management, as well as supported by all stakeholders. The vision and mission must be aligned to a cohesive purpose among all units within local government toward promoting quality in service delivery. This has to be complemented by a legislative framework that guides service delivery as a responsibility of local government. Such considerations can promote a common purpose, collective action, a framework of shared values, continuous interaction and the desire to achieve collective benefits that cannot be gained by acting independently (Rakodi 2003:530). Apart from identifying the needs of citizens, such needs must be reviewed to determine progress towards fulfilling such needs, as well as barriers to achieving the expected results. In this regard, Woodford and Preston (2013:358) suggest that an auditing system be implemented to conduct audits of participation activities, the results of which are made public.

Strategy development to support citizen participation, followed by policy development in this regard has been preceded by plans to support the strategy and policy development and review process. These processes need monitoring mechanisms to be established to ensure that strategy and plans support the needs identification process. ISO 9001 (2009: v) refers to the following important considerations which can be adapted to local government quality management from the perspective of citizen participation:

- Establish unique processes, sequence of processes and process relationships that addresses the needs of local government to manage citizen participation.
- Establish, explain and understand the network of interconnected processes, using the systems approach.
- Establish the efficacy and effectiveness of processes with interested parties.
- Resource provision to support processes.
- Bi-directional communication with all interested parties.
- Improve processes through review and analysis instruments.
- Use process descriptions to set organizational objectives, support process review activities; illustrate relationships between organizational structures, systems, and processes, identify

potential challenges; and identify improvement activities.

The importance of the aforementioned activities is noted by Halachmi and Holzer (2010: 382) who state that since citizens are the "consumers" of government services, knowing their needs through citizen participation, is an important input.

While the strategy and policy process focuses on citizen participation at the input stage, it is important that outputs are identified, so that at the input stage the expected output relating to the needs of citizens are identified. This requires local government to undertake the following at the input stage: requirements of the service specified by citizens; requirements not specified by citizens, but needed for use; statutory and regulatory requirements applicable to service provision (SABS 2015:17). As noted by Halachmi and Holzer (2010: 384), government needs to establish agreement with external stakeholders about what data is needed; how such data is going to be analyzed; what are the intended uses of the data; and disseminating information that is derived from it as inputs for decision making. Such data sharing not only increases transparency, but also trust in the value of citizen participation.

Figure 3 incorporates ISO 9004, which provides a wider focus on quality management than ISO 9001 as it addresses the needs and expectations of all interested stakeholders (all interested parties) and aims to guide organizations through a quality management approach to achieve sustained success which is now a goal of the standard. Quality management is considered as the means to achieve success as the end goal. ISO 9004 argues that objectives can only be achieved if the organization consistently meets the needs and expectations of its interested stakeholders.

Figure 3 illustrates the important role that citizens play as customers in specifying requirements as inputs. Citizen needs can be evaluated based on their perceptions of expectations of local government at the input stage, as well as their perceptions of satisfaction at the output stage. All processes can be subjected to the "Plan-Do-Check-Act" (PDCA) methodology, which includes the following steps (ISO 2014: ix):

- Plan: establish the objectives and processes necessary to deliver results in accordance with customer requirements and the organization's policies.
- Do: implement the processes.
- Check: monitor and measure processes and product against policies, objectives and requirements for the product and report the results.
- Act: take actions to continually improve process performance.

