

Stakeholder involvement as strategic
instrument to strengthen customer
service: The case of the City of Ekurhuleni
Metropolitan Municipality

SE Maseko



orcid.org/0000-0001-5466-2796

Thesis accepted for the degree *Doctor of Philosophy in
Public Management and Governance* at the North-West
University

Promoter: Prof Gerrit van der Waldt

Graduation: June 2023

Student number: 32285310

DECLARATION

I, Sidididi Ewert Maseko (Student number 32285310) declare that the thesis titled “Stakeholder involvement to strengthen customer service: The Case of the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality” submitted for the degree Doctor of Philosophy in Public Management and Governance at the North-West University, Potchefstroom Campus is my own work and has never been submitted by me to any other university. I also declare that all the sources used have been acknowledged by means of complete referencing.

I understand that copies of this thesis submitted for examination will remain the property of the North-West University.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'SE Maseko', written over a light grey grid background.

SE Maseko

Date: 16 November 2022

DEDICATION

This research study is dedicated to all those students across the length and breadth of South Africa who have emerged, despite typical pervasive challenges like poverty, unemployment, inequality, financial exclusion, mishandling and derailment of their respective applications to study in various tertiary institutions—in search of corpus source of knowledge to better their lives. To them, I say remain resolute, resilient and unwavering in your desire to forge ahead and reaffirm your determination to claim your constitutional right of receiving a higher quality and better education in this country. Always bear in mind that “... education is not the learning of facts but the training of the mind to think” - *Albert Einstein*

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

In no order, I would like to offer my heartfelt gratitude to the institutions and individuals listed below for their contributions to the successful completion of this research study.

My sincere and heartfelt gratitude goes out to God Almighty, who is boundless in goodness and grace, for giving me the courage, strength and perseverance to accomplish this research study. Completing this research project would not have been possible without his unchangeable power of exposing himself to me as the Holy Trinity, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

I'd like to express my gratitude to my study supervisor, Professor Gerrit van der Walddt, for his unwavering leadership, unrelenting guidance, encouragement and support, which culminated in the successful completion of this study. His robust comments and remarks, prompt feedback responses and well-placed criticism drove me to work even harder. Throughout this voyage, he was unquestionably a vital source of knowledge, wisdom and insight.

A special thanks to my family, particularly my wife Buyi and my lovely children Mbali, Reamogetse, Tumelo, Onkabetse and my grandson Kwandokuhle, who deserve special appreciation for helping me finish the race that was placed before me in completing my research. I owe a debt of gratitude to my parents for their unwavering support and encouragement as well as their unwavering emotional and spiritual assistance. In addition, I'd want to express my gratitude to my brothers Lloyd, Zwelithini and Elijah for always being there for me in times of need; I love you all and will always be obliged to you.

I would also like to express my gratitude to all my friends and colleagues for their support and assistance throughout my studies. I also want to express my gratitude to James Thabo Mogale and the late Xolani 'Nxe' Luhabe for listening to my odd mumblings and continuous loud views and ideas. You have been a rock throughout this journey; your encouragement and motivating will not go unnoticed. To you, Xolani my brother, I say may the Lord grant you eternal rest and may His perpetual light always shine upon you. I want to convey my heartfelt gratitude to my employer, the

City of Ekurhuleni for authorising and granting me permission to conduct the study. I would also like to acknowledge the Customer Relations Department and customer care area managers at the municipality for allowing me the privilege to interview them. Their valuable time and indispensable input provided an essential source of information for this study. As a result, I truly hope and believe that they will find time to review the study's results and recommendations. Finally, I'd like to express my gratitude to all the stakeholder organisations and everyone who participated in the study; by taking part in the questionnaire, they were able to share their opinions, perceptions, substantive inputs, insights and knowledge about stakeholder involvement as it relates to the municipal functioning of the City of Ekurhuleni. As such, that provided an essential source of information and helped in proposing a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for the municipality.

ABSTRACT

The new democratic dispensation ushered in by the 1994 elections introduced the notion of 'people-centred development'. The principles of people-centred development were advocated by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994:2) and formulated as "the building blocks of development, public participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability". Notably, the deepening tenets of grassroots democracy and harnessing of participatory governance in government settings were promoted as instruments to overcome the legacy of separate development (Davids *et al.*, 2014:18). However, it became apparent that these ideals were hampered by several underlying driving and constraining factors which 'hollowed out' the state of municipalities in the country including poor service delivery, being hotbeds of corruption, maladministration, graft, thieving, inefficiency and ineffective stakeholder involvement practices. This situation generally resulted in mainly local governments in South Africa finding it difficult to maintain healthy relationships with local communities (Shabangu and Oskiutycz, 2018:199). This, in turn, led to legitimacy challenges for municipal councils. Moreover, South African municipalities have continued to witness militant service delivery protests, a lack of effective and productive stakeholder involvement and low levels of public satisfaction with the state of local government and poor customer service delivery in the country. In this research study, the extent to which stakeholders in the local government environment are involved in strengthening customer service is interrogated as the focus area. As a result, the primary objective of this study is to determine and analyse the underlying driving and constraining factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE. The study confined itself to two target populations; namely, managers of customer care centres of the CoE and a representative sample of stakeholder organisations that interact with these centres including CBOs, NGOs; small, medium and macro enterprises (SMMEs); faith-based organisations (FBOs) and sports organisations. The sample was purposively selected. A qualitative approach was used for this study. The rationale for using mixed methods is to enable the researcher to gain a more integrated, multidimensional, and combined perspective with the potential to produce more valid research outcomes by tapping the strengths of each research paradigm. The researcher uses the literature review as a point of

departure to uncover gaps in the current knowledge and pinpoint areas that should be further probed through empirical investigation. Moreover, data presented in this study are mainly derived from the responses of participants to the ten questionnaires that were distributed to three stakeholder organisations and were randomly sampled from six main stakeholder grouping types of the City of Ekurhuleni as well as responses to the semi-structured interviews that were conducted with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$). Notably, in this study, the ethical considerations as espoused by Mouton (2009:240) were adhered to. The study contributes to the body of knowledge on the effective involvement of stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. Furthermore, the study will highlight barriers and impediments faced by stakeholder organisations in trying to strengthen customer service and provide recommendations aimed at improving stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making processes. The study's key contribution will be the development of a new strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE. While the locus of this study will be the CoE, information from this study will not be useful to the CoE only, but also to other municipalities across South Africa as a learning experience.

Additionally, the significance of the study's main key contribution towards the advancement of a new scientific body of knowledge on effective and productive involvement of stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, is structured in several main domains:

- Contributions to the corpus source of knowledge informing the discipline of Public Administration / Management and Governance;
- Contributions to the scholarly discourse regarding local democracy, participation structures and strategies, and stakeholder engagement; and
- Practical application value by proposing the contours and content of a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for the implementation by metropolitan municipalities in South Africa, with specific reference to the CoE;
- Creating a more responsive administration and customer orientation; and

Lastly, as its main contribution to the corpus source of knowledge on public administration / management and governance, this study successfully located the significance of stakeholder involvement within the customer service domain.

KEYWORDS

Stakeholder involvement, City of Ekurhuleni, stakeholder organisations, customer service, strategic instrument, local governance, local democracy, public participation

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION.....	II
DEDICATION	III
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	IV
ABSTRACT	VI

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1	ORIENTATION	1
1.2	PROBLEM STATEMENT	5
1.3	RESEARCH QUESTIONS	9
1.4	RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	10
1.5	CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS.....	10
1.6	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	12
1.6.1	Literature review	12
1.6.1.1	Data bases consulted	14
1.6.2	Empirical investigation.....	14
1.6.2.1	Case study design.....	15
1.6.2.2	Target population and sampling	15
1.6.2.3	Data collection	16
1.6.2.4	Data analysis.....	16
1.7	RESEARCH ETHICS	16
1.8	SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY.....	17
1.9	LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	17
1.10	CHAPTER LAYOUT	18

CHAPTER 2: STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE IN GOVERNANCE SETTINGS: A THEORETICAL EXPOSITION

2.1	INTRODUCTION	20
2.2	TOWARDS A CUSTOMER ORIENTATION IN GOVERNMENT: TRACING THE CHRONICLES OF PARADIGMATIC DEVELOPMENT	22
2.2.1	The Pre-Generational Paradigm.....	22
2.2.2	The First-Generational Paradigm	23
2.2.3	The Second Generational Paradigm	24
2.2.4	Post-Second World War Period.....	25
2.2.5	New Public Administration Paradigm.....	26
2.2.6	Public Management Paradigm.....	28
2.2.7	New Public Management Paradigm	29
2.2.8	Public Governance Paradigm.....	32

2.2.9	New Public Service Paradigm	35
2.3	LOCATING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND A CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION WITHIN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PRAXIS	39
2.4	STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY: THE CRITICAL INTERFACE.....	42
2.4.1	Contextualising Local Democracy	44
2.4.2	Stakeholder Involvement Per Type Of Democracy.....	46
2.5	THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT ...	48
2.5.1	Stakeholder Theory	49
2.5.2	Contingency Theory	49
2.5.3	Social Exchange Theory.....	50
2.5.4	Knowledge Gap Theory.....	51
2.5.5	Systems Theory.....	52
2.6	TYPES OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT	53
2.7	STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN THE INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN CUSTOMER SERVICES SETTINGS	57
2.7.1	Level 1 Strategies.....	58
2.7.2	Level 2 Strategies.....	60
2.7.3	Levels 3 Strategies.....	61
2.8	THE BENEFITS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.....	63
2.8.1	Benefits for Civil Society.....	63
2.8.2	Benefits for Municipalities.....	64
2.9	CONCLUSION.....	66

CHAPTER 3: INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1	INTRODUCTION	67
3.2	INTERNATIONAL, CONTINENTAL, AND REGIONAL STANDARDS AND CONVENTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT	67
3.2.1	International Association for Public Participation.....	69
3.2.2	The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.....	71
3.2.3	The Manila Declaration on the Involvement of people in Environmentally Sustainable Growth.....	72
3.2.4	World Bank Governance Surveys.....	72
3.2.5	United Cities And Local Government (UCLG)	74
3.2.6	World Governance Index.....	75
3.2.7	PUMA and OECD.....	75
3.2.8	Agenda 2063 and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation	76
3.2.9	African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM).....	78

3.2.10	Mo Ibrahim Foundation.....	78
3.2.11	Afro-Barometer	79
3.2.12	SADC Protocols.....	80
3.3	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN SELECTED COUNTRIES: UNCOVERING BEST PRACTICES	80
3.3.1	Case Study 1: United Kingdom	81
3.3.1.1	Government Ict Policy And Regulation Framework	81
3.3.1.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity	82
3.3.1.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement	83
3.3.2	Case Study 2: India	84
3.3.2.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulation Framework.....	84
3.3.2.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity.....	85
3.3.2.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement.....	86
3.3.3	Case Study 3: South Korea	88
3.3.3.1	Government ICT policy and regulation framework	88
3.3.3.2	Government initiatives to build public participation capacity.....	89
3.3.3.3	Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement.....	90
3.3.4	Case Study 4: Brazil.....	93
3.3.4.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulation Framework	94
3.3.4.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity.....	94
3.3.4.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement.....	96
3.3.5	Case Study 5: Ghana	96
3.3.5.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulation Framework	97
3.3.5.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity	98
3.3.5.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement.....	99
3.3.6	Case Study 6: Kenya.....	101
3.3.6.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulations	102
3.3.6.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity	103
3.3.6.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement.....	106
3.3.7	Case Study 7: Tanzania	107
3.3.7.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulations	108
3.3.7.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity	109
3.3.7.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement.....	110
3.3.8	Case Study 8: Botswana	111
3.3.8.1	Government Ict Policy and Regulations.....	111
3.3.8.2	Government Initiatives to build Public Participation Capacity	112
3.3.8.3	Best Practices pertaining to Stakeholder Involvement	114
3.4	SYNOPSIS OF INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICE AND A GAP ANALYSIS PERTAINING TO STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PRACTICES IN THE COE ..	115
3.5	LESSONS TO BE LEARNED FROM THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE	129
3.5.1	Essential Lessons for Local Government.....	131
3.5.2	Lessons for Stakeholders.....	132

3.6	CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS UNCOVERED FROM THE SELECTED CASES	134
3.6.1	Political Administrative System.....	134
3.6.2	Advancement Ict Infrastructure and Connectivity	135
3.6.3	Customer Oriented E-Government Services	136
3.6.4	One-Stop Shop Centres	136
3.7	CONCLUSION.....	136

CHAPTER 4: LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK GOVERNING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1	INTRODUCTION	138
4.2	THE LEGISLATIVE (STATUTORY) FRAMEWORK GUIDING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT	138
4.2.1	The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996	139
4.2.2	Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 177 of 1998.....	140
4.2.3	The Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000	142
4.2.4	Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000.....	144
4.2.5	Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000	145
4.2.6	Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003	146
4.2.7	The Traditional Leadership and Governance System Act 41 of 2003.....	147
4.2.8	Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004	148
4.2.9	Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005.....	148
4.3	REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND OFFICIAL PRESCRIPTS GUIDING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT	149
4.3.1	White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, 1994	150
4.3.2	White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997	151
4.3.3	White Paper on Local Government, 1998.....	154
4.3.4	Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001	156
4.3.5	The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS), 2000	157
4.3.6	African Charter for The Public Service, 2001	158
4.3.7	Municipal-Community Partnership Programme, 2004	159
4.3.8	Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS), 2009	160
4.3.9	Local Agenda 21.....	162
4.4	CONCLUSION.....	163

CHAPTER 5: THE STATUS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN STRENGTHENING CUSTOMER SERVICE IN THE CITY OF EKURHULENI: EMPERICAL FINDINGS

5.1	INTRODUCTION	164
5.2	RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	164
5.2.1	Target Population and Sampling	165
5.2.2	Data Collection Methods	166
5.2.2.1	Semi-Structured Interviews	167
5.2.3	Research Ethics	169
5.2.4	Research Limitations	170
5.3	Research Results: Analysis and Interpretation of Data	171
5.3.1	Results and Findings: Customer Care Area Managers	171
5.3.1.1	Section A: Demographical Profile of Participants	172
5.3.1.2	Section B: Stakeholder Involvement in the CoE	173
5.4	RESULTS AND FINDINGS: SAMPLED STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATIONS.....	184
5.4.1	Section A: Demographical Profile of Participants	185
5.4.2	Section B: The Role and Function of Stakeholders in Strengthening Customer Service.....	188
5.5	CONCLUSION.....	224

CHAPTER 6: SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: TOWARDS A STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT TO STRENGTHEN CUSTOMER SERVICE

6.1	INTRODUCTION	225
6.2	SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF STUDY OBJECTIVES.....	226
6.3	SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS.....	230
6.4	A STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT TO STRENGTHEN CUSTOMER SERVICE	232
6.4.1	Considerations and Recommendations for the Application of the Stakeholder Involvement Instrument.....	251
6.4.2	Control and Oversight Mechanisms.....	252
6.4.2.1	Online Digital Devices and Portals	252
6.4.2.2	Improve Communication to Disseminate Information	253
6.4.2.3	Openness, Accountability and Transparency	254
6.4.2.4	Open Council Meetings.....	255
6.4.2.5	Online Petition System	255
6.4.2.6	Co-Production	256

6.4.2.7 Use of Civic Education	256
6.5 PROPOSED CLASSIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS IN THE INSTRUMENTS TO STRENGTHEN CUSTOMER SERVICE.....	257
6.6 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT.....	258
6.6.1 Strengthen Communication with both Users and Consumers of Service	259
6.6.2 Conduct Stakeholder Profiling or Mapping Exercises.....	261
6.6.3 Allocate Adequate Resources for the Implementation of the Instrument	262
6.6.4 Monitor and Evaluate The Stakeholder Involvement Strategy.....	264
6.6.5 Clarify the Roles and Responsibilities of Support Departments in the Execution of the Strategy	264
6.6.6 Sharing Best Practice and Lessons Learned from other Metropolitan Municipalities.....	266
6.6.7 Establish Protocols for good Local Governance and Stakeholder Engagement	268
6.6.8 Establish Online Digital Platforms for Engagement	269
6.6.9 Create One-Stop Shop Centres to Facilitate Stakeholder Engagement	270
6.7 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY.....	271
6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH.....	272
6.9 CONCLUSION.....	274
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	276

LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Separation of politics and administration.....	24
Table 2.2: Doctrinal components of new public management (NPM)	30
Table 2.3: Functional dimension of good governance and their institutional arenas	33
Table 2.5: Types of citizen involvement	55
Table 3.1: Spectrum of public participation	70
Table 3.2: Comparative analysis between the CoE and selected countries on strategies pertaining to stakeholder involvement.....	117
Table 3.3: Best practices pertaining to ICT policy and regulation framework	120
Table 3.4: Best practices pertaining to the use of technology and e-government initiatives.....	124
Table 5.1: Years of experience in current position	191
Table 5.2: Percentage of experience of the participants	192
Table 6.1: Alignment of both research objectives and questions to the chapters of the study	234
Table 6.2: Typical pervasive impediments and concerns in strategic stakeholder engagement	251
Table 6.5: Proposed stakeholder involvement instrument budget template for allocation of resources	264
Table 6.6: Summary of roles and responsibilities from support departments in the execution of the proposed strategy	266

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.2: Different levels of stakeholder engagement and influence	57
Figure 4.1: Transformation priorities for service delivery	157
Figure 5.1: Draft stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE	226
Figure 6.1: Critical considerations on the structure, systems, processes and stakeholders in the strategic stakeholder involvement instrument	241
Figure 6.2: Strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE	242
Figure 6.3: Three classifications of stakeholders	257
Figure 6.4: Effective and productive communication technique to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics	261
Figure 6.5: Summary of the roles and functions of stakeholders in strengthening customer service	263
Figure 6.6: Framework to build on experience, best practice and theory.....	269

LIST OF GRAPHS

Graph 3.1: Public participation structures within the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development	99
Graph 5.1: Strengthening customer service	193
Graph 5.2: Impact of non-participation on customer service	194
Graph 5.3: Involvement as municipal responsibility	197
Graph 5.4: CoE's level of stakeholder contact	200
Graph 5.5: Success in maintaining working relationship with stakeholders	201
Graph 5.6: Information regarding meetings and other outreach programmes.....	204
Graph 5.7: Partnerships for customer service	205
Graph 5.8: Involvement of stakeholders in CoE affairs	207
Graph 5.9: Effectiveness of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service	208
Graph 5.10: Involvement of stakeholders in decision-making processes	210

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AG	:	African Government
AMA	:	Accra Metropolitan Assembly
APO	:	African People Organisation
APRM	:	African Peer Review Mechanism
BCRA	:	Botswana Communication and Regulatory Authority
BERR	:	Business Economic Regulatory Reform
BPS	:	Business Process System
CBO	:	Community-Based Organisation
CCA	:	Customer Care Area
CCAM	:	Customer Care Area Managers
CCC	:	Customer Care Centre
CDS	:	Community Development Society
CoE	:	City of Ekurhuleni
COGTA	:	Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs
CRM	:	Customer Relations Management
DEMS	:	Department of Emergency Services
ECA	:	Economic Commission for Africa
EGDB	:	Economic Growth and Development Bill
EMIS	:	Education Management Information System
EPP	:	E-Payment Portal
FBO	:	Faith-Based Organisation
FnWG	:	Forum for New World Governance
GoB	:	Government of Botswana
GoG	:	Government of Ghana
GoK	:	Government of Kenya
IAPP	:	International Association for Public Participation
IEPP	:	International European for Public Participation
ICT	:	Information and Communication Technology
IDeA	:	Improvement and Development Agency
IGRTC	:	Intergovernmental Relations Technical Committee
ISODE	:	Integrated Social Development

ISRDS	:	Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy
ITAX	:	Integrated Taxation Management System
LGA	:	Local Government Association
LGR	:	Local Government Reforms
LGTAS	:	Local Government Turnaround Strategy
LAIFOMS	:	Local Authority Financial Operations Management System
MDA	:	Ministries Department and Agencies
M&E	:	Monitoring and Evaluation
MIF	:	Municipal Intergovernmental Forum
MIF	:	Mo Ibrahim Foundation
MCP	:	Municipal Community Partnerships
MoICT	:	Ministry of Information and Communication Technology
MoTeCH	:	Mobile Technology Community Health
NCIA	:	National Computing and Information Agency
NEPAD	:	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	:	Non-Governmental Organisations
NPM	:	New Public Management
NPFPP	:	National Policy Framework on Public Participation
OECD	:	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OGP	:	Open Government Partnership
PEEPA	:	Public Enterprise Evaluations and Privatisation Agency
PMIS	:	Project Management Information System
PRS	:	Poverty Reduction Strategy
RDP	:	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SADC	:	South African Development Community
SMME	:	Small Medium Micro Enterprise
SONA	:	State of Nation Address
TBT	:	Tanzania Beyond Tomorrow
TaGLA	:	Tanzania Global Learning Agency
UNA	:	United Nations Agencies
UCLG	:	United Cities and Local Government
UN-PAAERD	:	United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery
VCV	:	Central Vigilante Commission

VDC	:	Village Development Committees
WSMIS	:	Water Sector Management Information System
WPLG	:	White Paper on Local Government
WPTPS	:	White Paper for Transforming Public Service
WCIT	:	World Congress on Information Technology
WGI	:	World Government Index

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 ORIENTATION

Stakeholder involvement is commonly regarded as an essential ingredient of a healthy democracy (Tau, 2013:154). According to Pratchett and Wilson (1996:46), local democracy entails the allocation and distribution of public goods according to the preferences and needs of communities. The key element of local democracy is participation. Participation is about empowering communities to actively participate in the realisation of their well-being and prosperity (Edbon, 2002:275). For grassroots democracy to succeed, citizens have to be given some role in the processes associated with a democracy. This role is usually embedded in national legislation and the utilisation of various participation structures in accordance with the political culture of a municipality (Van der Waldt, 2010). Local democracy denotes a political system in which the eligible people participate actively, not only in determining who governs them, but also in shaping the policy output of their government (Reddy, 1996:52). King and Stoker (1996:45), Lutz and Linder (2002:6) and Van der Waldt (2010:18) reason that the maintenance of a healthy democratic dispensation is dependent on a variety of issues.

