



The Nuts and Bolts of Public Participation and Good Governance in South Africa: A Critical Review

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to unpack and indicate the interrelatedness of public participation and good governance, the paper argues that sufficient, fair and effective public participation promotes good governance within the Local Government. Public participation is a process by which an organization consults with affected individuals, organizations, and government entities before taking a decision. Public participation is considered as a two-way communication and cooperative problem-solving process whose goal is to achieve better and more acceptable decisions. Good governance begins with the political will to govern well. This paper is conceptual in nature, and it relies heavily on the secondary data, and/ or the existing literature to address answers to the inherent argument. From the literature, authors derived at various findings such as: poor communication channels, ethical practises, inadequate budget, lack of prioritisation of the public's needs to make proper decisions inter alia, as contributing factors making impossible for good governance. Therefore, this paper recommends that further research should be conducted in all the municipalities within South Africa, to detect problems of public participation for the enhancement good governance as well as echoing that the municipalities should acknowledge and prioritise the needs of the community and convert them into services.

Keywords: *Public Participation; Good Governance; Community; Citizenry*

1 Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to unpack and indicate the interrelatedness of public participation and good governance, the paper argues that sufficient, fair and effective public participation promotes good governance within the Local Government. The South African government is regarded as one of the most advanced democracies on the African continent. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 was developed to enable a high level of public participation, and to suggest the roles and functional

mechanisms, as well as independent bodies, to look after each other's practices. Section 152 (1) (e) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 stipulates that the local government must encourage communities and community organisations in the matters of local government. In South Africa, the government is divided into three spheres: namely, local, provincial and national with the main purpose to satisfy all the rights of the publics and promote good governance.

Public participation is regarded as a way of countering development and encouraging the public to cooperate for moving towards sustainable development (Kandil 2016). Sebola (2016); asserts that public participation is seen as an idea that is defined in different ways by numerous and different people and in a diversity of environments. Furthermore, Sebola (2016) emphasises that public participation is used interchangeably with the concepts, citizen participation, civil participation and community participation. Section 152 (1) (a) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 ensures provision of democratic and accountable government for local communities. A democratic and accountable government for local communities includes the involvement of the people in matters that affect their well-being. Erasmus (2010:98), emphasises that good governance enforces the state to perform its tasks or exercise with its main purpose to achieve and maintain transparency, predictability, a culture of justification of State action and certainty. According to the International Federation of Accountants (2013:78), good governance is aimed at motivating public participation; improving accountability and sufficient service delivery, by creating a standard for good governance in the public sector.

In the past, many people in South Africa were merely living their lives, without political consciousness, and the government was making social, economic and political decisions on their own even though some of them should have been shared with ordinary citizens (Kesselman, Kreiger & Joseph, 2018:02). The national government prescribes regulations for provincial and local governments to implement. The Public Participation Framework for the South African Legislative Sector (2013); contends that the intention of public participation provision in the Constitution is clear because it influences government policy outcomes, so that they can reflect the will of the people. Section 52 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 confirms a number of citizen rights and more specifically, the right of people to be involved in local governance. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 together with Section 4 of the Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Amendment Act, 2003 (Act 41 of 2003) and the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act 32 of 2000) support the involvement of people in the local government issues that affect their lives. According to Makgamatha and Moikanyane (2018:214); participation strategy has been active for quite a while after the apartheid era and has collapsed recently because of loss of confidence in the ruling government because it inadequately considers the public's needs and aspirations. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Section 152 (1) (e) stipulates that the local government must promote the involvement of communities and community organisations in the matters of local governance

Despite all the legislative provisions indicated above, there are several challenges facing the different local municipalities regarding public participation to promote good governance: namely, lack of public participation in the Integrated Development plan (IDP) planning and imbizos as well as influences from higher institutions (politicians). The other challenges include the following: resources constraints, lack of skills, technological development and information to involve people in participation. It is also unclear to what extent ward committees indeed bring public responses and proposals to bear on local government decision-making. According to the study conducted by Mafunisa (2008:452-460) on public participation and Integrated Development Planning, it was found that participation in the IDP seems to have become a sophisticated process, only meaningful to and understood by, the few educated elite, co-opted individuals, including senior municipal officials, but not including ordinary community members. The study sought to come up with mechanisms to enhance public participation with the intention to promote good governance in the local government, particularly the Blouberg Local Municipality.