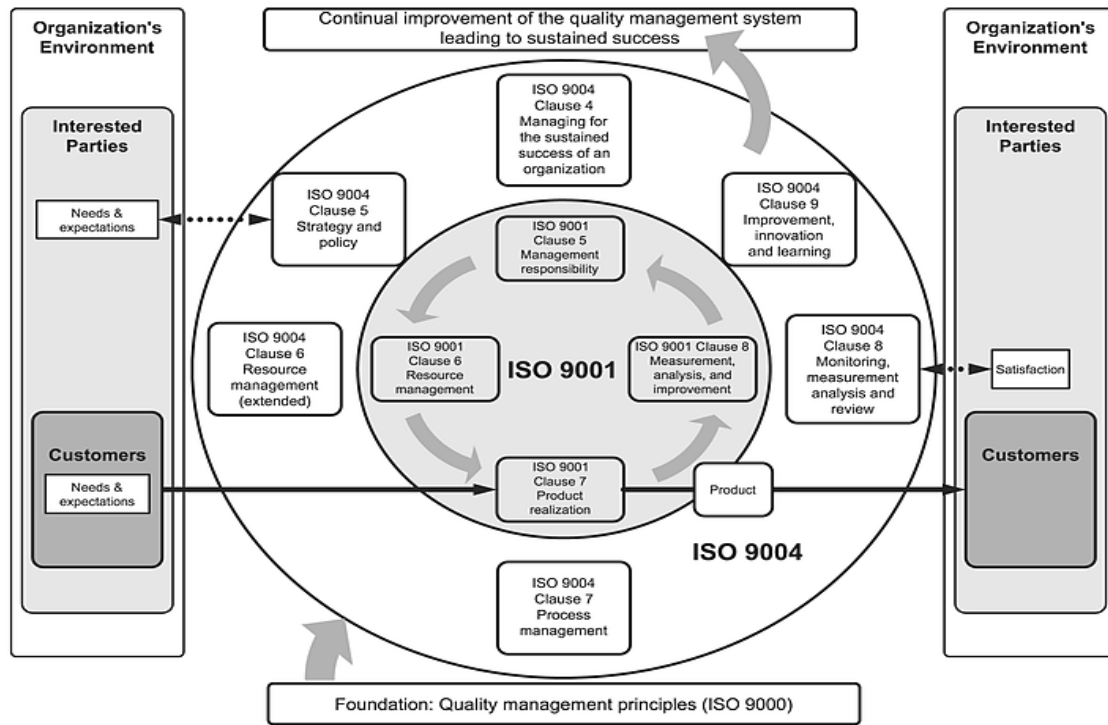
To ensure the quality of the products/services it provides, citizen participation can be incorporated as a tool at the input (identification of more reliable requirements) and output level (identification of levels of satisfaction with the product/service) within the process approach. A diverse and interconnected range of government processes like the provision of resources and capacity; monitoring and evaluation of service provision; and the establishment of internal and external communication channels are required to

provide quality services to citizens. In activating these processes, it is necessary to address the following (ISO 2014: xii):

- Identification of the internal or external customer.
- Determining the main inputs to the process such as policies, financial resources and legal requirements

- What are the expected outputs such as service specifications.
- Establishing controls and indicators needed to verify results and performance levels.
- Identification of interaction with other input and output processes within the local government system.
- Determining necessary controls for transparency.

Figure 3. Extended model of a process based quality management approach



Source: Adapted from ISO (2009)

The aforementioned is reinforced in Frey's (2008:38) argument that procedural utility is created when citizen needs are addressed through "institutionalized processes" that contribute to a positive sense of the self. This is further supported by research findings of Ott (2010: 360), which highlighted higher levels of connection between citizen happiness and technical quality of governance than with its democratic quality. Therefore, the quality of local government is an important factor, especially in terms of processes that are well managed to produce the expected results, since technical quality can be viewed as the engine of local government success.

In addition, at the input stage (assessing customer needs), the following require attention (SABS 2015:16): Complaints and suggestions from customers/citizens and local government personnel; outcomes of the integral diagnostic analysis; comparative studies in the implementation of systems of other local governments with ISO 18091; budgetary requirements for implementation and operation; monitoring progress of previously decided actions relevant to the quality management system; changes in national or regional government policies and resource provision; changes in statutory and regulatory requirements; changes in local demographic; and risk assessment. The

mentioned activities should be the responsibility of relevant employees throughout the entire local government. While this requires a clear understanding of the intention of local governance by all parties, there has to be bidirectional sharing of knowledge and concerns to facilitate a holistic approach in achieving best output (Uzzaman 2010:387). Shared responsibility not only strengthens processes achieving their objectives, but overall the quality management system is enhanced.