Some of these issues include the level of political representation, general knowledge of the community regarding local government affairs, the attitude of public officials regarding community participation and the institutionalisation of community participation in municipal structures. A local community typically comprises various groupings or segments such as local businesses; small, medium and macro enterprises; youth organisations, faith-based organisations, taxi associations, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations (Van der Waldt, 2019:8). All of these represent key stakeholders for municipalities. For these stakeholders, some of the benefits of involvement include the opportunity to communicate their needs, aspirations and priority concerns and as such, contribute to decision-making processes in municipal councils. For municipalities, the benefits of stakeholder involvement include compliance with statutory obligations, improved

dissemination of local governance-related information to communities and tapping into local knowledge systems (State Government Victoria, 2011:2). Additionally, Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201) assert that the continuous involvement of communities as stakeholders are essential for developing mutual trust and building legitimacy and accountability in local government. Moreover, Dawkins (2014:284) observes that in order to distribute the benefits of any organisation fairly, substantive input from stakeholders is vital, suggesting that stakeholder involvement should be at the centre of operations in local government. Stakeholder engagement can create better communication, build trust and enhance overall service delivery outcomes (Department of Health and Human Services, 2011:3). Involvement generally contributes to a stronger civil society and fosters more community-oriented local development. Involvement has also been recognised as one of the key instruments used by municipalities to promote and strengthen participatory local governance. It generally enables citizens to express their wishes on local issues, thereby promoting popular participation in local governance (Reddy, 1996:5). Thus, stakeholder involvement intersects closely with public participation, which can be understood as the "two-way exchange of governance-related information" (Molepo *et al.*, 2015:346). However, as a construct for scholarly inquiry, stakeholder involvement differs from the broader notion of 'community participation' in that it is far more targeted, structured, specific and issue focused (NPFPP, 2007:48). Stakeholder involvement also contributes to the creation of community solidarity since citizens usually take ownership of local affairs and feel more involved in matters relevant to their welfare.

According to Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:199), when communities as key stakeholders of municipalities become more involved in local affairs, it generally leads to more effective planning and better-informed policy and by-law formulation. As such, it generally leads to improved customer service. In the South African context, (Reddy, 1996: XI) maintains that civil society movements kept the "tradition of democratic governance alive and functioned as bulwark against former political and civil oppression". With the advent of democracy in 1994 and the promulgation of various legislation related to local government, it became evident that stakeholder involvement is central to the government's agenda of inclusive governance. Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996, for example, compels local, district and metropolitan municipalities to continuously engage local communities as

key stakeholders in local affairs. It has further become apparent that the success and overall performance of municipalities will be measured against the quality and level of stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, South Africa has been a constitutional and democratic society in which its constitution was the fundamental guarantee of democratic principles and human rights (Smit and Oosthuizen, 2011:55). The primary objectives of the Constitution are grounded in protecting the civil rights of citizens on the one hand and on the other, ensuring that government authority is not exercised arbitrarily, but rather follows fixed principles (Gildenhuys and Knipe, 2006:6). As a democratic state, the country was thus founded upon values such as human dignity, non-racialism, non-sexism, the supremacy of the constitution and the rule of law. In the context of local government, this means that:

- Municipalities should not be allowed to exercise discretionary powers that are too wide and unrestrained.
 - Municipalities should not be allowed to act in an arbitrary manner.
 - All citizens should be equal under the law.
 - Judiciary institutions should function independently of local authorities and magistrates should act as independent guardians to ensure that the rights and freedoms of individuals are respected.
- (Gildenhuys, 1991:125)

The notion of bringing 'government to the people' was important not only in strengthening civil society, but also for mobilising the population to implement the programme of reconciliation and development necessary to transform civil society (Fourie, 2001:216). Stakeholder organisations like community-based organisations (CBOs) and civil society organisations are some of the structures through which local democracy can be actively promoted (Muronda, 2017:29). Similarly, stakeholder involvement can be achieved through the application of effective communication (Sebola, 2017:26). This argument is further underscored by scholars such as Street (2001), Savigny (2002) and McNair (2003) when they argue that there is a close interrelationship between politics, communication and local democracy. In a democracy, political communication is at the epicentre of the collection of political-relevant information and the emergence of proposals for legislative action (Powell and

Cowart, 2003:3). Accordingly, to promote and maintain such an interrelationship on the local government level requires comprehensive communication strategies, which include the utilisation of various mechanisms and structures to facilitate the flow of information between citizens and local government structures (Fletcher, 1999:125; Savigny, 2006:6). According to Smith and Ansett (2011:5), stakeholder involvement refers to an innovative approach to government communication which focuses on dialogue with civil society, pressure groups, lobby groups, unions, charitable associations and other community stakeholder organisations. In this case, involvement means a high level of two-way interaction between the municipality and the public. The involvement of stakeholder organisations in matters of local government is aimed at harnessing participatory governance and deepening local democracy between the state and civil society movements. It can be argued that before 1994, limited democratic structures advocated for the involvement of communities to participate in local government affairs (Van der Waladt, 2014:20). However, the transition from the political system of Apartheid to the democratisation of South Africa gave rise to a plethora of legislation and various policy initiatives which embrace the spirit of active citizenry that is in line with the advancement of constitutional reform. The transition from a policy of separate development to democracy has significantly transformed the evolution of civil society movements.

Currently, all citizens enjoy an array of human, voting and property rights coupled with the government's commitment to promoting participatory governance (Muronda, 2017:25). A theoretical framework for scientific inquiry into stakeholder involvement is generally informed by a range of meta-theoretical and theoretical approaches. The theoretical foundation of stakeholder engagement can primarily be traced to stakeholder theory, which was made popular by Freeman in 1984 (Parma *et al.*, 2010:404). Stakeholder theory was initially developed to guide the behaviour of business managers but is also applicable to all types of organisations, including local government (Shabangu and Oskuitycz, 2018:199). Other pertinent mid-level theories that will be explored for the purposes of this study are contingency theory, social exchange theory and knowledge gap theory. The grand theoretical framework that will be applied is systems theory. Contingency theory is one of the theories that foster local democracy. Van der Waladt (2010:20) opines that this theory refers to several management theories that are influenced by both the internal and external

environments of organisations that influence decision-making in government institutions. Furthermore, the author argues that the process of democracy has influential effects on both internal and external impediments to the municipality and its subsystems. Social exchange theory argues that the major force in interpersonal relationships is the satisfaction of all people's self-interests. Michener (2004) posits that all human interactions are formed by the use of a subjective cost benefits analysis and the comparison of alternatives. To wit, as Van der Waladt (2017) postulates, this implies that when citizens perceive that the cost of relationships outweigh the perceived benefits, the theory predicts that the citizenry will choose to leave the relationship (thus, not taking part in the democratic process). Social exchange theory encompasses a wide range of social aspects such as how societies influence change and adapt to their surroundings (Muronda, 2017:30). Knowledge gap theory, according to Van der Waladt (2010:25), is applicable in studies that focus on potential 'gaps' between people of lower economic status and government institutions. In the context of local democracy, it implies that municipalities should take cognisance of the fact that people of higher socioeconomic status get their information in a different way than lower-educated people. To put it differently, education level or socioeconomic status makes a difference in knowledge acquisition, an issue which is worthwhile to consider in the developing context of South Africa.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT

The new democratic dispensation ushered in by the 1994 election introduced the notion of 'people-centred development'. The principles of people-centred development were advocated by the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) (1994:2) and formulated as "the building blocks of development, public participation, social learning, empowerment and sustainability". In sum, participatory governance was promoted as an instrument to overcome the legacy of separate development (Davids *et al.*, 2014:18). However, it became apparent that these ideals were hampered by several factors including poor service delivery, corruption, maladministration, inefficiency and ineffective stakeholder involvement practices. This state of affairs generally resulted in mainly local governments in South Africa finding it difficult to maintain healthy relationships with local communities (Shabangu and Oskiutycz, 2018:199). This, in turn, leads to legitimacy challenges for municipal councils. The

resultant waves of violent protest action and a lack of public involvement have received much media prominence over the past two decades. South African municipalities have continued to witness militant service delivery protests, a lack of stakeholder involvement and low levels of public satisfaction with the state of local government and poor customer service delivery in the country. Civil society organisations consistently continue to caution municipal councils about the administrative lapses that cripple the ability of local government to deliver services to its citizenry. The lack of stakeholder involvement in the decision-making processes, policy agenda setting, and policy implementation has, therefore, been seen as one of the main impediments to the acceleration of service delivery (Davids *et al.*, 2014:18; Shabangu and Oskiutycz, 2018:199). Moreover, according to the State of Local Government reports (CoGTA, 2009:4), some of the impediments facing local governments are the lack of strategic stakeholder involvement and positive engagement with communities. According to Gwayi (2010), one of the key challenges to customer service in South African municipalities is inadequate stakeholder involvement in decision-making. Maseko (2018:57) also argues that most stakeholder groupings, including ward committees, have "abdicated their responsibility of harnessing participatory governance at local government level due to lack of trust in councils". In addition, the Public Information and Communications Service (2013) maintains that inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making and policy implementation continues to affect the delivery of services in South African municipalities.

In South Africa, municipalities are categorised by the Constitution, 1996. Category A municipalities refer to metropolitan municipalities (metros) with exclusive municipal executive and legislative authority in their areas. There are currently eight of these in South Africa, namely Johannesburg, Tshwane, Ekurhuleni (Gauteng); eThekweni (Kwazulu /Natal), the City of Cape Town (Western Cape), Nelson Mandela Bay (Eastern Cape), Mangaung Metropolitan Municipality (Free State) and Buffalo City (East London). As a Category A municipality, the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (CoE) has developed a new governance model which is premised upon the principle of separation of power between the legislative and the executive arms of government. Under this principle, the legislature (i.e., the council) will be responsible for law-making, oversight and public participation. The Speaker is the head of the legislative arm of the council and presides at council meetings. Part of the Speaker's

responsibility is to ensure that the council meets to ensure compliance with the code of conduct for councillors. The Speaker also has a coordination and management role in respect of 112 ward committees and other Section 79 committees. As such, the Speaker is the primary role player as far as the promotion of stakeholder involvement is concerned (Item A-CORP 145-2011:8). The CoE has also adopted a new customer-service delivery approach, which was first launched as a pilot project at five customer care centres in 2004. Through this approach, the vision is that the CoE will become a 'caring government' that places the community at the centre of service delivery. In 2007, the final project was rolled out to accommodate a total of twenty customer care centres. This was followed by the organisation's need for a 'one-stop-shop' multi-service approach and single points of entry for customer queries and complaints. The idea was to provide a more dynamic and complete positive customer experience, underpinned by the concept of 'bringing government closer to the people. Through this approach, the customer care area managers were mandated to coordinate customer services at their respective customer care centres (Item A-CORP 117-2010). The following customer service standards are expected at all its customer care centres:

- Appropriate signage displayed to ensure easy access to our facilities.
- You will be received by informed and responsive staff.
- We will identify who is serving you and who is in charge.
- We will inform you of the services available.
- We will endeavour to answer 90% [of] our telephone [calls] within five (5) rings.
- We will endeavour to acknowledge 90% of your email[s] received within two (2) working days.
- We will attend to all complaints by keeping proper records and ensuring that you receive feedback on all concerns raised with us; and
- We will apologise where we have made mistakes. (Item A-CORP 117-2010).

The current situation with the customer centres in the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) is that its Customer Relations Management (CRM) departments monitor the service delivery performance of other departments by ensuring that they comply with council-approved customer service standards. However, in terms of the Customer Management Strategy, the focus was to rationalise all existing customer contact points such as walk-in centres, call centres and online contact centres—to form a uniform and seamless customer interface. Such interface capacity is necessary to consolidate all customer-interfacing departments to operate under the umbrella of the CRM departments. The establishment of such a common approach and capacity remains a significant challenge. Some key responsibilities of call centre services still resort under the Department of Emergency Services (DEMS) and the Customer Relations Management Department. Challenges associated with developing a uniform stakeholder involvement models and customer service strategy include the following:

- The current Customer Relations Operating Model is perceived not to be compatible with the needs of customers and organisations;
- Current praxis does not make adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in municipal decisions;
- Information technology systems are not integrated and do not support a new customer orientation and electronic customer interfacing channels;
- Different departments, centres, and units within the CoE have different organisational cultures and follow a variety of stakeholder involvement and customer care principles, approaches, and etiquette; and
- Different management teams pursue different customer interfacing protocols.

The information presented above points to a dysfunctional state of affairs insofar as the strengthening of customer service is concerned. Hence, the main problem is that the CoE requires a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for promoting customer service. Such an instrument will help to continuously engage with citizens, businesses and community groups as well as assisting customer care centres to make provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions. The instrument will further assist in obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions; to communicate the

outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders, promote joint ownership of municipal challenges and establish a common developmental vision for the city (cf. Draai and Taylor, 2009:114).

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Considering the above orientation and problem statement, the following research questions will guide the scholarly inquiry into the stated problem:

- What is the nature of the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and what are appropriate principles, models and approaches to guide scholarly inquiry into these constructs?
- What could be learnt from international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and what are best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument?
- What are the statutory and regulatory stipulations and official prescripts that govern stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa?
- What are the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular?
- What are the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE?
- What are the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city?
- Which dimensions and aspects should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for the strengthening of customer services in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular?

1.4 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The primary objective of this study is to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer services in the CoE. In order to operationalise this primary objective, the following secondary objectives are formulated:

- To explore meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and to identify appropriate principles, models and approaches for scholarly inquiry into these constructs.
- To gain international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and to uncover best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument.
- To analyse the statutory and regulatory framework that governs stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa.
- To determine and analyse the challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular.
- To investigate the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE.
- To analyse the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city.
- To design a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for the strengthening of customer services in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.

1.5 CENTRAL THEORETICAL STATEMENTS

Stakeholder involvement is an essential ingredient for effective local democracy (Tau, 2013:154). Draai and Taylor (2009:114) state that stakeholder involvement in local government entails engagement in decision-making processes and partnerships in the implementation of municipal programmes and projects. In this way, stakeholders

become co-owners of local development initiatives and share in the benefits of socioeconomic development. Dawkins (2014:284) also observes that to distribute the benefits of any organisation fairly, substantive input from stakeholders is vital, thereby suggesting that stakeholder involvement should be at the centre of operations in local government. Stakeholder involvement or engagement can create better communication, build trust and enhance overall service delivery outcomes (Department of Health & Human Services, 2011:3). As consumers and end-users of municipal services, stakeholders expect value for money, affordable services as well as courteous and responsive customer services. Hence, stakeholder organisations in local governance such as business enterprises, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations should become partners in decision-making and the prioritisation and mobilisation of municipal resources for development. Smith and Ansett (2011:5) contend that stakeholder involvement in local government represents a new paradigm for government engagement with citizens. It focuses on continuous interaction and positive dialogue with civil society, pressure groups and other community stakeholders. Such involvement should promote customer service by fostering high-level, two-way engagement between the municipality and the community. Stakeholder involvement can be regarded as a primary focal point for the community participation process but is far more targeted, structured, specific and issue-focused (NPFPP, 2007:48). Section 152 of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1996 compels local governments to involve community organisations in local governance matters. In addition, the White Paper on Local Government, 1998 requires active participation by citizens.

As voters, the idea is to ensure maximum democratic accountability by the elected political leadership. As citizens, the community should be able to express their views via different participation mechanisms to ensure that municipal policies reflect community preferences as far as possible. The White Paper on Local Government, 1998 further stipulates that building local democracy is a significant function of local government; hence, municipalities should develop strategies and mechanisms to continuously engage with citizens, businesses, and community groups. In this regard, the NPFPP (2007:9) proposes that forums should be established to allow stakeholder groupings to initiate municipal policies and/or influence policy formulation. Such forums should also promote their involvement in the monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

of municipal programmes and projects. The NPFPP (2007:9) further proposes that structured stakeholder involvement should be promoted by encouraging stakeholders to participate in certain council committees, in particular, those that are issue orientated. Wang and Wan Wart (2007:266) emphasise that involving municipal stakeholders leads to improved local governance. Stakeholder involvement is considered essential to the success of a local government (Shabangu and Oksiutycz, 2018:199).

1.6 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher an opportunity to explore and understand the meaning that individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Secondly, this approach was preferred because it enables the researcher to collect data in the field at the site where the participants experience the issue or problem under study (i.e., stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service). Du Toit *et al.* (2002:421) support this notion when they argue that qualitative research helps the researcher to understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. The goal of understanding a phenomenon from the participants' points of view and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified. Moreover, a qualitative approach was followed precisely because the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures, data typically being collected in the participant's setting and data analysis that is conducted by inductively building from particulars to general themes (Creswell, 2014:4). The qualitative research approach is also preferred since it will allow the participants an opportunity to express themselves on issues pertaining to stakeholder involvement in the CoE. Equally so, the quantitative approach was chosen for this study because it is associated with analytical research and its purpose is to arrive at a universal, verified statement (Mouton, 1996:128). A literature review will be conducted in this study to comprehend the implications of the lack of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service.

1.6.1 Literature review

Fink (2014:12) refers to a literature review as "a critical summary and assessment of the range of existing materials dealing with knowledge and understanding in a given field". This view is shared by Flick (2018) who writes that a literature review surveys books, scholarly articles and any other sources relevant to a particular issue, area of research or theory and by so doing, provides a description, summary and critical evaluation of these works in relation to the research problem being investigated. The literature review forms a basis and integral part of the research project. Bertram and Christiansen (2014:13) state that a literature review "puts a research study into context of previous research by showing how it fits into a particular field". According to Mouton (2009:86), reviewing a body of scholarship refers to the researcher being interested in a whole range of research products that have been produced by other scholars. Welman and Kruger (1999:35) support this notion when they argue that compiling a literature review should not consist of a mere compilation of separated and isolated summaries of the individual studies of a chosen topic that have already been published, since researchers may become aware of such gaps and weaknesses that may justify further enquiry. In this instance, the researcher should clearly indicate where their proposed study fits in. According to Fink (2010:3), a research literature review is a systematic, explicit and reproductive method for identifying, evaluating and synthesising the existing body of completed and recorded work produced by researchers, scholars and practitioners. To enhance the validity and reliability of the study, it is extremely important for the researcher to ensure that a related literature survey is conducted to assist in

- providing a detailed and comprehensive background to the identified problem to be researched;
- allowing the researcher to craft a theoretical and conceptual framework that will allow him or her to collect data and analyse it; and
- enabling the researcher to examine the primary information gathered from focus group interviews against the secondary information from scholarly articles i.e., academic books, journals, local government publications, articles and the local government legislation and policies—in order to inform the findings of the study.