2 Theoretical Frameworks: Public Participation

While there could be various and contesting theoretical locations on phenomena of public participation. The authors took cognizance of the following: Public Choice theory, Social and Democratic Theory. Therefore, this paper employed the use of the Public Choice theory to ground its argument.

2.1 The Public Choice Theory

The foundation of a new political economy literature, which appeared in the late 1970s was constructed by the Public Choice theory (Johnson, 2014:4). Public Choice Theory essentially evolved in the aftermath of World War II, gained intensity in America in 1950s and 1960s and in Europe and Japan during the 1970s. The Public Choice Theory, the failure and inadequacy of limited approaches for resources between individuals and institutions in political science akin to economics, have led public choice theorists to economic methods and analyses of Public Choice. Failure and the inadequacy of the scarce political science approaches of resources between individuals and institutions, just like in economics, political science, has led to of (Borooah, 2005:2-3). Due to this tendency, the idea used by economists could be useful in explaining the conducts of governments and other institutions that prioritize public welfare. Thus, this idea represented the backbone of the literature of Public Choice (Borooah, 2005:1). The Public Choice or the economy of politics has emerged as a new branch of economics with the leadership of James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock in Virginia (West, 1990: 105). Buchanan defines Public Choice, as a sub-discipline between economics and political science and which reversed the generic point of view of academicians (Sönmez, 2011: 70). The Public Choice Theory is an economics idea that was approved to define and clarify political realisms and how they influence the nature of public decisions (Blankart & Koester, 2006:171). This Public choice theory is formed by individual's human values, which are the norms on which public policies are based. Public Choice Theory is relevant in the field of public administration since it shows why it is necessary to encourage participatory democracy as a way of limiting the excesses of representative democracy.

The Public Choice Theory provides the public or people with the satisfaction of participating and shaping their society. By showing the self-centered nature of some public officials, the public choice theory ensures the institution of effective structures of public participation in the decision-making procedures of the government (Jolande, 2017:69). Public Choice Theory dictates that society decides the processes by which governments make decisions and social interdependence costs vary amongst these processes (Jolande, 2017:69). According to the Public Choice Theory, when it comes to governmental intervention and decision-making, rather than focusing on all possible areas of concern in a community, the government should focus on the areas that are absolutely barred from correction or intervention by the private sector or when the collective has difficulty coming to a consensus (Jolande, 2017:69). Public Choice Theory is relevant in the sense that it enforces public participation through voting and other means of election of their representatives (Becker, 1976:5). Public Choice Theory utilizes the microeconomic theory of voting behavior (Jordaan, 2005:317). Public choice rejects the construction of organic decision-making units, such as the people, the community, or society (Jordaan, 2005:318). Groups do not make choices, only individuals do. The problem then becomes how to model the ways in which the diverse and often conflicting preferences of self-interested individuals get expressed and collated when decisions are made collectively (Jordaan, 2005:318). One key conclusion of public choice is that changing the identities of the people who hold public office will not produce major changes in policy outcomes.

2.2 Public Participation and Good Governance: The Nexus

Tanaka (2007:140) asserts that public participation is an enabling component of democracy in the sense that through it, the publics are involved in the government affairs. Public participation encourages unity amongst government and the public, mainly in the provision of quality and sustainable services

(South African Legislative Sector (SALS, 2013). Mathebula (2015:25) emphasizes that public participation has different application interpretation and meaning. This is because public participation is responsible for creating more active common good, partaking and well-motivated citizens that support a sustainable future development (Leggewie & Nanz, 2016). Sebola (2016:25) acknowledges that public participation is a term that is demarcated in different ways by numerous and diverse people and in a multiplicity of environments. Public participation is considered as a conduct in which the public uses control and influence over the decisions that affects them (Devas & Grant 2003:309). According to Gaventa and Valderrama; (1999:4), public participation is regarded as an interference of citizens with determination of social interest in the activities of the publics. Public participation is responsible for deepening democracy and promotes good governance.