Citizen participation can be valuable in identifying potential constraints in the input and output management system; and can help in finding ways to improve active contribution of all relevant stakeholders to enhance standards at the input and output stages. It can be argued that if local government is to succeed in providing sustainable products/services, then citizen participation in identifying needs must be an integral part of the process approach within the overall quality management system. Such participation can determine through various sources the different needs and expectations of citizens, what needs and expectations are changing, as well as what needs and expectations are in conflict. This can enhance citizen trust in local government engaging in reliable processes to provide effective and efficient services. Therefore, it is integral that if

local government is to successfully respond to the needs and expectations of citizens, then the following require consideration (ISO2009:V):

- Have a long-term planning perspective of how needs are to be identified and addressed.
- Continuously scan the environment to identify changes.
- Identify existing and new stakeholders and how they impact local government performance. assess their individual potential impacts on the organization's .
- Continually engage citizen participation to communicate activities and plans.
- Maintain beneficial relationships with all stakeholders.
- Engage in negotiation and mediation to balance competing need and expectations of citizens.
- Develop a risk mitigation strategy.
- Identify resources needed to address citizen needs and expectations.
- Establish appropriate processes to strategy.
- Engage in regular monitoring and evaluation
- Provide opportunities for continual learning for employees to sustain organisational vigour.
- Implement processes for innovation and continual improvement.

The aforementioned require the use of various innovative approaches, strategies, tools to engage citizens in governance. Farazmand (2012:235) rightfully states that “the capacity to govern requires a capacity to manage, and this requires sound public administration”, which are vital in recognising the legitimacy of governance structures and processes. Citizen needs include not only quality services, but also reasonable price; equity in service provision; and sustainable and reliable services. Commensurately, advocates view citizen participation as promoting citizenship values, enhancing accountability, maintaining legitimacy, achieving better decisions, and building consensus (Barber 1984; King, Feltey, and Susel 1998; and Thomas 1995 in Yang and Pandey 2011: 880).

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

Imperatives for citizen participation at the input stage

Before engaging with citizens in a participatory model to enhance service delivery, local government has to be committed in its responsibility to provide services, both specified and unspecified by citizens, in an endeavor to promote the dignity of citizens and their rights. Through the engagement with citizens, local government installs a “relevant step to put democratic values at the local level into practice, and to facilitate the achievement of a more sustainable governance” (Carvalho and Fidelis 2011:

390). It is therefore important that service delivery encompasses several considerations like: safe, accessible and hygienic services; professional and ethical conduct of local government personnel; acceptable waiting and/or response times; acceptable prices for the service provision; convenient service hours; availability of clear information dissemination and communication channel for citizens (SABS 2015: 18).

Various authors have recommended differing imperatives for successful citizen participation as mentioned by Yang and Pandey (2011: 882-883):

- Langton (1978) argued that the quality of citizen participation is determined by citizenship education, elitism, technological complexity, financing, government agency behavior, and representativeness influence the quality of citizen participation
- Rosener (1978) highlighted the importance of planning and matching participation methods to participation purposes.
- Kweit and Kweit (1981) identified participation mechanisms and organizations; characteristics of the target organization; and the environmental characteristics as determining successful citizen participation.
- King, Feltey, and Susel (1998) argued that educating citizens/administrators and enabling facilitative systems/processes to promote better cohesiveness between administrative systems, administrators, and citizens will help in overcoming barriers to effective participation.
- Walters, Aydelotte, and Miller (2000) proposed that participation techniques (should be aligned to participation purposes (finding definitions, alternatives, or criteria; educating the public about the issue and proposed alternative; determining public opinion about the alternative; persuading the public toward an alternative; and legitimizing government decisions) and the nature of the issue (level of conflict, the number of stakeholders, level of confidence, the number of alternatives, the knowledge of outcomes, and the probability of the outcomes).

Further, in linking the processes and outcomes associated with public participation in local government, citizen empowerment in guiding administrative decisions is promoted (Olomid 2014:79). This is additionally supported by Iyanyna and Shah (2011:61) who state that the quality of governance encompasses both quality of institutions and processes, as well as governance outcomes. The focus is on exercising authority and control to preserve, protect and enhance the quality of life of citizens. In this regard they refer to the following responsive and fair governance indicators as important considerations, which can guide input and output (Iyanyna and Shah 2011:62):

Table 1. Governance indicators

Responsive governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public services consistent with citizen preferences. • Direct possibly interactive democracy. • Safety of life, liberty and property. • Peace, order, rule of law. • Freedom of choice and expression. • Improvements in economic and social outcomes. • Improvements in quantity, quality and access of public services. • Improvements in quality of life.
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Fair governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fulfillment of citizens' values and expectations in relation to participation. • Social justice, and due process. • Access of the poor, minorities and disadvantaged groups to basic public services. • Non-discriminatory laws and enforcement. • Egalitarian income distribution. • Equal opportunity for all.
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Source: Adapted from Shah (2008)