A review of the relevant literature will be conducted for the researcher to gain an understanding of the theories, typologies, principles and approaches to local government stakeholders, customer service and stakeholder involvement. The researcher will make use of scholarly texts, journals and official local government publications and reports. The literature review will cover aspects of researching organisations and their role in strengthening customer service pertaining to the CoE. This study will incorporate aspects of the barriers and hindrances faced by stakeholder organisations in an attempt to strengthen customer service. The literature review will cover research on former studies, to provide recommendations aimed at improving stakeholder involvement. In this study, primary literature will be used as the meta-foundations of this research. Meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings as well as principles and dimensions of stakeholder involvement and customer orientation within the context of local government will be reviewed. Statutory and regulatory frameworks governing municipal obligations regarding stakeholder involvement and customer orientation were analysed and summarised within the applicable conceptual categories.

1.6.1.1 Databases consulted

The following databases, among others, have been consulted to ascertain the availability of material for this research study:

- a) *NRF Catalogue of Theses and Dissertations of South African Universities*
- b) *Emerald Insight*
- c) *Jstor*
- d) *Google Scholar*
- e) *Sabinet*
- f) *Researchgate*
- g) *Academia*

1.6.2 Empirical investigation

In this study, qualitative approach will be used with the potential to produce more valid research outcomes.

1.6.2.1 Case study design

The CoE was used as a case study for this investigation. According to Goddard and Melville (2001:9), a case study approach enables the researcher to study a phenomenon in its day-to-day environment and gather information about real-life experiences. Welman and Kruger (1999:65) support this assertion when they argue that in case study design, research is directed at understanding the "uniqueness and idiosyncrasy of a particular case in all its complexity". The units of analysis embedded in this case study are customer care centres and stakeholder organisations interacting with these centres.

1.6.2.2 Target population and sampling

According to McMillian and Schumacher (2001:164), one of the critical steps in designing qualitative research is to choose a sample. For this study, two target populations are relevant; namely, managers of customer care centres at CoE (N=20) and a representative sample of stakeholder organisations that interact with these centres including CBOs, NGOs; small, medium and macro enterprises (SMMEs); faith-based organisations (FBOs) and sports organisations. A total of eighteen (18) of these organisations will be randomly sampled. Semi-structured interviews will be conducted with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$). The customer care centres are Tsakane CCC, Germiston CCC, Kwa-Thema CCC, Springs CCC, Tembisa 2 CCC and Kempton Park CCC. These managers are purposively sampled since they are well conversant in and have appropriate experience with the challenges facing stakeholders. Purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices about which people, groups or objects to include in a sample (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014:60). It is regarded as an important kind of non-probability sampling where researchers rely on their experience, ingenuity and/or previous research findings (Welman and Kruger, 1999:63; Maseko, 2018:42). Interviews will be conducted in accordance with the the COVID-19 safety protocols and policies of the City of Ekurhuleni. In addition, semi-structured interviews will be conducted with randomly sampled representatives of eighteen (18) stakeholder organisations, thus representing three organisations per customer care centre. The sample of the study will include three (3) stakeholder organisations randomly sampled from six (6) main

stakeholder grouping types of the City of Ekurhuleni, namely CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs FBOs and sports organisations.

1.6.2.3 Data collection

In this study, the researcher utilised a literature review as a point of departure. The literature review uncovered gaps in knowledge and pinpointed areas that should further be probed through an empirical investigation. Permission was obtained from the 'gatekeepers' at the CoE to carry out the study (i.e., the Office of the Speaker and the Office of the City Manager). An interview schedule was then compiled (based on the literature review) and piloted (pre-tested) with three managers. Thereafter, the researcher made appointments with the selected managers and conducted the interviews in accordance with scientific conventions and COVID-19 protocols. These interviews were conducted after hours in order to minimise any inconvenience to the functioning of these managers.

1.6.2.4 Data analysis

Data were analysed by probing the challenges and barriers faced by stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in the CoE. The responses of the participants (i.e., interviews) were coded and thematically analysed. *ATLAS.ti 8* was utilised for these purposes and the scientific conventions for data analysis were adhered to, as outlined by McMillian and Schumacher (2001:364).

1.7 RESEARCH ETHICS

The ethics of science concerns what is perceived to be 'wrong or right' in the conduct of the researcher. According to Mouton (2009:240), scientific research is a form of human conduct. It follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values. Furthermore, Welman and Kruger (1999:181) indicate that various ethical considerations come into play at three stages of a research project:

- when participants are recruited;

- during the intervention and/or the measurement procedure to which they are subjected; and
- in the release of the results obtained.

For this study, the researcher obtained written permission to conduct the study within the customer relations management component of the CoE and obtained written consent from respondents to participate in the survey. Participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Furthermore, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained, and the conventions and protocols of the Ethics Committee of North-West University were fully complied with.

1.8 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to the body of knowledge on the effective involvement of stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. The study further highlights the barriers and impediments faced by stakeholder organisations in trying to strengthen customer service and provides recommendations aimed at improving stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making. The study's key contribution is the development of a new strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE. Although the locus of this study is the CoE, information from this study is not only useful to the CoE, but also to other municipalities across South Africa that can use it as a learning experience.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Limitations may negatively affect the empirical findings of any study. This study utilised a case study design and such findings cannot be generalised to all municipalities in the country. However, the strategic instrument to strengthen customer service that will be designed as the main contribution of the study is generic in nature and as such, applicable to comparable municipalities. In addition, the empirical investigation is confined to the responses of particular units of analysis, namely the customer area managers (CCAs) and stakeholder organisations in the identified customer care

centres (CCCs) of the CoE. Due to limited resources such as time, finance and logistics, the focus of enquiry was limited only to six of the twenty customer care centres in the CoE.

1.10 CHAPTER LAYOUT

This study is composed of six chapters. The typical structure or layout of the proposed study is detailed below.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter introduces the topic; it contains the background and orientation of the study, the research problem, and objectives. The research methodology and research design that were applied in the study is discussed.

Chapter 2: Theories, typologies, principles and approaches to local government stakeholders, customer service and stakeholder involvement.

This chapter provides a review of the existing literature on the theoretical framework of stakeholder involvement. Thus, the various theories of stakeholder involvement were explored. The chapter also focuses on the methods and benefits of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in government.

Chapter 3: International perspective on stakeholder involvement in local government

This chapter explains the international perspective on fostering stakeholder involvement in local government. Best practices for stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches are extracted. These serve as benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in CoE can be gauged.

Chapter 4: Legislative and regulatory framework governing stakeholder involvement in local government

This chapter focuses on the statutory and regulatory obligations of local government regarding community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement in South Africa.

Chapter 5: The status of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in the CoE: Empirical findings

This chapter covers the qualitative research approach, design, research type and research paradigm, and trustworthiness is outlined. The chapter also presents the empirical findings of the study. In addition, data gathered from the sample are presented and analysed.

Chapter 6: Summary and Recommendations: Towards a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service

The purpose of this chapter is two-fold. Firstly, the chapter summarises the study. Secondly, a strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE is presented. Lastly, the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study are presented.

CHAPTER 2

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND CUSTOMER SERVICE IN GOVERNANCE SETTINGS: A THEORETICAL EXPOSITION

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter presented and stated the orientation and problem statement, research questions and study goals as well as a short outline of this study's research method. In an attempt to crystalise the second research objective, this chapter reviews the relevant literature, particularly, theories, typologies, principles, and the approaches incorporated by local government stakeholders and customer service to ensure stakeholder involvement. The literature review provides a context for the study and demonstrated the necessity and relevance of the study. The rationale of a literature review is to allow the researcher to understand the current state of affairs regarding the proposed enquiry. The literature review forms an essential and integral part of the research project. According to Brynard and Hanekom (2006:31–34), a comparative literature survey exposes the researcher to a magnitude of data from which to select the most vital references. Furthermore, Bless *et al.* (2006:9–27) and Mouton (2001:86) outline the relevance of an analogous literature survey method. Both authors confirm that this type of literature survey generally assists in:

- sharpening and deepening the theoretical framework of the research;
- guarding against duplication of previous research and saving time;
- helping the researcher to become acquainted with the latest developments in the area of research as well as in related areas;
- identifying key analytical concepts and definitions as a point of departure;
- identifying gaps in the knowledge as well as weaknesses in previous studies;
- identifying the most appropriate research methods and showing why they worked;
- discovering links, contradictions or other relations between different research results, case studies and applications; and

- allowing the researcher to be exposed to other researchers' problem statements, hypotheses, points of departure, results and recommendations (in this regard, a thesis is of special value) previous results or recommendations act as a starting point for new research.

In addition, Welman and Kruger (1999:34) reason that by compiling a review of research findings already published on a particular topic, researchers may become aware of inconsistencies and gaps which may justify further research. Such a review allows researchers to indicate exactly where their proposed enquiry fits in. However, if its relation to the body of knowledge is evident and it achieves greater importance, it may persuade other researchers also to research the particular topic. For this reason, the researcher reviewed the literature survey related to this study so that a foundation can be found to support the research. Accordingly, a literature review has placed the inquiry into a particular point of view and provides direction to the present research. Neuman (in De Vos, 2002:129) supports this assertion by acknowledging that a robust literature review places a research inquiry in a particular context. It shows that the researcher has identified gaps in knowledge and that the proposed study would meet a demonstrated need. The main aim of this chapter is to conduct a robust literature review for the development of a comprehensive conceptual and theoretical framework on stakeholder involvement as a central construct of this study. It is also necessary to locate stakeholder involvement as a potential strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in local government settings. For this purpose, the chapter will trace the paradigmatic development of public administration to explore the nature and dimensions of customer service in government. It will also trace its meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings to determine its main principles and approaches. Furthermore, the chapter will locate the significance of stakeholder involvement within the customer service domain. The notions and conceptions of customer orientation and stakeholder engagement in public service that are inclusive of local government and how they have evolved from the early ages of the paradigmatic development of public administration are analysed.

2.2 TOWARDS A CUSTOMER ORIENTATION IN GOVERNMENT: TRACING THE CHRONICLES OF PARADIGMATIC DEVELOPMENT

Several systemic changes in the organisation and management of the public sector have become evident over time. These changes were mainly brought about by the complexities of political dynamics, socioeconomic growth, information technology and globalisation (Ludwiczak, 2014:356). A substantial increase in society's knowledge and demands for effective public institutions is especially evident, forcing these institutions to shift towards a performance orientation and to initiate steps to move away from their bureaucratic practices toward an outward-looking public administration that aims to improve the quality of life of its citizens (Ludwiczak, 2014:356). Increasingly, citizens demand a more effective administration to replace ineffective and wasteful bureaucracies. This brought about new co-modes of delivering public services that involve civil society and the utilisation of more business-like approaches. In this respect, Hughes (2003:27) argues that there is a general trend towards advocating for more client or customer-oriented approaches. Such approaches should make provision for the decentralisation of authority and the adoption of a business orientation. These trends are intended to catalyse government productivity and effectiveness geared towards a far more responsive and effective public administration. Proposed new business-like approaches were perceived to be more beneficial for public administrations by making them more outcomes-based, results-oriented and focused on clients' expectations (Katsamunski, 2012:78). To assess the chronological development of the trends briefly summarised above, it is necessary to investigate the paradigmatic development of public administration in general. Owing to the focus of this study, it is essential to reflect on the development of customer orientation by involving stakeholders in government decision-making processes.

2.2.1 The pre-generation paradigm

The practice of public administration can be said to be as old as the earliest civilisations formed by humankind. The history of ancient civilisations and kingdoms reveals many generic administrative practices commonly applied in contemporary statehoods (Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:20). To make sense of the paradigmatic development

of the study of public administration, Jordaan (2013:24) proposes that the history of public administration in relation to global events and environmental factors should be studied in three main phases, namely the pre-, first- and second-generational phases. The work of prominent philosophers like Plato, Aristotle and Machiavelli can be included in the first phase, also labelled the 'embryonic stage' (Jordaan, 2013:24). This phase primarily focuses on the moral and political concerns of the administration of the state in fulfilling society's needs, aspirations and desires. The formalisation of the study of public administration became evident during the 18th century in the western world. Evidence of this can be traced to the early training programmes of the German *Kameralwissenschaft*, which is the German word for the 'science of administration'. The Prussian universities of Halle and Frankfurt an der Oder commenced with training for state administration officials in 1727 (Lindenfeld, cited in Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:20).

2.2.2 The first-generation paradigm

The first-generational paradigm generally entails the work of a prominent German scholar, Lorenz Von Stein in 1855. Von Stein is commonly regarded as one of the pioneers of public administration in the western world (Jordaan, 2013:25). Von Stein regarded public administration as an applied science, incorporating various study fields such as sociology, political science, and administrative law. A defining characteristic of the first-generational paradigm is the idea that politics and the administrative functions of government should be separated (Basheka, 2012:35). This idea sparked a debate on how the relationship between politics and administration should be managed. In the United States of America, then President Woodrow Wilson supported this idea by arguing that there should be a clear distinction between politics and administration (Masuku and Jili, 2019:307). In 1887, Woodrow Wilson offered an 'administrative directive' for the study of public administration with his article titled "The Study of Administration". His main argument was that to strengthen the progress of effectiveness and efficiency in governance settings there had to be a separation of power. Mubangizi and Tshisong (2013:307) maintain that these ideas merged into a generally accepted paradigm advocating that civil servants should not interfere in political decision-making processes but rather, should only advise policymakers on technical matters. Van der Walldt (2001:118) refers to the non-participation of civil servants in political processes as the "doctrine of neutrality" of the public service.

Mboto (2005:15) also asserts that political party dependence is a major impediment that continues to plague public administrations. Table 2.1 below outlines the key differences between politics and administration as held by first-generational scholars.

Table 2.1: Separation of politics and administration

Politics	Administration
Deals primarily with political questions.	Deals primarily with business questions.
Deals with the “expression of the will of the people”.	Deals with the “execution of the will of the people”.
Deals with politicians and ‘plays the politics of the politician’.	Deals with public civil servants/ technocrats and plays the politics of the administration.
One becomes a politician through either positive or negative popularity.	One becomes a public civil servant through one’s intelligence, experience and qualifications.
Prior training is not given to politicians and their qualifications are of low standing.	Public civil servants are professionals in various fields.
Power is the centre of study in politics, i.e., the process of capturing and retaining power.	The central focus is running an administration successfully, effectively and efficiently.
Approve policies.	Implement policies.
Tell naked lies.	Dress their lies with technicalities.
Survive by talking loudly.	Survive by writing a great deal.
Rarely have a code of ethics	Governed by ethical conduct.

Source: Basheka (2012:35–36).

The distinctive dichotomy between politics and public administration—as advocated by first-generational theorists—continues to play a significant role in contemporary public administration.

2.2.3 The second-generation paradigm

The scholarly soundness of the first paradigm was questioned by so-called second-generation scholars during the 1940s. Fredrick Winslow Taylor (1856–1915) was one of the prominent contributors who suggested several classical management principles that became both influential and indispensable in shaping the study and practice of public administration. He conducted experiments with managers and factory workers. In addition, he advocated for cooperation between management and labour for achieving work objectives in accordance with scientific methods. Taylor's ideas emphasised enhancing the productivity of individuals in the working environment. In his book, *Industrial and General Administration* Fayol established fourteen (14) management principles that fundamentally shaped both the academic and practical fields of the discipline. Maserumule (2011:337) conversely states that the proposition of these principles details the generic functions of managers in a working environment. This coincided with the time when the concepts of public administration functions (formulated as POCDCORB) were proposed by Luther and Gulick, reflecting planning, organising, control, directing, coordination, reporting and budgeting. Significantly, these concepts of public administration functions are seen as basic principles that apply in every context where the study of public administration is carried out (Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:39). Weber's theory of bureaucracy which emphasises the specialisation of work functions is closer to Fayol's 14 management principles. Fayol further held the view that all positions within a bureaucracy are structured in a way that permits the higher job positions to supervise and control the lower positions. The second-generational paradigm lasted up to 1945 and was characterised by changes in the socioeconomic, technical, and political contexts, which contributed to changes in the corpus of knowledge on Public Administration as an academic domain.

2.2.4 Post-Second World War period

Soon after 1945, the third generational theorist questioned the theories of Wilson and Gulick as well as the politics–administration dichotomy. After the Second World War scholars generally considered this paradigm inappropriate and rather insignificant. Waldo (1955:1) especially criticised the ideas of management efficiency in his book *The Administrative State*, where he argued that public administration should be supported by a framework of democratic values and not mainly be driven by efficiency. Citizens who increasingly demanded that ineffective and wasteful bureaucracies

should be replaced with more responsive and efficient public institutions contrasted this opinion. Consequently, this period was characterised by the idea that public administration should refrain from politics and advance a more responsive administration for it to remain effective, efficient, and legitimate. Furthermore, during this period, there was a compelling argument that public administration had developed a relatively mature corpus of knowledge and thus, it should become a recognised scientific discipline. This paradigm being characterised by a more outward citizen focus rather than an inward bureaucratic efficiency focus is indicative of the early emergence of a customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement focus on governance settings.

2.2.5 New public administration paradigm

Between 1960 and early 1970 the new public administration (NPA) paradigm emerged. Scholars reviewed the tenets of the discipline and critically engaged the foundational principles ascribed to it. Issues such as social equality, inequality and citizen participation received much more prominence. With particular reference to the focus of this study, a people-centred approach and customer-service focus have subsequently, become the focus of public administration praxis and theory. Numerous structural agenda reforms in governments have continued to play a significant role in comprehending the chronicles of the emergence of customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement in government institutions. Approaches from various fields like political science, law, sociology, psychology, history, and business management have influenced public administration (Jordaan, 2013:32). In general, these approaches are categorised as normativism, empiricism and behaviourism (Van der Walldt, 2017:184). Normativism determines what should be targeted, while empiricism claims that all knowledge is founded on experience or derived from experience (Mautner, 2006:166). Behaviourism is a systematic psychological research approach which studies and investigates what an organism does in order to distinguish between stimuli and recreation. The normative and behaviourist approaches to NPA especially have a bearing on stakeholder involvement. Normative approaches consider the ethical dimensions, norms and values associated with good governance, stakeholder engagement and the democratic tenets of transparency, openness, and participation. Behaviourism informs decision-makers about issues such as group dynamics,

individual preferences, conduct and perceptions of stakeholders. These approaches also direct the development of theory in the respective subfields of the study domain. In addition to these three main categories of approaches, Kumar (in Nkuna and Sebola, 2012:70) identifies traditional approaches, innovative approaches, the scientific approach, mechanistic-behaviour approaches, and ecological approaches. Traditional approaches comprise the historical approach, legal approach, and institutional approaches; new approaches are classified as the systems and structural-functional approaches. Scientific approaches comprise comparative methods, new techniques, and case methods.

Rosenbloom and Kravchukuk (2002) also added to the theoretical discourse regarding the corpus of knowledge of NPA by reasoning that the study domain is informed by three key theoretical approaches: managerial, political, and legal. Rosenbloom and Kravchukuk (2002:5) maintain that these three approaches have become the “epicentre of new public administration knowledge and practice”. The managerial approach argues that public administrators should strive towards maximising the economy through the effective and efficient use of resources and the management of institutional processes. Thus, this approach focuses on strengthening (local) governance through the optimum utilisation of scarce and limited resources, to achieve the desired service delivery outcomes. Moreover, public administration should aim to satisfy the needs, wants and desires of the citizenry by advocating for a greater set of values which includes a transparent, accountable, and coherent government. Scholars such as Botes *et al.* (1998:25–32) and Jordaan (2013:34) maintain that the managerial approach should make provision for the social contexts of employees and stakeholders like the factors that motivate them as well as issues around leadership, communication, conflict, and social interaction. Rosenbloom and Kravchuk (2002:5) argue that the managerial approach contributed to the emergence of the political approach. The political approach to the discipline of public administration emphasises the value of representativeness, political and administrative responsiveness, and accountability to the citizenry through the elected political principles (Jordaan, 2013:34). Accountability and involvement in administrative decision-making are essential for the development of representative democracy. The legal approach is closely related to the political approach. The evolution of the legal approach ushered in the emergence of administrative law and the trend towards the judicialisation of

public administration and constitutional law. The main focus of this approach is to ensure that procedural due process is followed, that citizens' rights are protected and that they are shielded from malicious, arbitrary, cruel, or unconstitutional government actions. Jordaan (2013:34) argues that the legal approach emphasises the "adjudicatory role" of administrative institutions. It can be argued that these approaches all have, to varying degrees, a bearing on the scholarly inquiry into stakeholder involvement and customer care in local government. These approaches ensure that a more multidimensional, comprehensive, and coherent perspective is followed in the investigation into stakeholder involvement and customer care. An additional benefit of these approaches is that they promote a collection of principles like community focus, fairness, and openness in the effective provisioning of public services. These approaches highlight the importance of rendering government services impartially, equitably and without prejudice. They also assist the researcher in tracing the paradigmatic chronicles of stakeholder involvement and a customer service orientation in local government settings.