Sebola (2016:25) affirms that public participation is a way to ensure that the people who make decisions are responsible for making decisions that affect the life of the public are able to communicate with the public before taking those decisions. Public participation enforces public trust in governmental legitimacy and responsiveness, and it ensures transparency in the affairs of local government (Royo, Yetano & Acerete, 2014). According to Bryson, Kathryn, Quick, Barbara and Crosby (2013:1) in a democratic government, the public is regarded as important stakeholders because it can easily participate directly or indirectly through its representatives in the formulation, adoption and implementation of policies and laws that affect it. In addition to the above, public participation is recognized as a central part of the relationship of public government democracies (Bryson et al, 2013:1). Kandil, (2016:19) concurs that public participation is concerned with encountering the development and encouraging the publics to cooperate with the main purpose of moving towards sustainable development. Public participation refers to the participation of the people and civil society in the activities of the government. According to Maloba, (2015:46) Governance is a relationship between the government, civil society, NGOs, and other stakeholders. Good governance it is therefore a concept that includes all societal actors within and outside the terrain of the state and within and outside the borders of a country. Governance can then be referred to as a partnership and collaboration between the state and the non-state, actors such as business, academia, and civil society. A more articulate description of governance is the one provided by Williams (2009:22) who maintains that the term governance has emerged as a compelling descriptor of a more interactive and symbolic relationship; it describes, in effect the creation of partnerships. Governance stands for the relationship between the government, civil society, NGOs, other stakeholders. Therefore, this concept includes all societal actors within and outside the state (Williams, 2009:22).

Governance is regarded as a partnership and collaboration between the state and non-state actors such as business, academia, civil society, etc. Williams (2009: 22) posits that, the term ‘governance’ has emerged as a compelling descriptor of a more interactive and symbolic relationship. Williams further argues that the notion of governance is grounded in a collective action approach to problem solution.” In addition, governance involves integrating stakeholders and communities to resolve complex and messy public problems by including not only the state but many independent organizations. The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (2014:95) contends that concept of governance is not new hypothesis. It is as old as human civilization. Public participation is acknowledged in governance and development discourse, as a mechanism for building capacity in the rural poor in the quest for poverty reduction and good governance. Governance means the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented (or not implemented). Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance.

2.2.1 Public participation: Genesis

In the past, public participation was not considered as part of the decision-making method (Shiple & Utz, 2012:131). The late 1960s is considered as a period of substantial social and political

change around the world. Public participation in the 1970s embodied one-way communication between local authorities and the public. The public had an unexperienced sense that they were active participants of the course. Public participation is emerged in the South African local government with the advents of new democracy. This importance, however, should be explained in the framework of the wider political process that has been unfolding in South Africa pre- 1994, a method which stimulated the participation of the publics in decisions that affect their well-being.

Ideologies of good governance by the people was transliterated into the permeable of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Public participation provides an opportunity for the public to participate in the planning of the implementation of the mandate of the local municipality. The local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) provides for the establishment of ward committees and ward participatory structures, as statutory formal structures for local communities, to involve municipalities. Public Participation has so matured in South Africa that national parliament, and some provincial legislators engage in the process of taking parliament to the people (Municipal Systems Act, 2000).

2.2.2 Public Participation in the Local Government Context

According to Houston (2001:206) the idea that the legislation responsible for local government in South Africa ensures provision of municipalities to implement a system of participatory democracy with the main purpose to guarantee free expression of societal needs within their wards under their municipality. The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) (MSA) provides for a municipality to encourage the involvement of the local community through the established mechanisms, such as ward meetings, Integrated Development Planning (IDP) meetings and imbizos. It is important that municipal councils should regularly inform the community about the quality level, impact and range of municipal services delivered by the municipality, which is regarded as a key to regulate the level of services requested by the community. Pollit (2007:99) regards public participation as the most active form of link, as the citizens are often directly engaged in the decision-making process. It is also important in the sense that it sustains democracy and promotes good governance in local government, especially municipalities. The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) provides that even though municipalities encourage the public to actively participate, it remains the job of the municipality to ensure public participation. This along with the Local government: Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No 32 of 2000) Section 4 set out the duties of a municipality; firstly, it must encourage the involvement of the local community and consult the local community about the level, quality, range, and impact of municipal services. Secondly, the municipality must provide the community with information regarding the available options for basic service delivery (Municipal Systems Act, 2000).