The aforementioned indicators of responsive and fair governance can be aligned to Farazmand's (2012:231) concept of sound governance which encompasses (1) citizen participation; (2) the process involving all stakeholders; (3) the structure constituting the regulations, procedures, decision-making frameworks, and authoritative sources that legitimizes the governance process; and (4) the value system of the governance structure or process. Buckwalter (2014: 574) argues that critical resources to build participant efficacy are required to create the platform for participation and empowerment, which are important constituents of sound governance. Additionally, Ngugen et al. (2015:45) argue that the poor or marginalized are in a more disadvantaged position for participation and they therefore need assistance to make their voices heard from government or other organizations. The study by Yang and Pandey (2011:885-890) argued that while the aforementioned propositions are important in ensuring quality citizen participation, additionally the following factors which extend beyond the citizen-administrator inter-face require consideration:

- Minimizing red tape and bureaucratic administrative rules and requirements that prevent citizens from getting timely and accurate government information to participate or participate effectively.
- Promoting transformational leadership which can focus on the role of citizens and citizenship in formulating and realizing shared goals.
- Using multiple citizen participation mechanisms to foster consensus, responsiveness, and trust in government.
- Educating citizens; improving their knowledge, and enhancing their communication and participation skills can reduce delays in the decision processes and facilitate the achievement of quality solutions.
- Minimise unequal representation through increased citizen competence, which ultimately produces better citizen input, which will be valued by government officials.

Additionally, a study by Shehu, Pollani and Gjuta (2013: 683) point to the following important drivers for successful citizen participation:

- Legalise the rights of citizens in decision-making processes.
- Promote awareness and a culture of the importance of participation in decision making processes.
- Enhance transparency in the process of communication with the public.
- Regularly updating information on the local government website on local government activities.
- Education of citizens on local government functions.
- Expansive use of the media for communication.

The above pointers stress the importance of communication, as reinforced in a study by Vivier et al. (2015: 89), which argued that "limited and differentiated access to information and to

communication platforms; the incomplete or inaccessible nature of the information available; and the inadequacy of the types of platforms used", was attributed to poor government communication processes. Communication platforms play a constructive role in supporting substantive citizen participation. It also indicates the importance of linking information exchange to other processes in order to "close the feedback loop" in a quality management system, so that everyone understands the purpose for using the quality management system and its benefits..

Despite attempts by scholars to recommend ways to improve the process of citizen participation, it is inevitable that some cultural and social factors like gender and caste may mitigate successful participation (Sharma, Bao and Peng 2014: 84). Therefore, within the context of quality management, citizens and employees need to be made aware of potential cultural resistance and educated on ways of consensually managing its possible negative impact. Further, citizens need understanding and empowerment in the following areas:

- They are a valuable resource in local government, which requires their involvement in decision making regarding their needs and expectations.
- Citizen management based on a transparent and socially responsible approach, so that they understand the importance of citizen participation.
- Taking collective ownership and responsibility to solve problems.
- Knowledge and competence development in understanding the purpose and processes underpinning citizen participation.

The aforementioned is supported by Lawton and Macaulay (2013:76) who argue that the above has the potential to develop both expert citizens (professionals with expertise working inside the system of governance) and everyday makers of their own local governance (citizens concerned with local interests and everyday life).

If citizen participation is not well managed, it may delay decisions, increase conflict, disappoint participants, and lead to distrust (Yang and Pandey 2011: 880). In addition, improperly managed formal participation mechanisms have the potential to distract the time and energy of citizens towards irrelevant issues and conflict, while important decisions regarding service are taken by other groups (Lombard 2103: 139). This can result in socially excluded and marginalized citizens competing for the crumbs, while resolutely being distracted from the cake. Therefore, in engaging citizens in helping to determine their needs and expectations, well organised actions are required from local government, which include (ISO 2009: 17):

- Anticipating any potential conflicts arising from the different needs and expectations of citizens.
- Evaluating current performance of local government and problems associated with poor service delivery in the past.

- Maintaining constant communication with citizens on progress and the need for feedback from them.
- Reviewing, updating and reporting on processes within the management system
- Making accessible resources required for improvement.