2.2.6 Public management paradigm

It could be argued that the managerial approach that emerged during the NPA paradigm came to full fruition during the public management paradigm. Mutahaba (2010) and Basheka (2012) insist that governments increasingly receive criticism for being ineffective, inefficient, and mostly wasteful. Other impediments synonymous with mismanagement such as nepotism, political patronage, vast and rigid bureaucratic practices, and widespread corruption came to characterise public administration machinery (Basheka, 2012:51). Because of these challenges, government officials were unable to effectively implement national development plans to preserve the livelihoods of the ordinary citizens. In addition, internal weaknesses, institutional limitations, and the adverse effects of the poor implementation of development plans resulted in citizens becoming increasingly unhappy with their governments. Strong political pressure led decision-makers to initiate transformation, restructuring and rationalisation programmes in public services in an effort to replace mediocrity with efficient, effective, and productive administrations (Laegreid, 2011:1700). This resulted in a number of structural adjustment initiatives during the 1990s. Mutahaba (2010) holds that these programmes had an additional positive

outcome; namely, a general trend towards advocating for a more customer-oriented approach. Another outcome was the decentralisation of authority and public administrations becoming more business oriented (Mutahaba, 2010:81). This brought forth the movement towards new public management (NPM).

2.2.7 New public management paradigm

The perceived successes of the public management paradigm, characterised by managerialism and business-like approaches to public administration, contributed to the emergence of the new public management (NPM) paradigm. Authors such as Denhardt and Denhardt (2003:5), Laegreid (2011:1700) and Maserumule (2013:488) maintain that NPM mainly emerged as a result of increased public interest in government affairs, market-driven reforms, and the quest for good governance. Hughes (2003) and Ijeoma *et al.* (2013) also confirm that NPM was aimed at improving efficiency, productivity, service delivery and accountability in public administrations. This implies that the state's role was to maximise effectiveness and efficiency in the provision of goods and services by adopting market-based approaches. The NPM paradigm is characterised by the privatisation of state-owned enterprises, fewer government regulations and neo-liberal, free-market approaches (Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:43). Lane (2003:3) adds that a new public sector governance methodology, called 'contractualism' was adopted to encourage greater efficiency in public management. Some conventional government functions and services that were outsourced to private sector partners further led to more innovative approaches to public administration (Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:43). Denhardt and Denhardt (2003:4) list the following additional characteristics of NPM that distinguish it from the former public administration and public management paradigms, as seen below.

- The adoption of outsourcing instruments and contractual arrangements with external service providers;
- Increased decentralisation and devolution of authority and administrative functions to local government administrations;
- Further deregulation and the elimination of regulatory controls by the government;

- Alternatives in service delivery implementation, such as privatisation and network governance;
- Public-private sector collaboration and the privatisation of government entities.
- The increasing use of modern information and communication technologies (ICTs) in government programs and activities;
- Focus on accountability, evidence, outcomes, performance measurement, management of performance and performance-based contracting; and
- Improved government–citizen engagement and the treatment of citizens as customers or clients of the government.

The latter point is especially relevant to this study. In addition, Hood (1991:4–5) identifies seven doctrines of the NPM as summarised in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2: Doctrinal components of new public management (NPM)

Doctrine	Meaning	Typical jurisdictions
Hands-on professional management in the public sector.	Active visible, discretionary control of organisations from named persons at the top, free to manage.	Accountability requires the explicit assignment of responsibility for action and not a diffusion of power.
Explicit standard measures of performance.	Definitions of goals, target indications of success, preferably expressed in quantitative terms, especially for professional service.	Accountability requires exact statements of goals. Efficiency requires careful scrutiny of objectives.
Greater emphasis on output control.	Resource allocation and rewards linked to measured performance, break-up of centralised bureaucracy-wide personnel management.	Needs to stress results rather than procedures.

Shifts to disaggregation of units in public sector	Break-up of formerly monolithic units, unbundling of U-form management systems into corporatised units around products operating on a decentralised 'one line' budget and dealing with one another at arm's length.	Need to create 'manageable units', separate provision, and production interest, gain efficiency advantages of the use of contract or franchise arrangements inside as well as outside the public sector.
Shift to greater competition in the public sector.	Move to term contracts and public tendering procedures.	Rivalry as the key to lower costs and better standards.
Stress on private sector styles of management practice.	Move away from military style 'public service ethic', greater flexibility in hiring and rewards and greater use of PR techniques.	Need to use proven private sector management tools in the public sector.
Stress on greater discipline and parsimony in resource usage.	Cutting direct costs, raising labour discipline, resisting union demands and limiting compliance costs to business.	Need to check the resource demands of the public sector and 'do more with less'.

Source: Hood (1991:4–5).

The underlying NPM is the belief that the provision of public services is enhanced by the introduction of the doctrines listed in the table above. These doctrines aim to transform both the public organisation's organisational structure and the process by which public services are delivered. The relevance and significance of this component are that, firstly, they strengthen customer orientation by improving the quality and effectiveness of stakeholder organisations' public service delivery. Similarly, the emphasis of the component is on management practices or market-type mechanism styles of the private sector. Using the market-type mechanism will allow public institutions to develop policies that promote timely responsiveness and accountability

to citizens' (i.e., stakeholders') needs and desires, using optimal resources to strengthen local governance.

2.2.8 Public governance paradigm

The early 2000s saw the emergence of the public governance paradigm. This paradigm did not replace NPM but according to Basheka (2012:58), extends the existing corpus of knowledge of public administration by adding broader governance dimensions. According to Osborne and Gaebler (1992), governance refers to the processes by which governments try to solve societal problems and address needs. A government is commonly regarded as the instrument of governance by serving as institutional measures to meet those needs. In this regard, the World Bank (2006) maintains that governance refers to the actions of government. In the context of public administration, Klaer 2004 (in Ijeoma, 2013:184) conversely states that notions of government are increasingly becoming more complex since a more networked form of governance heralded the inclusion of civil society actors in the conventional functions and activities of governments. As Henry (2010:38) briefly put it:

We are moving away from government or the control over citizens and the delivery of public benefits by institutions of the state, and we are moving towards governance or configuration of laws, policies or organisations institutions, cooperatives arrangements and agreements that control citizens and deliver public benefit. Government is institution, and yet governance is institutional and networked. (Henry, 2010:38).

Governance is not the preserve of the government alone, according to Basheka (2012), rather, it is undoubtedly one of the key players. Other players can be private sector entities like churches, non-governmental organisations, professional societies, traditional cultural institutions and a variety of other groups of people that are essential components of good governance structures. Stakeholder involvement is regarded as essential to harnessing their knowledge and insight necessary to take advantage of the potential benefits of globalisation. It is also crucial to mobilise stakeholder support for government decisions. A particular contribution of the governance paradigm—beyond the increase of the scope of public administration—is the emphasis on tenets of 'good' governance. Basheka (2012:58) argues that notions of good governance

introduced a more participatory style of government by focusing on normative and democratic dimensions of public administration. In this regard, Hyden and Court (2002) hold that the emphasis on good governance introduced by the public governance paradigm reveals some functional dimensions that are applicable in specific public institutional arenas, for particular purposes. Table 2.3 lists these functional dimensions.

Table 2.3: Functional dimension of good governance and their institutional arenas

Functional dimensions	Institutional arenas	Purposes
Socialising	Civil Society	Advocate for active citizen involvement and how the public raises challenges/problems.
Aggregating	Political Society	Forms ideas and interests are put together in a policy by political institutions.
Executive	Government	Advocate for political oversight and policymaking.
Managerial	Bureaucracy	Manage and control the administration and execution of policies.
Regulatory	Economic Society	Shape the way the state and the market interact for the advancement of development.
Adjudicatory	Judicial System	Advocate for the prompt response to conflict and dispute resolution.

Source: Hyden and Court (2002:21).

The relevance and significance of these functional dimensions are that they instil and maintain a customer service culture in government. Customer orientation in general, fosters a positive interrelationship between the government, consumers of services and civil society organisations (Ijeoma *et al.*, 2013:26). In addition, because of its construction and preservation of the rewarding relationship with decision-makers,

interest groups and other stakeholders, the functional aspect of good governance is critical for fostering a spirit of active stakeholder involvement—to reinforce the integral values that advocate openness, transparency and accountability in (local) governments. The concept of good governance is further espoused by international organisations such as the World Bank, the United Nations and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). These organisations as well as scholars such as Jordaan (2013) postulate that the extent to which governments adhere to accepted features of good governance will significantly enhance their legitimacy, performance and ability to conform to social expectations. According to the World Bank (1998); UNESCAP (2007); Ijeoma *et al.* (2013:26), the following generally accepted features of good governance should be upheld:

- Participation: Governments are outward and people orientated. Citizens participate in policy-making processes and governments have established mechanisms to further foster engagement.
- State capacity: Government institutions have the required competence, capability and ability to carry out their constitutional obligations and other mandates.
- Consensus-orientated: Government decisions are based on the majority consent of all stakeholders. Different interests in society are mediated to reach consensus.
- Accountability: Government policymakers are obliged to account for and report to the public regularly.
- Transparency: Governments should be open in their functions and activities and advocate transparency in policymaking and policy implementation processes.
- Responsiveness: Governments should be sensitive to the needs, aspirations and reasonable demands of stakeholders. Timely response by government institutions to the potential adverse effects of service delivery is critical.
- Rule of law: Good governments advance a fair legal framework that is enforced without prejudice and impartiality. This includes the protection of human rights.
- The judiciary and law-enforcement agencies should be independent of political pressure and be allowed to honour and uphold the rule of law.

- Effectiveness and efficiency: Governments should be capable of utilising resources optimally for the common good of society. Government institutions should be outcomes-based and results-orientated.
- Equitability and inclusiveness: Governments can be regarded as good when they execute public policy unbiasedly, equitably and inclusively. Public officials should treat citizens fairly and justly and maintain a relationship of partnership.
- Minority sensitiveness: Government decision-makers should consider the views and aspirations of all stakeholders, inclusive of those who are marginalised such as the poor and vulnerable groups in society. This implies that an enabling environment should be created to provide an opportunity for diverse interest groups, including minorities to have a voice on key critical issues affecting their livelihoods in the full interest of inclusiveness.

In addition to these broad tenets of good governance, authors such as Jooste (2008); Makanyeza *et al.* (2013) and Du Toit *et al.* (2015) maintain that customer service can be regarded as an integral aspect of good governance. They argue that customer orientation is valued worldwide for its ability to preserve the livelihoods of the vulnerable, marginalised, poor and dispossessed communities in society. To establish and maintain a customer orientation, government institutions have to establish organisational frameworks with suitably trained officials to provide the services they are responsible for (Du Toit *et al.*, 2015:90). In addition, Jooste (2008:82) notes that public administrations must recruit fit-for-purpose officials in order to create a “customer-oriented, service-minded workforce”. The scholarly discourse regarding public governance is further strengthened by the focus on the idea of ‘democratic citizenship’ and the importance of the participation of civil society in governance (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000:589). It became evident that this discourse necessitated a further theoretical and functional re-conceptualisation of public administration. This gave rise to the emergence of the new public service paradigm.

2.2.9 New public service paradigm

According to Maserumule (2011:389), the paradigmatic development of public administration as a study domain culminated in the emergence of another

epistemological trend in the development of public administration. This trend mainly sees the discourse regarding paradigmatic theoretical propositions of conventional public administration to that of a renewed focus on the fundamentals of a truly 'public' administration. This discourse gave rise to the emergence of a more citizen-centred approach to government, commonly referred to as the new public service paradigm. Maserumule (2011:389) argues that the new public service approach is a distinct paradigm, clearly distinguishable from the NPM and public governance paradigms. Bourgon (2007) and Pollitt (2007b) simply refer to this new paradigm as the "new public administration theory". According to Paile (2018:10), this new theory embraces the fundamental principles and values of modern public service including:

Serving rather than directing, encouraging people to become active contributors to society rather than treating them as customers; responsiveness to the needs of citizens, collaboration and trust building; consideration for mutual benefit rather than individual self-interest; and attention to policy legislation. (Paile, 2018:10).

Consequently, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:553) argue that "citizenship theorists, culture and civil society theorists, organisational humanists, and postmodernist public administrations, have helped to construct the parameters of the new public service". Similarly, Yeboah-Assiamah *et al.* (2015:19) hold that this new paradigm is characterised by a focus on people, service orientation and active citizenship. These authors propose seven new public service values, most notably that public servants' primary function is to help people express and satisfy their common desires rather than trying to regulate or direct society. Due to their significance for the focus of this study, these values are briefly outlined below.

- *Value 1: Serve, rather than steer. An increasingly important role of the public servant is to help citizens articulate and meet their shared interests, rather than to attempt to control or steer society in new directions.*

Civil servants have the responsibility to serve and inspire people. Their emphasis should not be on upholding the principles of new public management or governance, that is, steering or rowing the government ship, but rather on creating administrative processes that are characterised by openness and responsiveness. Government

institutions should be outward, people-driven and citizen-focused. Protagonists of this value (Bourgon, 2007; Pollitt, 2007) argue that governments must work in partnership with stakeholders including private and non-profit groups and organisations, to pursue effective solutions for the impediments to the delivery of public services. Accordingly, the role of government should be altered from one that primarily regulates society to one setting the national agenda, involving all stakeholders and brokering solutions. Maserumule (2011:395) encapsulates these sentiments as follows: “Instead of government responding to the needs of the citizen by saying yes, we can provide that service, to a response of let’s work together to find solutions jointly”. In support, Denhardt and Denhardt (2000:554) argue that this new focus will require new competencies from public officials such as brokering, negotiation and dispute-resolution skills.

- *Value 2: The public interest is the aim, not the by-product. Public administrators must contribute to building a collective, shared notion of the public interest. The goal is not to find quick solutions driven by individual choices; rather, it is the creation of shared interests and shared responsibility.*

The second value of the new public service model is that of developing a vision for society. This idea encourages a shared notion of government obligations in advancing the public interest and sharing responsibilities between the state and civil society. Governments should ensure that policy solutions are compatible with the interests of stakeholders. Such solutions should also be congruent with democratic values like justice, fairness and equality (Ingraham and Rosenbloom, 1989). Civil servants should thus play an important role in encouraging stakeholder involvement through dialogue and a mutual sense of public interest.

- *Value 3: Think strategically, act democratically. Policies and programs meeting public needs can be most effectively and responsibly achieved through collective efforts and collaborative processes.*

The fundamental assumption of the new public service paradigm is that governments should be open and accountable to stakeholders at all times. As such, it has to be

responsive and strive to serve individuals and create opportunities for citizenship (Maserumule, 2011:396). Governments should encourage stakeholder involvement in government initiatives and as a consequence, inculcate a sense of pride.

- *Value 4: Serve citizens, not customers. The public interest results from a dialogue about shared values, rather than the aggregation of individual self-interest. Therefore, public servants do not merely respond to the demands of 'customers' but focus on building relationships of trust and collaboration with and among citizens.*

The new public service theory holds that the interrelationship between government institutions and citizens as stakeholders is not similar to the relationship between private corporations and their clients. It is argued that the new model of public service delivery should not be characterised by governments only responding to the self-centred, short-term interests typical of customers, but rather serve the common interest and the well-being of all (Paile, 2018:11).

- *Value 5: Accountability is not simple. Public servants should be attentive to more than the market; they should also attend to statutory and constitutional law, community values, political norms, professional standards and citizen interests.*

Governments are required to ensure that public officials are accountable for their productivity, cost-effectiveness and responsiveness in executing their operational functions. Officials, as public servants, should uphold ethical standards and adhere to the stipulations of national legislation (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000:554).

- *Value 6: Value people, not just productivity. Public organisations and the networks in which they participate are more likely to succeed in the long run if they are operated through processes of collaboration and shared leadership, based on respect for all.*

The new public service theory stresses the significance of 'managing through people' in its approach to management and organisation (Pollitt, 2007:71). In the design of

management methods and procedures, systems for improving efficiency, process reengineering and performance assessments are seen as important instruments. Effective leadership, teamwork and empowerment are regarded as essential success factors for modern public services.

- *Value 7: Value citizenship and public service above entrepreneurship. The public interest is better advanced by public servants and citizens who are committed to making meaningful contributions to society, rather than by entrepreneurial managers acting as if public money were their own.*

The last value of the public service delivery model implies that public managers must not only share control, work with individuals and broker solutions, but must also reconceptualise their role as “a responsible participant, not an entrepreneur” in the governance process (Denhardt and Denhardt, 2000:557). Public managers should utilise scarce resources optimally in order to accelerate the provision of services to citizens. It is argued that these values of the new public service model are highly relevant to the scholarly inquiry into customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement. Hence, the paradigmatic development of public administration theory implies that the application of these developments in public institutions including municipalities, should foster the spirit of democratic citizenship, public dialogue and public interest to enhance customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement. The paradigmatic developments highlighted above also assist with locating the emergence of stakeholder involvement and a customer orientation within the praxis of public administration. This aspect will receive attention in the next section.

2.3 LOCATING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND A CUSTOMER SERVICE ORIENTATION WITHIN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION PRAXIS

From the preceding sections, it is evident that the theory or knowledge domain of public administration is increasingly concerned with placing citizens at the epicentre of the executive institutions of government. It is in these executive institutions where public administrations convert political decisions—informed by stakeholders—into service delivery praxis. Public service delivery by government institutions can thus be regarded as the functional output and outcomes of public administrations. Fox,

Schwella and Wissink (1991:2) and Du Toit and Van der Waldt (1999:8) argue that the process of public administration is more comprehensive in terms of its scope and nature in government institutions than public management, which is regarded as a distinguishable part of public administration. To wit, Cloete (1998:86) argues that public management is made possible by first executing the functions of public administration which include policymaking, financing, controlling, personnel provisioning, organising and determining work methods and procedures. However, Ijeoma *et al.* (2013:47) hold that 'management' should be added as an additional public administration function. Each of these functions should be performed to facilitate the delivery of services. It is evident that a customer service orientation in government and actions to foster stakeholder involvement depend on a variety of managerial functions. These functions are significant for this study since the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) as the case study, needs to adopt certain functions to improve its stakeholder involvement strategies and improve its customer focus. Its customer care area managers (CCAM) serve as units of analysis within the case. These managers should adjust their operational functions within their respective customer care centres throughout the municipality, to accommodate the values emanating from the respective phases of the paradigmatic development of public administration. They should be able to identify shortcomings in poor customer service and advise line departments to take appropriate management actions to rectify inappropriate actions through effective leadership.

As far as the application of stakeholder involvement and customer orientation in public administration is concerned, it should be noted that countries' constitutions and national legislation typically make provision for the adoption of certain values, principles and practices in government institutions. In the case of South Africa, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 stipulates that public authorities such as municipalities have an obligation to ensure that the citizenry is provided with services that fulfil their basic needs. Furthermore, the Constitution enshrines principles of public administration in Section 195. In addition, the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997 outlines key principles of service delivery, known as the *Batho Pele* (people first) principles. Van der Waldt (2004:1) and Subban *et al.* (2007:34) confirm that these principles have a strong customer service focus. The statutory prescripts to encourage stakeholder involvement and customer orientation

are encapsulated in the vision statement of "we belong, we care, we serve" (Subban *et al.*, 2007:34). The eight *Batho Pele* principles listed below have strong significance for stakeholder involvement and customer orientation in service delivery:

- Consultation: People should be consulted on the level and quality of service they receive and where appropriate, they should be given an opportunity of selecting the services with which they are provided.
- Service standard: Citizens should be told what level and quality of service they will receive so that they know what to expect.
- Information: Citizens should be provided with full [and] accurate information about the level of services they are entitled to get from the government. Information should be provided at all service points and including in local media and languages. Contact numbers and names should appear in all departmental communication.
- Openness and transparency: Citizens should be afforded an opportunity to be informed about how municipality's (*sic*) line departments function and how much they cost and who is [in] charge.
- Access: Citizens should have equal access to the public service to which they are entitled. Service delivery targets extending access to both public servants and services must be set. Furthermore, improved service delivery for people with disability should be implemented.
- Courtesy: It is always important to handle customers with courtesy and consultation. In addition, service customers should not tolerate any form of treatment that is insensitive. In their Code of Ethics, standards and training programmes, all organisations must define and incorporate requirements for public care. It is important to regularly check the performance of workers and discourtesy should at all times be discouraged.
- Redress: Citizen dissatisfaction on the level of service provided should spark positive action. Mechanisms for recording any public outcry must be established and staff must be capacitated to handle service delivery complaints fast, effective[ly], and efficiently. Regular and prompt feedback responses on the outcomes must be adhered [to]. Moreover, if the promised quality of service is not provided, the customers of service should be given an apology, a full

thorough clarification and a speedy [a] successful solution. When service delivery grievances are made[,] customers of service should receive a compassionate positive response.