2.2.3 Ward committees, Their Roles, and Functions in Promoting Public Participation

The Local Government: Municipal Structures Act, 1998 (Act No. 117 of 1998) Section 73 provides for the establishment of ward committees to enhance participatory democracy in local government. Theron and Mchunu (2013:106) assert that, in principle, ward committees should ideally create a bridge between the public, political and administrative structures of municipalities. Theron and Mchunu (2013:106) emphasize that ward committees are fraught with problems, ranging from politics of representatives, power play and party politics. However, municipalities are obliged to establish ward committees as representatives of the community. Legislation makes it compulsory for municipalities to develop tools to involve and consult communities in matters of the municipality and its procedures. The White Paper on Local Government (1998:28) states that the main purpose of the municipality is to establish the ward committees that comply with the feature of the legislation on public participation. Municipalities are required to come up with lasting and successful models by making sure that participation takes place through these established structures (Mtshali, 2016:29). Ward committees play

crucial role at the local government level because they assist in attaining the goals of local governance and democracy, as stipulated in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. The Ward committee Resource book (2005:20) clarify that ward committees systems constitute of not more than 10 members of a ward and ward councillor is the chairperson. Ward committees perform decisive role in enabling participatory democracy; assisting in rebuilding corporation for quality service delivery; assisting with challenges faced by the public at ward level and distribute material (The Ward committee Resource book 2005:20).

2.3 Public Participation and Good Governance: Significance

Public participation encourages a robust civil society as it offers the public and other local based stakeholders a chance to be involved in a civic society matters and activism aimed at developing the community. (Chaney, 2016:282). Public participation assists in building an informed and accountable public which has a sense of ownership of all amenities and services provided for them. It positively influences the outcomes of projects being undertaken because the community is likely to support such developments. Good governance is perceived as the best insurance policy for long-term resilience and a deterrent to unethical conduct, scandals, and crime. Public participation is a continuous method of involving the public in planning, implementing, and monitoring projects that improve the well-being of the community (Mubangizi, 2010:158). Camay and Gordon (2004:250) recognize the importance of public participation by suggesting the following:

- It ensures the platform for publics to lay their preference and demands to their representatives and administrators (decision-makers);
- Public participation is responsible for legitimating policy decision.
- Public participation only supports and considers the policy-making process if the public/citizens are involved because they know their views and demands will be included in the policy; and
- It is a platform aimed at representing the disadvantaged and ill-informed groups in communities that are regularly overlooked by their representatives; for example the, old physically challenged as well as youth.

Public participation is a tool that is used by politicians to collect data about societal needs and problems from the grassroots. Public Participation is considered as a way for local authorities to obtain facts on the local needs, conditions, attitudes, and desires of the community. Such information is as vital in reaching the established resolutions within the policy management process.

2.4 Synchronising Public Participation and Good Governance

Gibson, Lacy and Dougherty (2005:7) proposed that public participation is the key element of good governance; hence, the levels of public participation are linked to the level of governance. Public participation is the cornerstone of good governance. However, it is only applicable in democracy where publics are empowered to request and structure best decision, seek justice, lay complain and hold government accountable for their activities. Good governance is considered as a key to achieving development while true participatory democracy guarantees that development is sustainable and impartial. Kofi Annan (2000:797) contends that good governance is all about strengthening law, transparency, democracy, and capacity in public administration. Hyden (2004:19) confirms that public influence and oversight are requirement for good governance. Public influence and oversight is all about a conduct through which public can contribute or partake towards public policy making. Public participation plays significant role in strengthening democracy Hyden (2004:19). Public participation is also known as a components of good governance and it promote and maintain accountability and efficiency in the public institutions. Good governance ensures that public officials and public institutions comply with their

constitutional mandate of safeguarding good living standards for the publics (Johnston, 2002:1). Therefore, it is very difficult to separate public participation from the practice of public administration. In terms of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa 1996, public participation in local government is a fundamental democratic right of the publics and it occupies a key role in facilitating local democracy and promoting values of good governance (transparency, consultation, openness and the rule of law). Ile and Mapuva (2010:30) state that democratic governance is characterised by the existence of a strong civil society that is able to keep a check on government performance and provide input into policy processes that will enhance good government. Good governance means working in partnership with the public to improve the living conditions for local communities (Ile & Mapuva, 2010:30). An effective public participation process makes provision for local people to influence development agendas and contributes to policy imperatives impacting on municipal management (Municipal Systems Act, 2000).