The aforementioned is consistent with Fung's (2015:513) claim that the "democracy cube" promotes designing participation to include different kinds of participants; different ways of speaking, hearing, and exchanging information; and different levels of empowerment. This provides opportunities for inclusive representation, especially for marginalized citizens with fewer resources (Lombard 2014:137). This requires designing participation at the input stage that clearly articulates the process from participation to satisfaction of the intention, which is meaningful to citizens. Sustaining citizen participation is dependent on citizens supporting the institutions and practices of participation, within a local government context. This offers increased opportunities for improvements in accountability, trust, and integrity in local government as supported by (Wang and Van Wart (2007) and Devas and Grant (2003) in Lawton and Macaulay (2013:1).

Communication and promotion of effective processes to engage citizens is important to foster transparency and local government accountability. Communication and feedback processes to engage citizens can include citizen opinion polls; surveys; complaint's hotlines; meetings; phone services; a website, e-mails, citizen service desks in local government departments; complaints and suggestion mailboxes, and the use of mass media. Such data analysis will provide invaluable information regarding the needs of citizens. In addition, data analysis of citizen satisfaction at the output stage can also be used to enhance analysis of citizen needs. Beyond establishing communication processes, is the need to evaluate the process to mitigate repetitive problems.

In addition, identification of control measures required for each process within each procedure will ensure consistent outputs. There has to be measures to analyse the product and processes so that timeous corrective and preventive action can propagate continuous improvements to satisfy citizens. This has to be supported by available resources. Implementing such control measures can ignite the journey to successful local government performance.

Farazmand (2012:236-239) suggests the following ways in which citizen participation can be optimally used:

- Establishing strong community leadership to learn about citizens at the grassroots level. This provides an avenue for citizens from different professions and ranks to have their voices heard.
- Use of mass media and digital technologies to reach out to citizens. Information about their preferences, problems, issues, and suggestions from these sources can be analyzed and used effectively, thereby promoting motivation; and trust and credibility in the governance process.
- Advisory Boards representing from diverse backgrounds can be a powerful institutional

mechanism to engage citizens and use them as messengers back to the communities.

- Collaboration and partnership building can be used to make more informed decisions; enhance creativity, innovation, and synergy through collective action; and promote democratic productivity.
- Use of digital governance to empower citizens and bring them closer to government. Communication can become simpler and faster.
- Citizens can share governance functions, thereby promoting self-reliance. Government can also provide an enabling environment, by allowing citizens to manage certain responsibilities traditionally performed by government.

Farazmand's suggestions can be conceptualized into various stages of citizen participation as proposed by Creighton (2005: 35): inform the public, listen to the public, engage in problem solving, and develop agreements. By informing the public, citizens can contribute to decision making using information that is comprehensive and free of bias. Access to information is increased by listening to citizens, which helps to make decisions collaboratively and consensually.

Avenues to engage citizens provides opportunities to improve overall local government performance in problem solving, decision making, and service delivery. Sound governance through citizen participation can democratically produce the capacity to transform citizen participation into an authentic input tool to determine their needs.

CONCLUSION

In analyzing literature pertaining to quality management using ISO and the development of ISO18091:2104 specifically for local government, it can be concluded that a quality management system that incorporates all activities and processes needed to satisfy the needs and expectations of citizens, while considering the requirements of other stakeholders as well, can assure local government of success. The incorporation of citizen participation as an input tool in a quality management system can promote effectiveness, efficiency, trust, legitimacy and accountability from the local government perspective.

However, it can be posited that mechanisms for citizen participation will not necessarily improve the quality of service provision. Poor governance processes in the administration of local government can result in poor quality of service provision and dissatisfied citizens. If the vision of sound governance is to be brought to fruition, then local government must not only focus on providing opportunities for participation, but also on the quality and impact of such participation. It can be argued that through constructive efforts, citizen participation can steer the procedural or technical quality of the operations and management of local government in the direction that would not only optimize the benefits to citizens, but also contribute to enhanced quality of local government performance.

This implies that the needs of citizens must be correctly identified and appropriately satisfied. Ultimately, management; employees and citizens must take responsibility for the quality management

system and embrace commitment to the continual improvement of processes and the overall system.

While citizen participation may be a time consuming and complex process, it is an important aspect in democratic local governance. It can be asserted that in the absence of such participation in the process of influencing decision making, legitimate democratic decision making is compromised. Local governance provides an avenue for citizens to participate directly and indirectly in governance processes and decision making. Gaining the trust and confidence of citizens is attributable to local governance that is transparent and accountable. Through participation, the needs of citizens are taken into account.

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