- Value for money: The money ought to be wisely spent. The line departments of the municipality should provide evidence that successful savings and enhanced delivery of customer service top the agenda. Similarly, public service delivery should be delivered economically and efficiently in order to have the highest possible value for money for service users. (WTPSD 1997:8)

It could be argued that these *Batho Pele* principles are primarily the result of paradigmatic developments in public administration. It reflects the foundations of a new public service ethos, geared towards improving the standard of public service delivery and fostering stakeholder involvement in government. This study is premised on the theoretical idea that stakeholder involvement in governance is an essential ingredient to deepen local democracy through the adoption of various democratic values and principles. Stakeholder involvement, as a tenet of local democracy, is the focus of the next section.

2.4 STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT AND LOCAL DEMOCRACY: THE CRITICAL INTERFACE

South Africa is commonly regarded as a constitutional democracy in which the fundamental guarantees of freedom, democratic values and human rights are enshrined in the Constitution, 1996 (Smit and Oosthuizen, 2011:55; Mubangizi and Tshisong, 2013:305). The primary goals of the Constitution are to secure the civil rights of citizens and to ensure that government power is not unilaterally exercised (Gildenhuys and Knipe, 2006:6). A democratic state is generally built on foundational principles such as human dignity, non-racialism, non-sexism, constitutional supremacy and the rule of law (Mubangizi and Tshishong, 2013:305). In the context of local government, this implies that

- The exercise of discretionary powers which are too broad and unrestrained should not be tolerated by local authorities;
- municipalities should not be permitted to behave unilaterally in any way;

- all residents should be equal under local law and treated fairly in compliance with local law; and
- the judiciary should act independently of the local authorities and the judges and magistrates should act as independent guardians to ensure that the rights and freedom of the individual are respected. (Gildenhuys *et al.*, 1991:125)

Before 1994, limited electoral mechanisms advocated citizens' participation in the election of representatives in the three spheres of government (Van der Waldt, 2014:20). However, the transition from the political system of Apartheid to the democratisation of South Africa embraced the active citizenry. All citizens now enjoy basic human, voting and property rights coupled with the government's commitment to promoting participatory governance (Muronda, 2017:25). The foundational tenet of a democracy is civil society participation (Edbon, 2002:275). In the local sphere of government, grassroots democracy is about empowering communities to participate actively in municipal decision-making. This premise is evident in Chapter 2 of the Rural Development Framework (2013) titled *Building Local Democracy and Development*. This framework, like other official policies and strategic frameworks of the South African government, confirms the need to strengthen customer orientation and stakeholder involvement in local governance. Similarly, compulsory integrated development plans (IDPs) of municipalities enshrine the significance of a customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement in municipal planning. According to the Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000, municipal IDPs must ensure that communities participate in decisions that affect their well-being and that such participation should include the promise that their contribution will influence municipal decisions. The Act also stipulates that municipalities must design public participation strategies that will enhance stakeholder involvement in local governance matters. Municipalities such as CoE should, therefore, involve local communities as key stakeholders in socioeconomic development planning and in the actions necessary to satisfy their well-being (Van der Waldt, 2004:14). The involvement of broader society through different stakeholders such as development agencies, organised labour, business, taxi associations, religious groupings and interest and pressure groups will generally foster local democratic praxis.

2.4.1 Contextualising local democracy

The emergence of notions of democracy can mainly be traced to ancient Greece (Fayemi, 2003, in Muronda, 2017:22). According to Campbell (2008:5), the word *demos* refers to people while *krates* stands for rule and power. The prominent scholars Luckham, Goetz and Kaldor (in Muronda, 2017:22) confirm that the concept of democracy is derived from a classical Greek term that translates to “rule by the people”, whereas Hyland (1995) indicates that it is derived from an ancient Greek term *demokratia* which translates to “popular government”. Fundamentally, democracy refers to a system in which citizens can actively take part in decision-making, not only in deciding who rules them, but also in influencing their government's direction (Reddy, 1996:52). Van der Waldt (2010:17) adds that a democratic dispensation is one in which citizens actively participate in governance and politics for the broader social good. The author also holds that participation in decision-making is central to enabling people to claim their democratic rights. By placing democracy in a local governance context, Reddy (1996:4) argues that the local sphere of government was created purposefully “to bring government to the grassroots by giving ordinary people a sense of inclusion in democratic processes”. In addition, Van der Waldt (2010:16) states that for local government to be regarded as good requires partnership between municipalities and civil society. This partnering relationship is commonly regarded as the cornerstone of local democracy. Reddy (1996:9) postulates that local democracy affords the local citizenry an opportunity to actively participate in influencing policy initiatives and elect representatives eligible to govern them.

Meaningful democracy requires local governments to be transparent about what they do and ready to account for their actions (Valderrama and Hamilton, 1999:98; Young, 2000:67). According to Pratchett and Wilson (1996:46, cited in Van der Waldt, 2010:16), local democracy entails the allocation and distribution of public goods according to the preferences and needs of the people. Similarly, for this grassroots democracy to succeed, citizens have to be given some role in these processes, this role is usually defined in democratic structures, political culture and participatory processes (Van der Waldt, 2010). Local democracy denotes a democratic system in which qualified citizens actively engage not only in deciding who governs them but also in shaping their government's political performance (Reddy, 1996:52). King and

Stoker (1996:45) and Lutz and Linder (2002:6) maintain that democracy should be studied from various perspectives. These perspectives typically reflect the multi-dimensional nature and complexity of local democracy and include aspects such as political representation, governability, conflict resolution, minority rights and accountability. As Van der Waldt (2010:18) argues, the complexity of local democracy is further highlighted by the seemingly endless list of variables that could influence its effectiveness and efficiency. Below are some of these variables:

- The general knowledge of citizen[s] regarding government affairs;
- general knowledge regarding existing policies and by-laws;
- general knowledge regarding the normative and formative system of government;
- the attitude[s] of public officials regarding citizen participation;
- the degree of organisation of participation (mechanisms, policies, procedures);
- the degree to which decision-making is governed by strict regulations; and
- the hierarchy of decisions. (Van der Waldt, 2010:18)

When the involvement of stakeholder organisations in the affairs of local government is heeded, it becomes evident that such involvement is valuable for deepening local democracy. Edbon (2002) and Tau (2013) maintain that stakeholder involvement can be regarded as an essential success factor for a healthy local democracy. They further argue that stakeholder involvement has contributed to a stronger civil society and that it strengthens a more people-oriented focus in local development. Edbon (2002:275) strongly holds the conviction that grassroots democracy is about inspiring people to voluntarily engage as stakeholders in the realisation of their well-being. Gildenhuys *et al.* (1991:124) maintain that certain democratic ideals should serve as guiding principles for the involvement of stakeholders in local government affairs. These values are as follows:

- The application of resources must satisfy the collective needs of individuals;
- direct participation in decision-making by citizens;

- responsiveness of and accountability by political representative[s] like councillors who must be sensitive to community problems and needs;
- frequent interaction between political principals and the citizenry;
- social justice and social equity; and
- the maintenance of high ethical and moral values. (Gildenhuys *et al.*, 1991:124)

These values, in combination with the *Batho Pele* principles, may serve as valuable normative guidelines in the design of stakeholder involvement and customer care strategies in the City of Ekurhuleni as the locus of this study.

2.4.2 Stakeholder involvement per type of democracy

A more detailed analysis of notions of democracy reveals that different types of democracies are distinguishable. Eminent scholars such as Pateman (1970); Dahl (1998); Carswell (2002); Arenilla (2010) assert that democracies can be broadly categorised into three main types namely representative, participatory and direct democracy. Thus, it is necessary to briefly reflect on the potential nature and depth of stakeholder involvement per type of democracy. Representative democracy can be regarded as a form of democracy in which citizens allow elected officials to represent them in government processes and where they are not necessarily directly involved in the processes of law-making or decision-making (Modise, 2017:8). Arenilla (2010:11) similarly postulates that representative democracy introduces a series of mechanisms and institutions that attempt to achieve a balance between the exercise and control of power. In this regard, Dahl (1998:34) points out that representative democracy promotes a high degree of “political equality”. However, Modise (2017:3) cautions that one of the shortcomings associated with a representative type of democracy is that civil society representatives may not serve the people whom they are supposed to represent. He continues to argue that representatives typically serve in chambers like portfolio committees, senates, parliaments or similar government bodies. Deliberations in such structures are usually closed and confidential, thereby influencing the level of stakeholder involvement in decision-making. Modise (2017) further warns that there might be an unnecessary separation between citizens as stakeholders and the policies eventually formulated by representatives since not all

citizens have the means and know-how to understand the complicated nature of political decision-making. Modise (2017:4) argues that representative democracies can only be regarded as healthy when sound interactions and interrelations between elected representatives and citizens remain. In contrast to representative democracies, direct democracies enable the citizenry to participate more directly in the political process of government (Muronda, 2017:24). Carswell (2002:55) states that direct democracies foster a more people-centred approach to democracy by making the “governing subservient to the governed”. This assertion is underscored by Arenilla (2010:9) who states that direct democracy is based on the equality of all citizens, implying that all eligible voters can participate in decision-making. As far as participatory democracies are concerned, Muronda (2017:24) argues that it strives to create opportunities for all members of a population to make meaningful contributions to decision-making and seeks to broaden the range of people who have access to such opportunities. It tends to advocate more involved forms of citizen participation and greater political representation than representative democracies. Modise (2017:3) maintains that participatory democracies are maintained by regular, free and fair elections. People mandate political representatives to represent their aspirations and needs through elections. Muronda (2017:24) argues that this form of democracy plays a significant role in advancing the principle of accountability in state administrations. Elected representatives and civil servants should work towards the advancement of government objectives. Pateman (1970:71) supports the notion of accountability in participatory democracies mainly because it

- offers channels of stakeholder influence in policymaking;
- promotes the involvement of stakeholders by means of deliberations and public communication, which, in turn, provides legitimacy to decisions; and
- attracts an increasing number of stakeholders to become involved in governance processes.

In applying the types of democracies to a local government setting, Fourie (2001:216) argues that citizens—as individual stakeholders and stakeholder organisations like community-based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and other civil society organisations—are mainly the structures through which local

democracy is actively promoted. Similarly, Powell and Cowart (2003:3) hold that stakeholder involvement seems to be more encouraged in direct and participatory types of local democracies and that such involvement should be facilitated through a positive interrelationship and regular communication between local authorities and communities. Sebola (2017:26) also underlines this point as he argues that political communication is at the “epicentre of gathering political-relevant information in a democracy”. Promoting and maintaining sound interrelationships in local government requires comprehensive communication strategies, which include the utilisation of various mechanisms and structures to facilitate the flow of information between stakeholders and local government structures (Fletcher, 1999:125; Savigny, 2006:6). The succeeding section of the study will analyse stakeholder involvement from a theoretical vantage point. The main purpose of this section is, apart from the conceptual framework required, to establish a sound theoretical framework to guide further scholarly inquiry into this phenomenon. These theories will thus enable the researcher to identify the theoretical underpinnings that can and should be applied to utilise stakeholder involvement as a strategic instrument for the strengthening of customer services in the City of Ekurhuleni.

2.5 THEORETICAL FOUNDATIONS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

Theories are significant for scientific engagement with phenomena since they allow scholars to comprehend their foundational arguments and meta-perspectives to scientific researchers, to understand the phenomenon under study. The concept ‘theory’ derives from the Greek word *theoria* meaning ‘contemplation’ or ‘speculation’ (Bell and Bryman, cited in Van der Walddt, 2017:184). Van der Walddt (2017:183) stresses that when phenomena are viewed outside the theoretical framework of a particular theory or theories in combination, research results usually have little scientific meaning. Hence, the basic functions of a theory are to describe, explain, predict or control phenomena in a variety of contexts (De Vaus, 1994:10). To analyse the phenomenon of stakeholder involvement in the CoE, several theories have a bearing on designing a theoretical framework. These theories are placed within the ambit of general systems theory. Systems theory, therefore, serves as a macro or grand theoretical framework to investigate stakeholder involvement in municipalities. The exposition of micro theories within a systems frame is mainly aimed at identifying

factors that may influence the quality and level of stakeholder involvement such as the nature of participatory mechanisms, the profiling of stakeholders, the nature of political representativity and accountability, communication (i.e., involvement) strategies, municipal–community partnerships and stakeholder empowerment (cf. Van der Walddt, 2010:27).

2.5.1 Stakeholder theory

Stakeholder theory was made popular by Freeman (1984) when he outlined the theoretical foundations that underpin stakeholder engagement. The key hypothesis of stakeholder theory as postulated by Freeman (1984) is that the effectiveness of an organisation is determined by its capacity to satisfy the needs and aspirations of its stakeholders. Similarly, Korschun (2015:613) argues that any organisation is made up of different stakeholders and that organisations are expected to make essential and reasonable arrangements for the involvement of stakeholders in the success of the organisation. Stakeholder theory focuses on clarifying and predicting how an organisation operates in both public and private sector settings (Shabangu and Oksiutycz, 2018:201). Notions of stakeholders assist organisations in improving their efficiency and effectiveness by fostering positive relationships with their stakeholders. Draai and Taylor (2009:114) reason that stakeholders in local government typically include taxpayers' associations, CBOs, NGOs, sports clubs, local businesses, taxi associations, religious groupings, neighbourhood organisations and individual community members. Stakeholder theory guides an analysis of these stakeholders by assisting decision-makers in compiling a profile of each stakeholder and then designing appropriate strategies to involve them in decision-making processes. In line with the principles of local or grassroots democracy, stakeholder theory thus illustrates the need to encourage different stakeholders to participate voluntarily in the realisation of their well-being (Korschun, 2015:614). The theory also allows local government to leverage the mechanisms of participatory governance and to deepen local democracy in an effort to foster a customer orientation for developmental local governance.

2.5.2 Contingency theory

According to Van der Waldt (2010:20), contingency theory applies to a variety of management theories and shows how organisations are influenced by various internal and external dynamics. These dynamics influence decision-making in organisations, leading to the premise that there is no best way to organise an organisation or to make certain decisions (Mintzberg, 1979:89). Instead, the optimal course of action is contingent or dependent upon internal and external environments. The particular circumstances or situations in which decision-makers find themselves will, therefore, dictate the most suitable course of action. Accordingly, contingent organisations will apply a particular style of management to suit a specific situation (Morgan, 2007:112). Placing contingency theory within a local government, stakeholder involvement frame implies that municipalities may adjust their participation mechanisms and strategies to match the nature and scope of stakeholders in their areas of jurisdiction. Similarly, stakeholders will probably also adjust their level and quality of involvement depending on the particular circumstances in the municipality. In a healthy local democracy where municipal councils promote participation, it is more likely that stakeholders will become involved in local decision-making.

2.5.3 Social exchange theory

The origin of social exchange theory can be traced to the sociologist George Homans when he published an article in 1958 titled “Social Behaviour as Exchange”. Homans (1958:603) proposed a framework built on a combination of behaviourism and basic economics. This framework is premised on the notion that a relationship between parties is created through a process of cost-benefit analysis. This cost-benefit analysis is designed to determine the benefits or rewards that a party will receive in relation to the efforts required to maintain the relationship and the potential risks associated with it. Michener (2004, in Van der Waldt, 2017:21) posits that all human relationships are established by the use of a subjective analysis of cost benefits and the contrast of alternatives. In other words, as Van der Waldt (2017) postulates, when people consider the expense of the relationship as outweighing the perceived benefits, the theory predicts that the citizenry will opt to exit the relationship. Accordingly, the theory claims that fulfilling the self-interest of all parties involved in a particular relationship enhances the success of such relationships. The theory of social exchange covers a broad variety of social aspects such as how societies evolve and adapt to their

environments (Muronda, 2017:30). As such, the theory is universally applicable to the study of stakeholder involvement in local government affairs since stakeholders will weigh the potential benefits of such involvement with the effort required to become involved. It also implies that municipal officials will consider the effort they must put into engaging stakeholders in decision-making processes in relation to the benefits for the municipality to do so.

2.5.4 Knowledge gap theory

As social exchange theory holds, stakeholders conduct a cost-benefit analysis of the perceived benefits and rewards of participating in local government issues. Such cost-benefit analysis is, however, highly dependent on the availability of accurate and relevant knowledge regarding the potential short, medium and longer terms benefits of such involvement. As such, knowledge gap theory is appropriate for predicting the quality of such cost-benefit decisions. Knowledge gap theory primarily addresses the premise that in any society, people with high socioeconomic status tend to acquire information easier and faster than people of lower socioeconomic status (Eveland and Scheufele, 2000:215). Thus, a gap in knowledge is created between the two segments of society. Juxtaposing this theory with stakeholder involvement in local government implies that stakeholders who are representative of different socioeconomic segments of communities will have different perceptions of the potential advantages that involvement in local government might create. It means that stakeholders from the lower socioeconomic echelons will be less likely to become involved in decision-making since they simply do not have easy access to governance-related information (Gaziano, 1983:448). It further implies that municipalities should make provision for the distribution of information and knowledge to poor and vulnerable communities since stakeholders from such communities would be less likely to become involved. This could lead to the unequal treatment of stakeholders and further perpetuate injustices and inequalities in society. In this regard, Van der Waldt (2010:25) proposes that municipal decision-makers acknowledge the fact that wealthier and more educated people are more likely to participate in local affairs and open up avenues for less affluent and educated people to become involved.

2.5.5 Systems theory

Dooley (1997, in Nkuna and Sebola, 2012:74) states that in the 1920s, the development and basic conceptions of system theory originated from the thoughts of the influential biologist, Von Bertalanffy. The notion of 'systems' was borrowed from the natural sciences (Myers and Myers, 1982:47). In essence, systems theory entails a system consisting of interdependent components (i.e., subsystems) and that there is an interrelationship between these constituent components and the bigger system. This interrelationship is characterised by interdependence, meaning that the study of a system only becomes meaningful if its constituent parts and their interconnected relationships are studied. Systems are open, implying that they receive input from their environments and convert inputs into outputs; the reactions and results of these outputs are fed back into the system as input. Based on system theory, municipalities can be regarded as open systems that are part of the larger system of governance with which they interact. Applying systems theory to stakeholder involvement means that the context of local government (e.g., its political, organisational, economic, technological, demographic, social and cultural environments or subsystems), including the quality of local democracy will influence the level of stakeholder involvement in local affairs. Stakeholder involvement (e.g., their opinions, needs and aspirations) will serve as input for municipal decision-makers. Decision-makers will then have to convert resources into an output (e.g., services, goods and products) that addresses and matches the input gained from stakeholders. The responses of stakeholders to the quality and quantity of output received will serve as a feedback loop to the municipality as input. In this regard, Van der Walldt (2010:26) suggests that systems theory is useful for serving as a macro theoretical framework to investigate issues pertaining to stakeholder involvement in the context of local democracy. It is also useful to explore the level of awareness of stakeholders regarding the nature of the internal and external environments of municipalities. This concludes a brief synopsis of the most pertinent theories elucidating the theoretical framework for stakeholder involvement in local government. These theories will inform the empirical investigation and guide the sense-making efforts of data obtained later in the study. The next section continues with a theoretical exposition of stakeholder involvement as a key construct by analysing its typologies.

2.6 TYPOLOGIES OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

According to Pretty *et al.* (1995), Davids *et al.* (2005), Theron (2005) and Tau (2013), several distinguishable typologies demonstrate the different conceptions with regard to public participation in general and stakeholder involvement in particular. These typologies can provide valuable insight into the nature and scope of stakeholder involvement since varying degrees of involvement are possible. Local governments can utilise such typologies to gauge their stakeholders' level of involvement.