2.5 Challenges of Public Participation in Promoting Good Governance

2.5.1 Participatory Skills and Power Relation

Public participation can be more complex and require different types of skills. Experience, leadership, managerial capabilities and knowledge (Gavenda & Valderrama, 1999:42). Therefore, it is guaranteed that if the participants have a poor background or they are not trained properly it will be difficult for them to contribute effectively to the discussions, and they will end up withdrawing from participating. Shortage of essential planning skills and experience is considered as obstacles for meaningful participation. Therefore, erroneous selection by the municipality when providing employment affect the municipality because candidates with shortage of skills are hired and that hinders the participation in the BLM since the skills to ensure the participation cannot be enforce (IDP, 2018/2019:33). It is important for the Blouberg Local Municipality to enforce employment to the suitable candidate so that they can impose skills that improve and ensures participation in the municipality (IDP, 2018/2019:33). Power relation in the Blouberg Local Government is applicable where erroneous selecting it practiced with the intention of favour in return. This simply means some officials are given works, but their power is limited since they function according to the person appointed them and that affect the functioning of the municipality since the unethical conduct are practiced (IDP, 2018/2019:33). Power relation affects the participation since few people who have close relationship with municipal officials will participate while the views and concerns of the majority will not be expressed (IDP, 2018/2019:33).

2.5.2 Insufficient Financial Resources at Local Level

Participation at local government is regarded as unsponsored command because financial resources to establish development activities suggested by the publics are ignored because of lack of insufficient resources (Ababio, 2004:23; Cuthill, 2003:382; Gaventa & valderrama, 1999:21; Makgoba, *et al*, 2004:23 & Tosun, 2004:11). Cloete and Thornhill (2005:402) assert that challenges of financial sustenance are commonly created by the situation where municipalities fail to institute proper mechanisms to ensure that they indeed collect their revenue as planned. For instance, municipalities rendered services in the financial period 2013/2014 and were defaulted by more than 93.4 billion (South African Government Research Centre, 2014:27a). In addition, Cloete (2005:402) emphasis that without appropriate funding, it becomes difficult for local government to provide services to the publics. The insufficient financial resource is the major problem not only in Blouberg Local Municipality but also even in other municipalities (IDP, 2018/2019:33). The financial problem at BLM affects the functioning of the municipality because when implementing public participation because the following issues consider funding: meetings, travel allowances by municipal officials, printing of proposed forum, and other activities which require funding (IDP, 2018/2019:33). Therefore, the BLM must manage its financial problems so that the functioning of the municipality cannot be affect.

2.5.3 Political will

According to Gaventa and Valderrama; (1999:21), a politician's incapability to ensure promotion of public participation and the lack of high level bureaucratic and political support for taking part at local level also led to nonparticipation. Failure to communicate with the public since they are responsible for selecting their leaders leads to poor participation (Cloete, & Thornhill, 2005:402). Therefore, communities will take part effectively if they see that their representatives communicate with them regularly concerning the issues that affect their well-being (Cuthill, 2003:382; & Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999:21). The political will enforced by the political leaders in the Blouberg Local Municipality affects the public participation in the sense that the leaders do not consider the interest of the community, they only consider their wealth and this affects all the decisions taken by the municipality since the concerns of the public will not be contained (Cuthill, 2003:382; & Gaventa & Valderrama, 1999:21).

2.5.4 Unethical Conduct of the/Behaviour of Municipal Officials

Cloete and Thornhill (2005:409) emphasises that since lack of funding is a challenge, the situation is then degraded by the unethical conducts. Unethical conduct is a practice often in many municipalities that the procedures of selecting service providers are prejudiced by the politicians, thereby persuading the precise supply chain procedures (Cloete & Thornhill, 2005:409). Municipal managers in some municipalities were suspended by the municipal council because of failure to select service providers that the politicians support (South African Local Government Research Centre 2014:21b). While corruption enriches only a few government officials, tenderpreneurs and politicians for example, it has generally underdeveloped the creation of wealth and severely limited and hampered the government's power to deal effectively with poverty and deprivation. The unethical conduct in the Blouberg Local Municipality by municipal officials hinders the process of public participation and this hinders development in the municipality (IDP, 2018/2019:33). The unethical practices such as nepotism, bribery etc. affect the functioning of the municipality because the municipality is aimed at improving the welfare of the public but since they are not participating due to unethical conducts practiced in the municipality it hinders development and destroys the image of the BLM (IDP, 2018/2019:33). Therefore, the municipal officials at the BLM need to be monitored and supervised when performing their task and that will help in bettering the image of the Municipality and improving the welfare of the public since their concerns will be heard and taken into consideration.