The spectrum of public participation/stakeholder involvement's seven topologies is presented in Figure 2.1 below.

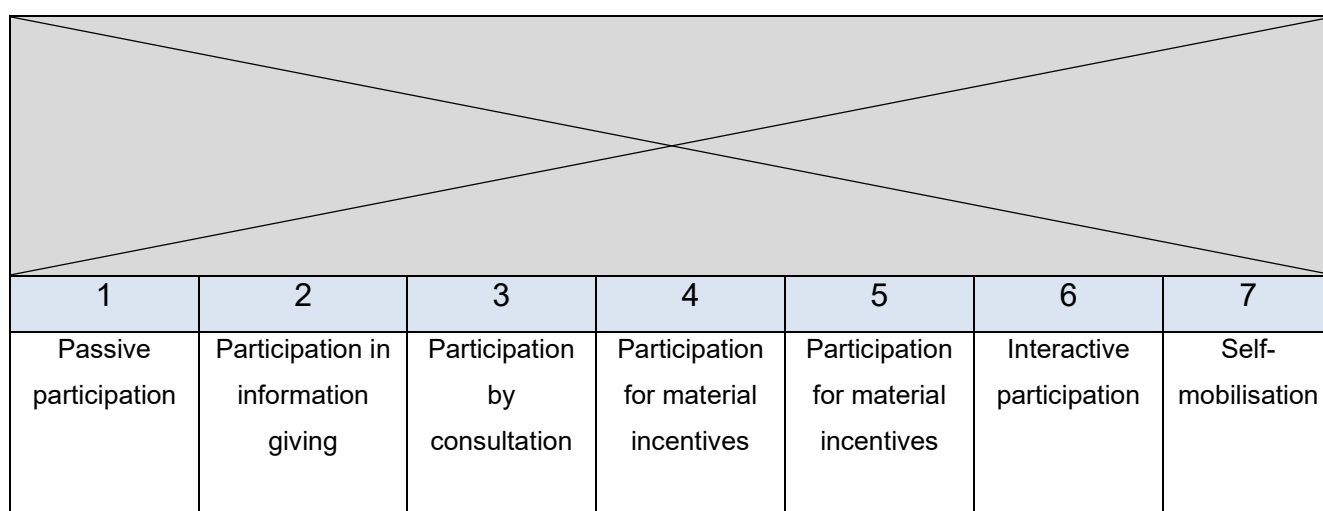


Figure 2.1: Typologies of public participation

Source: Adapted from Davids *et al.* (2005:118).

These seven typologies are briefly highlighted below.

- **Passive participation:** This refers to a situation whereby organisations (e.g., municipalities) provide information regarding their functioning and envisaged programmes and projects. By being told what is going to happen or has already happened, people passively become involved in the affairs of the organisation.
- **Participation in information giving:** Citizens may become involved in the affairs of an organisation by responding to the information provided. This may include

responding to surveys or telephone interviews, public announcements or open council meetings. Involvement is rather limited since citizens do not have the opportunity to influence or guide proceedings or information being shared.

- Participation by consultation: In this typology, citizens may become involved by being consulted by organisations on certain issues. This implies that organisations identify the issues and solutions and may adjust them, based on the responses of citizens. Consultation, however, does not imply public input in decision-making. Organisations still can decide whether or not to take any views or opinions of the public into consideration.
- Participation for material incentives: This typology entails the involvement of material rewards in return for citizen involvement. In exchange for incentives such as food or cash, citizens may become involved in the affairs of an organisation. This still does not imply that citizens can actively alter organisational practices and processes, since when those incentives cease, citizens will typically also end their involvement (Tau, 2013:157).
- Functional participation: In this typology, citizens engage organisations in order to accomplish predetermined goals. This may include participation in programmes, project design and implementation. Nevertheless, Davids *et al.* (2005:119) hold that such involvement usually only takes place once citizens are convinced that they will receive certain benefits from the initiative.
- Interactive participation: In this typology, citizens become partners of organisations (e.g., municipalities) in the design and execution of initiatives that may benefit both parties. This implies that citizens will be consulted, their opinions will be considered and their input may alter the direction, decisions and priorities of organisations.
- Self-mobilisation: In the last typology, citizens become fully involved in initiatives to improve their well-being. They are thus motivated to initiate activities independently from organisations (e.g., municipalities) to change their

prospects. Citizens and organisations may still partner in this typology, meaning that organisations may provide expertise and resources to assist citizens in helping themselves (Pretty *et al.*, 1995:71). Therefore, this final typology is characterised by self-initiated, bottom-up and self-reliant mobilisation and collective actions by citizens (e.g., local communities as municipal stakeholders).

In the above-mentioned continuum of public involvement, the advancement of passive participation at one end of the spectrum illustrates that citizens participate by being told what is going to happen or has already happened. At the other end of the continuum, a more bottom-up perspective helps citizens to maintain control of their destinies. In addition to this typology, Pretty *et al.* (1995:71), Theron (2005:114–119) and Heydenrych (2008:725) confirm that certain types of public engagement can also be distinguished. These types of engagement, participation or involvement can deepen democratic practices. In Table 2.5 below, these types of involvement and their particular application in a local government context are briefly highlighted.

Table 2.5: Types of citizen involvement

Type	Actions	Application
Persuasion	The public is informed and manipulated but has no real input or power.	A local authority presents local people with an idea/initiative to gain support. Similarly, this is one-way communication (information dissemination) in which the flow of information is handled, directed or guided by the authority.
Mobilisation	Others set the agenda and determine the process.	To induce the contribution of labour or funds to complement public institutions and keep costs low, the municipal authority approaches the citizenry.

Consultation	Others analyse the information and decide on a course of action.	Communities are consulted to provide better information for decision-makers. The opinions of the public are not considered. Consultation, therefore, increases decision feedback and contributes to more acceptable choices.
Participation	Citizens influence decisions and share responsibility for the outcomes but the agenda is often set by others	The public contributes to the decision-making process. All role players share the responsibility as a collective, however, political representatives and officials have influence and provide expertise where necessary.
Collaboration	There is a partnership and joint action (working with others to set goals and priorities and participate in implementation on a basis of equality with other role players.	An agency is bound by legislation and political oversight to give weight to the views of the citizenry. Notably, participating communities are implicated in the outcomes and share the risk that these might differ from those intended; hence, they share accountability.
Collective/Action/Self-Management/ Empowerment	Communities are in control, with little or no input from others.	Communities decide for themselves and carry full responsibility. They are empowered and so, may act without the involvement of local authority's input

Source: Adapted from Pretty *et al.* (1995:71), Theron (2005:114–119) and Heydenrych (2008:725).

In combination with the typology of public participation/stakeholder involvement, the types of involvement can serve the purpose of gauging the quality of local democracy and assist municipalities in designing strategies to improve the maturity of involvement. It can also assist with designing appropriate strategies for customer services in municipalities like the CoE. It could be argued that municipalities should carefully balance the level of participation by not unnecessarily slowing down decision-making processes, but rather by allowing a high level of involvement, to eventually mobilise communities as stakeholders to take ownership of their futures. As illustrated in Figure 2.1 and outlined in Table 2.5, it is evident that municipalities should act as catalysts for self-development by providing adequate information to key stakeholders, persuading them to take ownership of development and then empowering them to become self-reliant. In a similar vein, the next section explores the potential strategies required to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders in customer services.

2.7 STRATEGIES TO STRENGTHEN THE INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN CUSTOMER SERVICES SETTINGS

According to Theron, Ceasar and Davids (2009:116) and Muronda (2017:39), the democratic dispensation in South Africa has accelerated the design and implementation of certain strategies to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders, particularly in the local government sphere. These strategies are aimed at deepening democratic practices by ensuring that society participates in the affairs of government. Similarly, according to the DEAT (2002:14), the route to effective and efficient stakeholder involvement depends on selecting the right combination of strategies. The possible strategies suggested by the DEAT (2002:14) are presented as levels. This implies that similar to the typology of participation, organisations should improve stakeholder involvement by moving from Levels 1 to 3. Each level is achieved and maintained by following certain strategies. The level of engagement and the level of influence increase with each of the three levels. These levels are illustrated in figure 2.2 below.

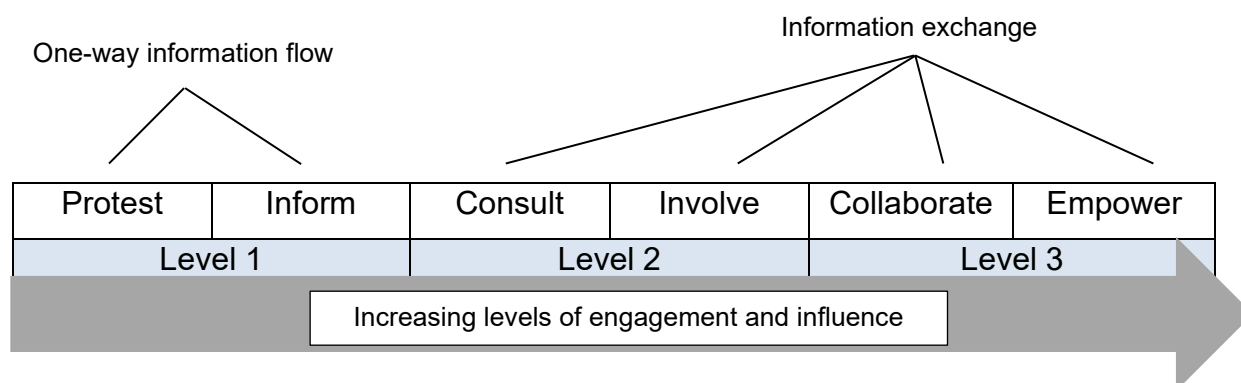


Figure 2.2: Levels of engagement and influence

Source: Adapted from DEAT (2002:7).

Level 1 entails public protest and information sharing. This level is defined as the one-way flow of information. During protests, municipalities become aware of certain frustrations and demands of the community. The municipality may respond by making the community aware that they are sensitive to these demands and are working to address them. During Level 2, stakeholders (e.g., the community) are consulted and become more involved in municipal processes and decisions. Level 3 is the highest level of involvement maturity and entails collaboration and stakeholder empowerment. Due to the significance of these levels for the development of more appropriate strategies for stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument in the CoE, each level with their respective strategies is briefly explained below. These levels and strategies emanate from the scholarly work of Oakley and Marsden (cited in Oakley 1991:6), Pretty *et al.* (1995) Meyer and Theron (2000:102), Theron, Ceasar and Davids (2009) and Muronda (2017:39).

2.7.1 Level 1 strategies

Level 1 strategies apply to a situation where organisations like municipalities simply make certain information available to citizens (i.e., stakeholders). Typical strategies to utilise in this regard include the following:

- **Open council meetings**

Municipal council meetings are generally open to the public and are an appropriate strategy for informing citizens of the political dynamics in councils, the complexities associated with municipal decision-making and the role of public involvement in holding councils responsive and accountable.

- **Public announcements and official notices**

Public announcements and official notices may take various forms. This includes newsletters in officials' correspondence for the municipality, the website of the municipality and speeches made by municipal officials and councillors. Thusong (community) centres and municipal notice boards may also be used to convey information.

- **Legal (policy) notices**

Legal notices advise ordinary citizens on any legal recourse for challenging perceived unjust and unfair treatment by the municipality. It also informs citizens about the legal ramifications of government decisions and actions. Because of the abundant legislation, policy initiatives and constitutional foundations of local government, municipalities must ensure that their day-to-day operational activities are not in violation of any legislation and constitutional stipulations.

- **Local media and radio**

Due to the relatively large circulation and access figures of local media like community newspapers and local radio stations, they serve as an invaluable strategy for informing and persuading stakeholders to become involved in decisions that affect their lives. Journalists serve as effective instruments for collecting input on a policy or plan of the municipality on behalf of the community, by questioning the executive mayor, municipal manager or developer (Meyer and Theron, 2000:40).

- **Citizen educational programmes**

Educational programmes aimed at promoting involved citizenship, civil rights and voter education are valuable as a strategy for sharing information. Municipalities may partner with development agencies, educational institutions and civil society organisations to make more politically neutral and balanced information available to communities.

2.7.2 Level 2 strategies

Level 2 strategies usually follow Level 1 strategies on an involvement maturity spectrum. This level is characterised by consultation and involvement. The strategies appropriate for consulting and involving citizens in local government affairs include the following:

- **Public meetings**

Public meetings, also known as *Imbizo's*, are one of the potential involvement strategies that can be used, for instance, by a statutory structure such as ward committees to promote involvement by the group in the affairs of local government. This often applies to well-planned and well-advertised meetings where the city manager, project manager, team developer or donor meets the public or particular stakeholders at a public place like a community centre (Meyer and Theron, 2000: 40). Public meetings provide a fruitful forum for members of the public to be consulted on certain matters.

- **Public hearings**

This strategy for involvement is analogous to public hearings but more formal and organised in nature. Public hearings are traditional ways to obtain input from the public or facilitate and organise a discussion on wide-ranging alternatives to particular issues of public service delivery. Similarly, they give the public an opportunity to express their views and ideas, and pose concerns for clarification on public policy initiatives. To

rephrase, public hearings are regarded as a form of public participation strategy on policy issues within government institutions as espoused by (Molepo *et al.*, 2015).

- **Interviews or focus group discussions**

This strategy involves a one-on-one meeting between the investigator or inquirer and a selected sample of particular stakeholders. Data is analysed and scientifically provided by the investigator for future planning considerations based on semi-structural interviews and open-ended questions.

- **Surveys and polls**

Here the relevant information is obtained and scientifically analysed through a survey, a representative group of the public or a particular stakeholder presentation that can be achieved by telephone and email. The only impediment to this type of approach is that the findings or results might be less reliable than face-to-face interviews. As such, public surveys and polls involve the public in decision-making. Nonetheless, surveys do not allow the public to get prompt feedback responses (Muronda, 2017:44). Survey questionnaires are used to determine what ordinary people's views and opinions are on a particular matter.

- **Telephone hotlines and complaints registers**

The contact numbers of senior municipal officials may be supplied to the community by hand or mail in written format. Municipal newsletters, lines or departments, for instance, are staffed by customer service agents familiar with the initiative/operation or by an ombudsman. Normally, the calls are monitored and registered, and the caller is given a prompt feedback response.

2.7.3 Level 3 strategies

Level 3 follows Level 2 and is mainly concerned with stakeholder collaboration and empowerment. However, it should be noted that as knowledge gap theory confirms,

some segments of the community may more readily have access to municipal information. In such segments of the community, municipalities may skip Levels 1 and 2 and directly engage them with Level 3 strategies. This should be done in a balanced and equitable manner so as not to put citizens with a higher socioeconomic status in an even more advantageous position. Typical strategies that municipalities can pursue in this regard include the following:

- **Workshops focus group and key stakeholders meeting**

This approach refers to the empowerment of participants by conducting small meetings in an open environment with various stakeholders, to share and provide input on a specific matter through a shared social learning platform. Stakeholders may then present them to the council (Meyer and Theron, 2000:45).

- **Advisory committees and panels**

Advisory committees and panels are also effective strategies that can be employed to empower stakeholders. These strategies can be used to advise decision-makers and to debate specific issues. Their composition includes stakeholders groups such as community leaders, NGOs, CBOs, scientists, experts or consultants representing the public.

- **Consensus conferences and workshops**

In this type of strategy, participants can be empowered through meetings or workshops attempting to reach an agreement or resolving conflict in a particular situation. Additionally, this form of strategy brings together experts and laypeople to discuss a particular subject. Muronda (2017:46) emphasises that community input always plays an important role in issues that are traditionally reserved for experts because there is a social side to every public policy.

- **Citizen juries or panels**

This strategy involves a small group of elected officials or stakeholders who are brought together to learn and share information on a particular issue, e.g., cross-examining witnesses or experts and making recommendations (Meyer and Theron, 2000:45). Citizen juries are normally made up of chosen representatives who will represent the public. In addition, they consist of randomly chosen people who join a panel to adjudicate on a particular matter. To enable them to adjudicate, the panel is exposed to information about the issue and gathers the appropriate information from witnesses. Citizen juries are a method of public participation where a selected panel represents the interest of the public (Muronda, 2017:46).

2.8 THE BENEFITS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT FOR CIVIL SOCIETY AND PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS

As confirmed by the theoretical exposition above, stakeholder involvement is recognised as one of the key instruments for promoting and strengthening participatory governance in local government. It enables citizens to express their wishes on issues of governance, thereby promoting and strengthening popular participation (Reddy, 1996:5). Moreover, it contributes to the creation of community solidarity because citizens feel involved in matters that are relevant to their welfare (Molepo *et al.*, 2015:346). Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:199) further hold that stakeholder involvement enables better-planned and more informed administrative policies, by-laws, projects and programmes as well as more responsive local government services. The benefits of stakeholder involvement for civil society and public institutions are explored in further detail below.

2.8.1 Benefits for civil society

The benefits of involvement in local government affairs for communities can be found in a number of domains. These domains include individual benefits, benefits for communities and benefits pertaining to specific involvement activities. According to Van der Molen *et al.* (2002:63) and Mzimakwe (2010:506), in a personal domain, the benefits of involvement include the following:

- Self-development through becoming more aware and educated on the role and responsibilities of local government as well as becoming more cognisant of the roles and responsibilities of the citizens in a democracy.
- The promotion of human dignity and self-sufficiency within the individual.
- The contribution to more reasonable citizenship since individuals can learn useful skills such as active listening, problem-solving and innovative thinking by becoming involved in areas that impact their livelihoods.

According to Cernea (1988:17-19), Mzimakwe (2010:503), Davids *et al.*, (2015:70), Molepo *et al.* (2015:346) and Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201), involvement holds the following benefits in a broader community domain:

- It serves as a channel through which their insight, information and knowledge can benefit the soundness of municipal policies and decisions.
- It gives marginalised and vulnerable people such as the elderly, women, the poor and the uneducated the opportunity to air their views and concerns.
- It creates a national dialogue on priority concerns and issues.
- It promotes accountability since stakeholder organisations in the community act as watchdogs, to make sure that municipalities act in accordance with democratic principles and constitutional obligations
- It encourages the poor to engage and thereby gain more control over the quality of their lives in matters that concern them.

2.8.2 Benefits for municipalities

According to Bovaird and Loffler (2004:190), Ndevu (2011:1252), Mzimakwe (2010:506), State Government Victoria (2011:2) and Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201), the following benefits of stakeholder involvement are evident:

- Enhancing information exchange by tapping into local expertise and having the ability to test stakeholder solutions and ideas, thereby improving the quality of

policymaking by allowing the government to tap wider sources of information, perspectives and potential solutions.

- Facilitating greater and faster interaction between the public and government.
- Increasing accountability and transparency, which increases representative and public confidence in government in general and municipalities in particular.
- Improving decision-maker awareness of the needs, wishes and desires of all segments of society.
- Improving the political legitimacy of municipal decisions and thus, decreasing the likelihood of public protests and the potential destruction of municipal property.
- The adherence of municipal councils and administrations to constitutional and other statutory obligations and prescripts.
- Creating a more responsive administration and customer orientation.
- Gaining the ability to evaluate policy changes and other initiatives with stakeholders before implementation.
- Tapping into the resources of individuals and stakeholder groups within the community.
- Eliminating or at least, decreasing the potential polarisation between public authorities and residents, thus avoiding tensions that often lead to public service delivery protests.
- Providing the opportunity for diverse interest groups, including minorities, to have a say in key issues affecting their lives in the interests of inclusivity and equality.
- Enhancing transparency and accountability in local government by developing a culture of openness through the participation of stakeholders.

Plainly, stakeholder involvement holds certain benefits for individuals, the community and the municipality. To operationalise these benefits, it is necessary to gauge the current level of involvement in a particular municipality and then pursue the appropriate strategies to gradually increase the level of involvement over time.

2.9 CONCLUSION

This chapter established a sound theoretical framework for investigating the nature and scope of stakeholder involvement in local government settings. Various theories, typologies, concepts and strategies that have a bearing on the more effective utilisation of stakeholder involvement as a customer orientation instrument were uncovered. It is evident that notions of stakeholder involvement and customer orientation have evolved through the respective paradigmatic development phases of public administration. It is also clear that conceptions of stakeholder involvement should be investigated within the ambits of local democracy in general and public participation in particular. The chapter revealed that the involvement of stakeholders in government can be regarded as an integral element in the deepening of local democracy. The three constructs of stakeholder involvement, public participation and local democracy are highly interrelated and should be analysed as such. The last section of the chapter expanded on the typologies and advantages of stakeholder involvement for civil society and public institutions. Notwithstanding this, stakeholder involvement in government settings should be conducted and enforced in an orderly manner and with a commitment to honour and uphold the rule of law. The South African government has promulgated multiple legislative and constitutional paradoxes in an attempt to enhance and regulate stakeholder involvement in the local sphere of government. In answering the second research question: What are the statutory and regulatory obligations of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer services and stakeholder involvement?, the next chapter will investigate international perspectives on fostering community engagement among stakeholders in local government. It will extract best practices relevant to strategies for community engagement, stakeholder involvement and customer service approaches. This will serve as a baseline practice and metric against which existing CoE stakeholder involvement policies can be gauged.

CHAPTER 3

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter established a sound theoretical framework for investigating the nature and scope of stakeholder involvement in local government settings. The conceptions, typologies, principles and approaches typically utilised by local government to foster stakeholder involvement were also uncovered. In addition, the paradigmatic development of customer service was traced and an extensive conceptual exposition of customer service, inclusive of the significance of stakeholder involvement in public services, was provided. The meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and a customer service orientation in municipalities were established. In pursuing the operationalisation of the second research objective, this chapter will probe international experience with fostering stakeholder involvement in local government. This will be done to extract best practices and lessons learnt about stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches in the context of both developed and developing countries. These best practices and lessons learnt will serve as benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) can be gauged. It should again be noted that the term *local government* in South Africa refers to the local sphere of government comprising local, district and metropolitan municipalities. As stated in Chapter 1, the CoE is a metropolitan municipality.

3.2 INTERNATIONAL, CONTINENTAL, AND REGIONAL STANDARDS AND CONVENTIONS FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

As was alluded to in the previous chapter, the participation of stakeholders in local government is considered a fundamental human right and also a key tenet of local democracy. Dawkins (2014:284) notes that meaningful participation from stakeholders (e.g., local community, business, rate-payers associations, the taxi industry, agricultural and religious groupings, pressure and lobby groups, trade unions and

charitable and community-based organisations) is essential to equally distributing the benefits, products and services of an entity (i.e., municipality). Accordingly, stakeholder engagement is commonly regarded as being at the epicentre of local government functions and operations. The participation of municipal stakeholders demands innovative approaches to engagement and two-way communication. This implies that municipalities establish effective systems, structures and methods for fostering civil society dialogue. Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018) add that participation may also imply the physical involvement of stakeholders in municipal decisions. This may require direct contact between the municipality and the community. Smith and Ansett (2011) emphasise that such direct involvement often leads to a sense of community–municipal cohesion since people are then more likely to take ownership of municipal decisions and operations related to their livelihood. In this regard, Reddy (In Muronda, 2017:27) maintains that one of the values of stakeholder engagement in urban environments is that it ensures that municipalities are responsive to the developmental needs, wants and desires of communities. Davids *et al.* (2015:69) further assert that stakeholder participation generally improves the ability of the local sphere of government to deliver basic services. Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:199) further claim that as communities become more involved in local affairs, they usually contribute to more efficient planning and better-informed policy formulation. As such, they usually contribute to enhanced customer services that lead to improved local governance. Wang and Wan Wart (2007:256) summarise this notion by simply stating that stakeholder involvement “leads to better local governance”.

The scholarly inquiry into stakeholder involvement is generally located within the broader notion of public participation since it is more issue-focused and context-specific (NPFPP, 2007:48). Local government engagement of stakeholders should be seen as a key focus point for the process of community participation as this reflects a new approach to democratic governance (Smith and Ansett, 2011; Muronda, 2017). It should also be noted that the corpus of knowledge regarding stakeholder involvement, inclusive of theories, principles, models and approaches significantly overlaps with that of public participation. Molepo *et al.* (2015:346) confirm that stakeholder participation offers a more targeted approach since it is aimed at involving particular groupings in attempting to influence municipal decisions. The purpose of the subsections below is to uncover international, continental (i.e., African) and regional standards and

conventions that direct broader public participation in local government. These standards and conventions will be utilised to frame stakeholder involvement as a strategic instrument in strengthening customer services in municipalities, in general and the CoE as a case study, in particular.

3.2.1 International Association for Public Participation

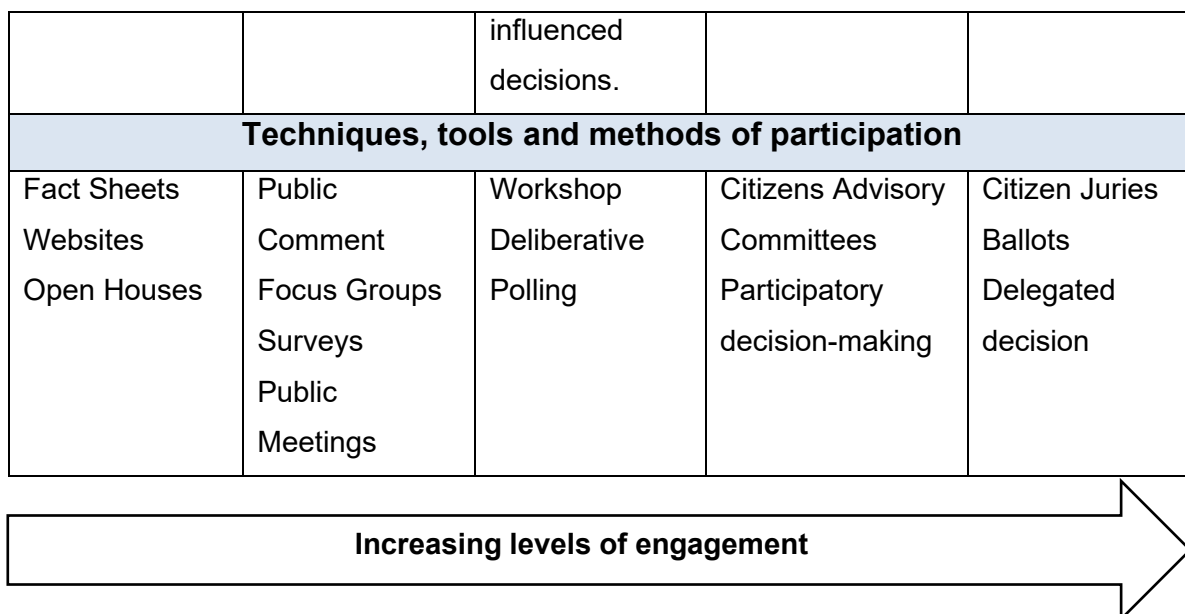
The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) is the largest professional organisation that promotes widespread public participation activities globally. The Association also aids citizens who implement or engage in the processes of public decision-making. The IAP2 further provides a forum for academics, practitioners and scholars to engage in public participation activities, particularly on issues affecting and involving communities (Molepo, 2013:7). Extensive international feedback was included in the creation of core values to define certain elements of public engagement that cross national, cultural and religious boundaries. Core principles that are widely recognised as well as best practices for participation can thus be extracted. The seven core values of public participation are:

- Public participation is based on the belief that those who are affected by a decision have a right to be involved in the decision-making process.
- Public participation includes the promise that the public's contribution will influence the decision.
- Public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interest[s] of all participants, including decision-makers.
- Public participation seeks out and facilitates the participation of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.
- Public participation seeks input from participants in designing how they participate.
- Public participation provides participants with the information they need to participate in a meaningful way.
- Public participation communicates to participants how their input affected the decision. (IAP2, 2007:4)

These core values of public participation are applicable in any government environment and should be embedded in national legislation and municipal policies. The scope of public participation proposed by IAP2 (2007) is aimed at building comprehension of the application of the spectrum of participation in government settings. The spectrum or scope of participation is shown in the table below.

Table 3.1 Spectrum of public participation

Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goals				
To provide balanced and objective information to assist the public in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process, to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision, including the development of alternatives and the identification of preferred solutions.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public				
To keep the public informed.	To listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced decisions.	To ensure that concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input	To incorporate advice and recommendations into decisions.	To implement what the public decided.



Source: Adapted from the International Association of Public Participation (2007).

To ensure that municipal stakeholders are involved in decision-making processes, the examples of techniques, tools and methods of participation for public engagement, as outlined in the spectrum above, should be considered.

3.2.2 The UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

One of the most widely recognised principles for guiding public engagement in local government is the United Nation's 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Heads of State, Governments and High Representatives approved an inclusive collection of universal and people-centred development priorities and objectives (Fukuda-Parr, Yamin and Greenstein, 2014:105). Regarding public dialogue and collaboration with civil society, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals pay particular attention to the voices of the poorest and most vulnerable communities (Smets and Lindert, 2016). Goal 11, in particular, (i.e., "Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable") is aimed at guiding public engagement and inclusivity in local government. As such, this goal has a significant bearing on this study.

3.2.3 The Manila Declaration on the Involvement of People in Environmentally Sustainable Growth

The Manila Declaration on the Involvement of People in Environmentally Sustainable Growth was signed in June 1989. Three core principles for public participation processes were formulated as central to people-centred growth. These principles are embedded in the following statements:

- Sovereignty resides with people, the real agents of positive change. The sovereignty of the people is the foundation of democracy. The legitimate role of government is to allow the citizenry to set and pursue their own structural agenda.
- To exercise their sovereign[ty] and assume responsibility for their development and their communities, the people must control their own resources, have access to relevant information and have the means to hold [the] government officials accountable.
- Those that would assist the people with their development must recognise that it is they who are participating in support of the people's agenda, not the reverse. (Ismail, Theron and Kealeboga, 2009:213)

The Manila Declaration maintains that the only way to build sustainable human societies is through people-centred growth, which is generally aimed at broadening civic engagement in local government affairs.

3.2.4 World Bank Governance Surveys

The World Bank Governance Surveys can be regarded as diagnostic instruments used to assist World Bank partner governments in measuring and mapping local governance framework impediments (Narayan-Parker, 2002). These governance surveys are regarded as mechanisms to promote policy changes that enable good governance. Hence, it provides for addressing governance issues such as corruption, malfeasance and graft in government with the objective of improving access to and quality of public service provision (Said, Alam and Khailid, 2016). As one of the basic

protocols for good governance, the survey process is designed to improve the capacity of the country to use techniques to track public sector performance and to involve the government in participatory structural policy reforms. These surveys cover the following seven stages:

- Phase 1: The preparatory phase focuses on identifying and establishing constructive working partnerships.
- Phase 2: The partnership-promoting phase focuses on establishing [a] working partnership with civil society.
- Phase 3: The development phase aims to evaluate potential institutional and legal weaknesses.
- Phase 4: The fieldwork phase involves the implementation of survey questionnaires among households, private and private sector institutions, and civil servants.
- Phase 5: The analytical and action planning phase refers to the analyses of data and the design of a specific action plan to improve local governance structures.
- Phase 6: The dissemination phase entails the dissemination of the results of the analyses to national and regional governments, officials, citizens, and research agencies.
- Phase 7: The follow[-]up phase refers to collaborating with the World Bank country team with the intention to integrate the results of the governance survey into broader country assistance initiatives. (Yong and Wenhao, 2012:305–316)

The significance of these steps for the objectives of this study is to engage with grassroots organisations (i.e., stakeholders) to improve the quality of public service delivery by increasing their involvement in municipal decision-making. Furthermore, collaborating with grassroots organisations can help to foster greater interaction between a municipality and its citizens by assisting with gathering stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies and decision-making, thereby increasing trust and building legitimacy and accountability in local government.

3.2.5 United Cities and Local Government (UCLG)

The United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) is

A global network of cities, local, regional, and metropolitan governments, as well as their alliances, dedicated to representing, protecting, and amplifying the voices of local and regional governments. (Nickson *et al.*, 2008:8)

UCLG further advocates for good governance among local government associations and acts as the convener of the Global Taskforce of Local and Regional Governments. To improve its network and reinforce the voices of local governments around the world, the UCLG uses a variety of suitable strategies, which includes the following:

- Policy and advocacy: UCLG strive to amplify the voices of territories internationally. This involves making recommendations on the role and viewpoint of local and regional government in defining the next step of global development agendas, as well as increasing national and international support and recognition for the role of local and regional government in implementation.
- Implementation: Identifying and promoting membership campaigns to accomplish global objectives and local targets.
- Learning: Creating a learning culture throughout the organisation and strengthening decentralized cooperation as a key instrument of international cooperation and development programmes.
- Monitoring and evaluation: To strengthen its global network the UCLG makes use of monitoring and reporting mechanisms. (Nickson *et al.*, 2008:9)

These strategies are important to this study by strengthening customer service approaches in local government. Such strategies may promote joint ownership of municipal initiatives aimed at enhancing stakeholder involvement and promoting excellence in customer services.

3.2.6 World Governance Index

The World Governance Index (WGI) was developed in 2008 and serves as a protocol indicator for directing public participation and good governance. The Index falls under the ambits of the Forum for a New World Governance (FnWG). The World Governance Index consists of six aggregated, broad-based governance indicators covering more than 200 countries and territories. These indicators include:

- voice and transparency (inclusive of public participation in government decision-making);
- political stability and absence of violence and terrorism;
- efficiency of government;
- standard of legislation;
- rule of law; and
- corruption prevention (Kraufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi, 2010:2).

The indicators and their associated performance metrics serve as valuable benchmark instruments to gauge the nature, scope and quality of public participation in government. A wide variety of survey institutes, think tanks (i.e., policy institutes), NGOs, foreign organisations, and private and public sector institutions provide rich data to populate the Index (Kraufmann, Kraay and Mastruzzi, 2010:4).

3.2.7 PUMA and OECD

The Public Management Committee (PUMA) of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation and Development (OECD) aims to assist countries with increasing their governance capacities by boosting the effectiveness of public and government institutions and strengthening policy-making processes. It is a focused committee of the Organisation for Economic Co-Operation Development (OECD) and contributes significantly to public sector management practices and processes. Governments and citizens of OECD member countries are generally concerned about strengthening the productivity and performance levels of public services. As a result, PUMA surveys and observations can aid in tailor-made administrative reform programmes and improve

stakeholder engagement practices (Pollitt and Bouckaert, 2003:12). This concludes a brief exposition of international standards and conventions. The sections below highlight continental imperatives regarding public participation in local government.

3.2.8 Agenda 2063 and the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation

According to Lasun (2016), Agenda 2063 is a shared framework for inclusive growth and sustainable development for Africa to be realised in the next fifty years. It is a continuation of the Pan-African drive for unity, self-determination, freedom, progress and prosperity (Njie, 2019). Agenda 2063 seeks to:

- Galvanize and unite in action all Africans and the diaspora around the common vision of a peaceful integrated and prosperous Africa.
- Harness [to] the continental endowments embodied in its people, history, cultures and natural resources, geo-political position to effect equitable and people[-]centred growth and development.
- Build on and accelerate implementation of continental frameworks and other similar initiatives.
- Provide internal coherence and coordination to continental regional and national frameworks and plans adopted by the AU, RECs and Members['] state plans and strategies.
- Offer policy space for individual, sectoral and collective actions to realise the continental vision. (Lasun, 2016:23)

Aspiration 3 of Agenda 2063 refers to good governance, democracy, respect for human rights, justice and the rule of law (Weiss, 2000; Nwebo, 2018:259). The vision of Agenda 2063 is that Africa will have capable institutions and transformative leadership in place at all levels. In 1990, an international conference on common involvement in the recovery and development process in Africa was held in Arusha, the United Republic of Tanzania (ACPPD, 1990:1). This conference was organised by the Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to contribute to the implementation of the United Nations Programme of Action for African Economic Recovery and

Development, 1986–1990, in cooperation with the rest of the United Nations framework (UN-PAAERD) (Adedeji, Bugembe and Teriba, 2014). The African People's Organisation (APO), the African Governments (AG), non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and the United Nations Agencies (UNA) have reached an understanding of the importance of common involvement in development and transformation through their concerted efforts. This led to the signing of the African Charter for Popular Participation in Development and Transformation. According to Davids, Theron and Maphunye (2005:207) the goals of this charter are to:

- Recognise the role of people's participation in Africa's recovery and development efforts.
- Raising national and international government knowledge of the dimensions, complexities, mechanisms, and potential of a development strategy focused on common programs and self-reliant efforts.
- Identify impediments to people's involvement in development and define appropriate approaches to the promotion of popular participation in policy formulation, planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of development programmes.
- Recommend actions to be taken by government, the United Nations system as well as the public and private donor agencies in building an enabling environment for authentic popular participation in the development process and encourage people and their organisations to undertake self-reliant development initiatives.
- Facilitate and coordinate the exchange of information, experience, and knowledge for mutual support among people and their organisations.
- Suggest metrics to track progress in promoting the involvement of people in the development of Africa. (Davids, Theron and Maphunye, 2005:207)

These goals further accentuate the significant premium placed on civil society engagement and public participation in decisions that affect their well-being and prosperity.

3.2.9 African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM)

The African Peer Review Mechanism, an instrument of the African Union (AU), is an integral part of the New Alliance for African Development that is aimed at “eradicating poverty and placing countries individually and collectively on a road of sustainable growth and development” (Netshituni, 2018:71). Most African countries are member states of the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) and thus, are encouraged to engage in the oversight and assessment processes of their respective governments. The Guide on Public Participation in the Public Service (DPSA, 2008:27) states that the APRM is similar to the Open Government Partnership initiative in many respects, such that countries are subjected to voluntary action towards improving governance and public participation. The APRM enables people to engage in the decision-making process as part of directing public engagement in local governance and fosters a strong interface between citizens and governments during the compilation and production of self-assessment reports. Similarly, departmental engagement plans and strategies should enable government organisations to include their stakeholders in the APRM processes (Guide on Public Participation in the Public Service, 2008:27). Van der Walddt (2012:87) emphasises this point by stating that the APRM encourages coordination and conformity regarding the application of governance values, codes, and standards in fostering local democracy in African countries.

3.2.10 Mo Ibrahim Foundation

Another protocol that guides community participation in local government on the African continent is the Mo Ibrahim Foundation (MIF). Its primary mandate is to assess the delivery of public goods, services and public policy outcomes in African countries. As such, the foundation has established the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), which is the most extensive dataset measuring African governance, providing African countries with scores and patterns across several governance dimensions. South Africa currently ranks 5th on the African continent. The MIF has given much more importance to the opinions of citizens because people are the beneficiaries of public leadership and governance. As such, one of the significant measures for the MIF to supplement the IIAG results with the understanding and satisfaction of people with the acceleration of public service delivery in government settings is ‘Citizens’

Voices', which allows for systematic and detailed analyses of current realities. The foundation strongly maintains that the voice of citizens will only be effective if the citizens themselves are competent at engaging their municipalities on service delivery impediments that affect their socioeconomic prosperity and well-being (<https://mo.ibrahim.foundation/>). The significance of this protocol for the focus of this study is the fact that the MIF has consistently flagged the data deficit when coming to inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making as well as poor policy implementation on issues of customer service in local government. As such the MIF has contributed to issues of public participation in local government by providing tools to support progress in leadership and governance in the African continent. It advocates for stakeholder organisations to engage governments and public institutions on matters of citizen participation in governance.

3.2.11 Afro-Barometer

Afro-Barometer is a Pan-African, non-partisan research network that conducts public attitudes surveys on democracy, governance, economic conditions and related issues in African countries (Aiko, 2015). To enhance participatory governance on the African continent, this network instrument also builds capacity among stakeholders in the collection, analysis, communication and use of high-quality data as well as existing private-public collaborations. In addition, this barometer has influenced several debates on topics like corruption, injustice and the desire for democracy and good governance (Diamond, 1994:4). The Afro-Barometer is used by key international stakeholders by, among others, the Economist Intelligence Unit, the UN Development Programme and the World Bank, to generate regional and global governance protocols (Besancon, 2003). Moreover, Afro-Barometer data became the first public attitude survey data included in the Ibrahim Index of African Governance in 2016. Data obtained from the Afro-Barometer serve as a valuable instrument to benchmark existing local governance praxis and learn from the experiences of other countries on the continent. This concludes an overview of continental conventions and protocols regarding public participation in local government. The following section outlines a regional perspective.