2.6 Government Strategies to Enhance Public Participation

Public participation can be enhanced by, amongst other strategies, the: imbizos, open meetings, public hearings, Ward Committees and Community Development Workers, Citizen/ community advisory committees and elections and traditional leaders.

2.6.1 Imbizos and Public Hearings

According to the Department of Public Service and Administration, (2008:8) Imbizo has been by a long shot the most well-known strategy, which politicians in the nation have used throughout the years to speak with citizens on policies issues and government programs (DPSA, 2008). An "Imbizo" is an African word, which alludes to a special meeting, more often than not assembled by somebody in power, for example, a traditional leader. Throughout the years, particularly since the approach of democratic government in 1994, it has turned out to be synonymous with interaction with citizens to promote democratic principles (DPSA, 2008:8). Government launched the Imbizo programme in 2001 as a time of strengthened movement where all spheres of government national, provincial and local associate with the citizens across the country (DPSA, 2008:8). Imbizo gives effect and concrete expression to participatory democracy, so that citizens can express their rights so that they can be heard and help the national

government to provide a suitable life for all (DPSA, 2008:8). Imbizo is about unmediated communication between government and its people. It is a forum for enhancing dialogue and interaction between ordinary people and senior government executives (DPSA, 2008:8). Imbizo ensure provision of opportunity for government to be able to communicate its action progress and programme directly to the people. It also promotes participation of the citizens in the programmes to improve their lives (DPSA, 2008:8). The interaction through imbizo highlights specific problems that need attention, blockages in policy area that may need review. The government is there to serve the public and the DPSA provide it with the system of imbizo to consider the

2.6.2 Ward Committees and Community Development Workers

Nyalunga, (2006:44) suggest that ward committees are regarded as a vehicle that establishes participatory governance at the grassroots level by means of encouraging active public involvement in the activities of local government. Ward committees are established with the main aim to maintain and promote participatory democracy by bridging the gap between the community and the local municipality (Van Rooyen & Mokoena, 2013:761). Ward committees are responsible for promoting grass-roots democracy by expanding the constitutional obligation of advanced accountability and local government democracy (Ababio, 2007:614 & Raga & Taylor, 2005:143). According to Smith, (2008:23) community development workers are deployed by government to work in communities to make sure that people can access government services. The main function of Community Development Workers (CDWs) is to help in increasingly meeting the demands of the community, assisting them to achieve their perspective targets, be aware of their aspirations and acquire their general wellbeing (Maphazi, *et al*, 2013:63). The CDWs are required to simplify the explanation of government policy to normally be in the language that the community will understand. The CDWs must have knowledge on how the government departments and services (Maphazi, 2012). The CDWs has duties entitled to them as to interact with the ward councilors and ward committees so that they can easily serve the interest of the ill-informed.

2.6.3 Open Government Partnerships (OGP)

The Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an international initiative of the President of the United State of America and it is aimed at encouraging and seeking commitments from governments to promote and maintain transparency, fight corruption and improve new information, effective and accountable government, technology to make government more open and increase public participation (DPSA, 2008:9). In order for countries to qualify, the OGP must meet the following criteria: access to information, citizen engagement, disclosure related to elected or senior public officials and fiscal transparency (DPSA, 2008:9). For countries to be involved they must first, deliver concrete action plan, developed with public consultation, embrace a high-level open government and commit to independent reporting on their progress going forward (DPSA, 2008:9). Like the African Peer Review Mechanisms (APRM), the OGP in considered as an instrument through which countries voluntarily subject them to peers' evaluation (DPSA, 2008). South Africa is known as member of the OGP and it is in line with the requirement of OGP participation, involved civil society and other partners through consultation in the development of a plan with concrete commitments on open government to address the challenge of service delivery (DPSA, 2008:9). The South African commitments included among other, the following: public participation, implementation of know your service rights, establishment of service delivery improvements forums, strengthen participatory budget process, development of a portal for environmental management systems and capacitate national anti-corruption forums and hotline (DPSA, 2008:9).

2.6.4 Traditional Leaders

Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 Chapter (12) Section (212) subsection (1) makes provision for the formulation of national legislation that affords traditional leaders a role at local

level. Thus, they play a part in community participation and are an important component of most constituencies, as they have a protracted record of facilitating community consultations. Traditional Leadership and Governance Framework Act, 2003 Section (4) ensure the primary functions of traditional councils. These include facilitating the involvement of the traditional community in the development of municipalities' IDP and recommending to government appropriate interventions that will contribute to development and service delivery within their jurisdictions. The important process in which public, particularly the traditional communities can participate in the affairs of the local government is through traditional authorities systems (Maphazi, 2013:64). Traditional leaders play an important role in public participation and are regarded as the important component of the most rural communities (Maphazi, 2013:64).

2.6.5 African Peer Review Mechanisms (APRM)

The African Peer Review Mechanisms is considered as a mutually suggested instrument voluntarily acceded to by the Member State of the African Union (AU) as an African self-monitoring mechanism (DPSA. 2008:10). The South African Government is a member of the African Peer review Mechanisms and government departments and civil society are encouraged to participate in the country APRM procedures that regularly lead to the development of the self-assessment report (DPSA. 2008:10). The APRM is in much respect similar to the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in the sense that through these instruments, countries subject themselves to voluntary peer review (DPSA. 2008:10). The APRM ensure the encouragement of citizens to participate in decision-making procedures and force interface between government and citizens during the provision of inputs by the public and development of self-assessment reports (DPSA. 2008:10). The departmental plans and strategies on public participation must ensure the encouragement of the departments to include their citizens and stakeholders in the APRM procedures related to their interest of participating department (DPSA. 2008:10).

2.6.6 The Integrated Development Plan

Integrated Development Plan is the process, which underscores the needs for citizen's participation, as well as to ward meetings as a space for local participation (IDP, 1996:3). Public participation in the process of IDP takes place through institutional structure such as representative's forum meetings, which are external, and steering committee meetings, which are internal (IDP, 1996:3). The latter forum meetings include representatives from the state departments, CBO's, NGO's as well as local sectors, which may include agricultural sector and business. The IDP is reviewed annually; therefore, the municipal councils manage the budget, evaluate progress, and prioritise then most basic needs of the community. The Local Government: Municipal systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) Section 16 stipulate that the IDP must be participatory in nature, that is the community participates in drafting the actual plan, and all stakeholders are included in the process through appropriate forum (Municipal systems Act, 2000). According to South African Local government Association, (2012:4) the IDP is a constitutional obligation, and effectiveness and functionality should assess community needs and draw up vision for the long-term future (SALGA, 2012:4). The IDP is supposedly participatory, it is has been argued that the information is not easily accessible and is an extremely technical process. The IDP does not explore the issues faced by communities, since it compromises of set of priorities identified by the relevant city.

2.7 The State of Scholarship on the Relationship between Public Participation and Good Governance

Public participation is important in empowering the community as they would be given opportunity to express their feelings and state their needs as far as development is concerned. Furthermore, people will be able to participate in identifying the difficulties they come across with the

aim perception of overcoming their challenges as they would have representatives in the municipality and in their village. The public participation helps in reducing municipal problems of rendering services that are not considered as important, for example, the delivery of tar roads while people do not have houses and water. Public participation helps in building strong and solid relationships between municipal officials and community members. This paper finds that public participation helps the community to raise their concerns. Public participation also helps in fighting poor service delivery, because municipal officials will deliver based on the community's prioritized needs. Furthermore, the study revealed that public participation leads to development as the municipality would be monitoring the day-to-day activities of the society, as well as attending them with the intention of developing the community. Municipalities lack effectiveness during participation by members of the public. This simply means that the public is not active as far as their participation is concerned. The study further, revealed that finance and communication are problems as far as participation is concerned.

Recommendations and Conclusion

This paper recommends that there is a need for municipal officials to encourage the public to participate in municipal affairs as most of the people are not sure whether public participation is encouraged. It is very important for the public to express their needs to the municipality. There is a need to inform the public about the activities of the municipality. Community forums be established to enable public participation. While the gist of this paper is on the interrelatedness of public participation and good governance, and how does the former promote that latter. This paper proposes that the municipal officials should prioritize the needs of the society as the custodians of good governance and policy implementors. In recap, good governance is then influence by many other aspects within the local government administration and public participation is not an exception. Municipal officials are expected to uphold the 'ideal' principles of public administration to realise the objective of good governance and amongst others is to observe the principle of 'inclusive development' which systematically utters the needs of public participation both as a theory and action strategy.

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