3.2.12 SADC protocols

The Southern African Development Community (SADC) developed several protocols to guide and promote good governance praxis in the region. It also provides codes of procedure and practice on various issues like public engagement (Magakwe, 2013). In an attempt to strengthen good local governance, the SADC public participation protocol has made significant strides in the consolidation of citizen participation in decision-making processes and the consolidation of democratic practices and institutions (Hicks, 2011:351). In summary, one of the main findings emanating from the section above is that substantive input from stakeholders is vital for strengthening customer service in local governance; suggesting that a comprehensive stakeholder involvement strategy should be at the epicentre of operations in local government. Such a strategy requires a new approach by government to partner and collaborate with the citizenry in matters relevant to their well-being. The primary intention should be to obtain stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, enhance the service delivery outcomes of decision-making processes and strengthen strategic priorities and actions. This concludes the section on a brief exposition of international, continental and regional standards, and the conventions of public participation in local government. The next section will probe international experience with fostering stakeholder involvement in local government. The idea is to uncover best practices for stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches. This will serve as a benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be evaluated.

3.3 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN SELECTED COUNTRIES: UNCOVERING BEST PRACTICES

To promote stakeholder engagement that will lead to more effective customer service approaches requires a new approach in local government. To design such a new approach it is necessary to probe the experiences of other countries in the design of appropriate stakeholder engagement and customer service strategies. The purpose of this section is to explore eight case studies that will include four established countries (i.e., the United Kingdom, Brazil, India and South Korea) as well as four emerging, developing African countries (i.e., Ghana, Tanzania, Kenya and Botswana)

in sub-Saharan Africa with the aim to uncover best practices for encouraging stakeholder involvement as a new customer service approach. Such best practices will serve as benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in CoE can be evaluated. The focus will on metropolitan municipalities in the selected countries—enabling a comparative analysis between them and the CoE.

3.3.1 Case study 1: United Kingdom

The United Kingdom (UK) is a constitutional monarchy comprising England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, each with its own administrative system. Each country also needs to build their own capacity for fostering public participation in governance processes. In this regard, specific legislation is aimed at giving people a stronger voice in decision-making (EIPP, 2009:11).

3.3.1.1 Government ICT policy and regulation framework

The Local Democracy, Economic Development and Construction Act 20 of 2009 mandates local authorities to promote democracy and facilitate petitions. Furthermore, the white paper: “Communities in control: Real people, real power” (2008) places a duty on local authorities to engage communities in their functions. In addition, the UK government publishes governance-related information and data to help people understand how the government functions and how decisions are made to promote and harness participatory democracy (Foley and Martin, 2000:479). The government portal www.data-gov.uk contains this information in a single searchable website. The website classifies data based on domains such as health, education, local government and so forth, and makes provision for access via software applications on smartphones and other devices (Ubaldi, 2013). According to Ndou (2004), two particular obstacles to successful public participation can be observed. The first obstacle is shifting political priorities that cause officials to be cautious about what they communicate to civil society. The second obstacle is that limited funding and resources are dedicated to public participation. This obstacle may lead to the propensity to make more authoritarian decisions. These two obstacles should be addressed in the regulatory framework of the country.

3.3.1.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

Brannan *et al.* (2006); Chadwick (2011) maintain that the UK government has embarked on several initiatives to improve engagement between the citizenry and government institutions. Examples of this include the following:

- The Ministry of Justice has established a democratic engagement branch, which supports all central government departments in engaging citizens.
- The Department of Communities and Local Government launched the community empowerment programme, which promotes public participation at the local level.
- The Department of Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform have officials specifically charged with assisting and coordinating public consultations across government spheres and tiers.
- The Cabinet Office has established the government communicators network, which is aimed at promoting and disseminating government communications good practices and engagement mechanisms, and instruments.
- The UK Local Government Association has a dedicated agency, the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government, that represents all local authorities, which supports and promotes best practice in all local authorities and assist civil society to engage with local councils.

An interesting observation about these initiatives is that the UK government also build the capacity and competency levels of public officials and elected representatives (i.e., councillors) to effectively engage citizens and to promote sound relationships between government institutions and civil society. Such training and orientation sessions include measures and mechanisms to design public policy in conjunction with stakeholders and to promote dialogue in decision-making processes. A further reflection on government initiatives is that civil society organisations are invited to become involved in government processes. There are approximately 141 000 registered voluntary and community organisations in the UK (EIPP, 2009:12). The non-profit organisation, Engage for Change, for example, aims to build a democratic

culture and participatory capacity among civil servants. Other organisations directly involved in promoting public participation include the following:

- *Participation Cymru*, providing resources for participation in Wales;
- *Our Kingdom* established a forum for citizens to debate democracy issues;
- *DEMOS*, the think tank to promote local democracy; and
- *Institute for Public Policy Research*, an independent think tank specialising in democracy, citizenship, and political power. (EIPP, 2009:9–20)

In addition, Potter (2008) highlights some of the structures and initiatives through which the capacity of public participation in the UK is strengthened:

- Public hearings across the country.
- Focus groups as a stakeholder involvement method.
- Citizen juries as a way of bringing stakeholders together to study and exchange knowledge about specific issues.
- Citizen panels, comprising representatives of stakeholders to study and share information about specific subjects.

3.3.1.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

An analysis of the approaches and methods for stakeholder engagement and customer service in the UK reveals several beneficial outcomes that may serve as best practices. The following are some of the best practices for stakeholder involvement:

- E-health services of the National Health Service, UK: This is a website designed to assist citizens in moving, living, studying, working or simply travelling abroad while avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and health-related red tape. The national hospitality UK e-health services provide several online resources, including doctor appointment bookings, e-referrals, prescription purchasing and pre-payment certificates. It also provides a European health insurance card and

a *Symptom Checker* application (Torres *et al.*, 2005). *Symptom Checker* assesses patients' symptoms to offer medical advice, including on self-care.

- Domestic Renewal Heat Incentive (RHI): This is a monetary incentive around renewable energy for UK citizens if they support the reduction of the costs of renewable energy by heating their homes with alternative sources including biomass, boilers, solar water heating and certain heat pumps. Payments are made for seven years, depending on how much renewable energy the heating system produces.

3.3.2 Case study 2: India

According to Sudeept and De Faria (2017:1), India's citizen participation strategies and mechanisms have emerged as some of the most effective in the world. The Constitutional Amendments Act, 1993 extends constitutional status to municipalities and thereby promotes stakeholder involvement and community buy-in in government initiatives. The Indian *Panchayat* system makes provision for a three-tiered governance structure consisting of villages, intermediaries and districts. People elect their village's governing council (*gram panchayat*) and chairperson who also serve on the intermediate *panchayat* council. Representatives of the district panchayat are elected by the intermediate *panchayat* council; these are people and locally elected officials with the potential to act in the public interest and have a say in how their neighbourhood develops. Citizens are encouraged to engage in the municipality's policy-making processes through ward committees that promote a bottom-up approach to participatory planning (Sudeept and De Faria, 2017:2).

3.3.2.1 Government ICT policy and regulation framework

India has made significant progress in developing a comprehensive ICT policy and regulatory framework to promote ICT-based applications for stakeholder involvement in government. The National e-Governance Plan (2006) serves as a key policy instrument to foster responsiveness, transparency and accountability in government. It also acts as a framework for seamless customer services in local government. The Department of Information Technology and the Department of Administrative Reforms

and Public Grievances collaborated on the design of this plan which includes 27 implementation projects. In addition, the National Policy on Information Technology focuses on using technology-enabled customer service approaches to address developmental challenges in education, health services, skills development, finances, job creation and governance—to mention a few areas. The policy aims to realise the full potential of ICT in the country's economy and to deliver ICT solutions to the rest of the globe. It is envisaged that cloud computing will dramatically accelerate the design and deployment of government services, as well as enable social networking and participatory governance.

3.3.2.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

According to Menon and Hartz-Karp (2019:6), India is fully committed to promoting public participation. This is especially evident in local government where stakeholders gained a far stronger voice in municipal decision-making and policy-making processes. The government of India have designed the following initiatives to build public participation capacity:

- Participatory budgeting: This initiative is effective in reducing inequalities and disparities associated with service delivery in Indian metropolitan cities.
- Modern deliberative democracy initiatives: According to Menon and Hartz-Karp (2019:9), these initiatives are aimed at addressing some of the barriers associated with public involvement in service delivery.
- Advocacy groups: Interest groups are convened on subjects or issues that the group cares deeply about and advocate their suggested solutions to government decision-makers.
- Institutional structures for local democracy: These structures are aimed at promoting participatory governance through proper consultation on urban matters. Some of the most significant structures include ward committees, neighbourhood groups, area development societies, neighbourhood committees and community development societies (Sudeept and De Faria, 2017:4).

- Organic participation: This initiative refers to social movements that advocate for greater political expression and the right of marginalised, dispossessed, and disadvantaged people including labour unions and membership-based organisations (Menon and Hartz-Karp, 2019:3). Kumar (2016: XIX) argues that organic participation is consistent with the ideals of social justice and equality in efforts to foster democratic urban governance.

3.3.2.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

Since India intends to position itself as a digital and technological hub in the world, best practices for stakeholder involvement mainly centre around e-governance (electronic) applications. E-governance essentially entails the application of information and communication technology to government functions to realise 'SMART' governance, i.e., Simple, Moral, Accountable, Responsive and Transparent (SARC, 2008:16). In terms of the government's e-governance strategy, called the Eleventh Plan of E-Government, twenty-seven sectors were reformed and 60 000 service centres have been established around the country to facilitate public service delivery. It also allows for the expansion of the optical fibre network and internet connections to all *panchayat* levels (SARC, 2008). Other examples of e-governance applications include the following:

- Automation of Central Exercise and Service Tax, which aims at improving tax-payer services, transparency, accountability and efficiency in the indirect tax administration.
- The introduction of the ICT E-Office that is aimed at increasing the usage of workflow and rule-based file routing, quick search and the retrieval of files and office orders, digital signatures for authentication forms and reporting components.
- The establishment of a service-oriented approach in the design and delivery of government services, called MCA21.
- Digitisation of land records to facilitate access to administrative forms and to update land databases. (SARC, 2008:9)

An assessment of these applications reveals that e-governance reforms generally engender greater citizen involvement in policy formulation and promote a responsive administration. The assessment further indicates that several best practices can be extracted from these applications. Of particular significance for this study are the respective domains into which e-governance is divided. These include e-Citizens, e-Services, e-Administration and e-Society (Kumar and Bhatnagar, 2001). In addition, these dimensions are maintained by government to citizen (G2C), government to business (G2B) and government to government (G2G) engagements. These dimensions and types of engagement are outlined in detail in the “National e-Government Plan” (NeGP) and only a brief synopsis of this stakeholder involvement and customer service approach is provided below.

- Government to citizen (G2C): In this form of government interaction, an interface is created between the government and the citizenry. The primary objective is to make both government and government institutions more citizen-oriented. Examples include the Gyandoot Community-Owned Rural Internet project, the Central Vigilance Commission, the Vijaywada Online Information Centre, Mandals Online and the Land Property Registration System (Kumar and Bhatnagar, 2001). These initiatives are computerised systems that make services available 24 hours a day, seven days a week with the primary aim of providing citizens with customer service excellence.
- Government to business (G2B): Various initiatives are used in this type of e-government engagement to assist the business community as well as providers of goods and services in seamlessly interacting with government agencies. When interacting with the government, the goal is to minimise all types of red tape, save time, decrease operational costs and create a more transparent corporate environment. Transactional G2B strategies can be used in licensing, permits, procurement and revenue collection. Similarly, these models assist in providing a welcoming environment for businesses, allowing them to function more efficiently and give useful information. Examples include the E-Procurement Project and the MCA21 Mission Mode Project.

- Government to government (G2G): This type of e-government interaction is used not only to restructure the governmental processes involved in the operation of government institutions, but also to maximise the flow of information and provide a seamless customer-centric experience within and between public institutions and government agencies. Its primary goal is to boost efficiency, productivity and output. The G2G customer service methodology aids in the improvement of internal government procedures of which Khajane Project and SmartGov are examples.

3.3.3 Case study 3: South Korea

The inclusion of South Korea as a case study provides valuable insight into stakeholder involvement praxis from the Far East. What makes this case unique is because unlike with western forms of public engagement, citizen involvement in South Korea evolved from strong forms of activism, protest and demonstration (Chung, 2011:19). The country has since adopted more conventional and liberal forms of democratic practice; the advancement in ICT especially, has accelerated public participation in different sociopolitical and economic arenas.

3.3.3.1 Government ICT policy and regulation framework

Like India, South Korea has emerged as a global leader in e-government applications (UN E-Government Survey, 2018). In 2002, the release of e-Korea Vision 2006 became a major impetus for the transitioning into an ICT policy environment. This document established a solid foundation for e-government initiatives such as the roll-out of 3G wireless technology and their IMT-2000 strategy. Further thrust came with the adoption of the U-Korea Master Plan which introduced a seamless customer service approach (Menon, 2011; West, 2010). Moatshe (2014) argues that the country succeeded in embarking on several programmes to bridge the digital divide for equal ICT access. The government's official website has also evolved into an integrated citizen-centric portal where citizens can obtain access to almost any kind of service. The portal utilises a wide variety of customer service methods in all government functional domains. Chung (2015:107) confirms that South Korea has established a comprehensive ICT policy and regulatory framework to establish a sound citizen-

centred approach. This approach makes it also possible for private enterprises to engage the government and to make services available in higher quantity and quality.

3.3.3.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

The country's policy and regulatory framework place strong obligations on public authorities to include stakeholders such as the citizenry, businesses, other government agencies and private firms in its operations (Chung, 2011:17). To build public participation capacity, the government of South Korea has embarked on several initiatives aimed at stimulating public dialogue with various stakeholders. These initiatives include but are not limited to the following:

- Voting: In this initiative, stakeholder engagement is promoted by requesting stakeholders to formally express their preferences (Chung, 2011:20).
- Referendums: This creative mechanism promotes direct participation in which people can influence decision-making processes (Chung, 2011:19).
- Public meetings and hearings: Senior government officials meet the public or relevant stakeholders at a public place such as a community hall to open debate on particular issues. Question and answer sessions are normally conducted in this format.
- Town hall meetings: These types of meetings are common; ordinary members of the public are given a forum to express their views and obtain prompt responses to public service delivery issues (Nabatchi and Leighninger, 2015).
- Citizen surveys and polling: These surveys and polls are usually conducted via smartphones or other digital devices. It allows policymakers to obtain a large amount of data from citizens at a relatively low cost.
- Citizen advisory committee panels: The main function of these panels is to cultivate a cordial relationship between the public and stakeholder representatives. Panel members usually include political officials, non-governmental organisations, community-based organisations, and scientific experts (Heath, 2013).

- Activism and protests: In South Korea, the spirit of activism and protest is still strong and is allowed through human rights such as freedom of speech and a free press (Banyan, 2006).
- Petitions: Maseko (2018:29) argues that petitions as a public participation mechanism significantly enhance responsiveness, accountability and openness by government.

Although these initiatives are also commonly applied in other countries, the particular socioeconomic and political realities of South Korean society add a unique dimension to its utilisation.

3.3.3.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

Chung (2015:108) emphasises that the level of South Korea's informatisation is highly recognised and receives worldwide acknowledgement, as can be seen from the fact that South Korea has ranked first for three consecutive years in the United Nations International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Digital Opportunity Index. South Korea's e-government services are commonly regarded as international best practice. One example of best practice for involving stakeholders is the introduction of the e-customs system (called UNI-PASS) which was established to complete an online export and import system. Korea Customs Service won the World Customs Organisation trophy in 2006 for their efforts to protect intellectual property with the fastest customs system among 169 member countries (Mogaha, 2008). A further example is the Information Network Village Project which won first place in the category of strengthening public policy-making processes. In addition, South Korea's online e-procurement system (KONEPS) won the United Nations Public Service Award and was selected by the OECD as one of the best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement. This initiative also won the Global IT Excellence Award from the World Congress on Information Technology in 2006. The following examples serve as best practices (for benchmark purposes) for promoting stakeholder involvement in South Korea; they will serve as metrics against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be gauged.

- Electronic procurement service (www.g2b.go.kr): To increase and promote efficiency and openness in public procurement, all procurement procedures in South Korea are handled electronically through a single window of procurement. As a result, all steps of procurement are handled online, including bidding, contract awarding, contracting, delivery and payment; and procurement progress can be tracked. Furthermore, all registered bidders are allowed to participate in the bidding of all public organisations including national organisations, local government bodies and public institutions by a single registration on the G2B system (Chung, 2015:117).
- Electronic customs clearance service (portal.customs.go.kr): This form of an e-government system involves sharing data across logistics organisations to optimise and streamline export/import logistics businesses and procedures as well as the implementation of a user-friendly batch logistics processing service. The export/import reports to the customs office and applications for inspections and quarantine to the appropriate organisations are integrated to strengthen customer service approaches, intending to provide a one-stop service (Chung, 2015:118).
- Patent service (www.kiporo.go.kr): Patent services like patent applications and status checks are delivered online as part of this type of best practice. This category of an e-government system's available content of service includes procedures for patent applications, reviews and judgments as well as procedures for filing objections and technical evaluations—all of which are publicly available online to provide patent administrative services 24 hours a day, seven days a week. For instance, consumers of this service can check and manage their patents and rights information effectively and productively. Services like applications for issuing certificates, verifications and commission payments are provided online (Chung, 2015:119).
- e-People, an online petition & discussion portal (www.epeople.go.kr): This form of government initiative facilitates people's participation in policymaking by processing people's grievances and suggestions via a single window. The

content of service associated with this best practice is that consumers of services or clients can submit their inputs and opinions on unfair administrative handling, infringements of their rights and interests, improvement of institutions and various other policies through integrated online windows. Additionally, consumers of these services can check the outcome of their results online (Chung, 2015:119).

- *On-nara* business process system (BPS) (government to business): The *On-nara* business process system (BPS) is a modern business process management system that has boosted administration productivity and transparency by handling, recording and monitoring all government business procedures online in a uniform manner. All government business in South Korea is classified according to functionality and aims, and business progress and performance are methodically managed down to the most basic units of work, due to this program. Document generation and business procedures are standardised and decision-making processes are documented (among other things) to maintain public administration's legitimacy, accountability, trust and transparency (Chung, 2015:120).
- National computing and information agency (NCIA): This agency's mission is to administer and operate the government's information systems by combining them into two data centres and providing non-stop administrative services using the greatest information technology and experience available. Back-up systems for major infrastructure, state-of-the-art security facilities and top-notch human resources ensure that e-Government services are always available—seven days a week, 24 hours a day. Real-time monitoring of system failures ensures advanced information security and reliability. To address issues such as rampant corruption, underpaid salaries for workers, ambiguous subcontract amounts, non-payment vulnerabilities in the direct payment method and unsystematic project management in the construction industry, the Seoul Metropolitan Government has implemented two seamless customer service approaches (Chung, 2015:120).

- The new subcontractor payment system: Seoul's city government decided to make separate payments for prime contractors and subcontractors, as well as an 'e-Immediately' online system payment, to ensure that a prime contractor has paid its subcontractors, materials and equipment vendors, and workers before receiving monthly progress payments from the city government. Once all the prime contractor's payables have been paid, the monthly payments are issued instantaneously to the prime contractor, in coordination with banking institutions. Subcontractors who have signed up for the online system have immediate access to the funds (Chung, 2015:121).
- Construction *Allimi* and *One-PMIS*: The City government of Seoul has also established the *One-PMIS* (a project manager information system) whereby all project stakeholders can monitor a project in real time. Key project information, such as the project overview and progress updates, will be posted by the client's contractors and consulting engineers. This website also contains all project documentation. As a result, construction resources may be efficiently managed and corruption during the project implementation stage can be avoided. The construction *Allimi* (meaning "informer") websites provide all necessary information about ongoing projects in the city to the general audience. The public can be given access to information about a project that the general public needs to know such as the project outline, pictures of work in progress and web camera images to monitor the construction site in real time (Chung, 2015:122).

3.3.4 Case study 4: Brazil

The emergence of participatory institutions in Brazil recently gained prominence because of the efforts made by that country to deepen democratic participation (Avritzer, 2012:116). This case is unique because the country divides its participation efforts into three categories namely bottoms-up participation, power sharing between state actors and civil society, and ratification processes whereby stakeholders approve or reject policy decisions. Avritzer (2012:116) argues that bottom-up participation especially is significant because it enables citizens to participate at the grassroots, local government level.

3.3.4.1 Government ICT policy and regulation framework

In Brazil, e-government is a federal government competence. The e-government executive committee oversees actions aimed at making government more accessible to citizens through ICT. The process commenced in the early 2000s with the formation of an inter-ministerial working group tasked with examining and proposing laws and guidelines to enable new kinds of electronic citizen involvement. The executive committee is now overseen by the Ministry of Planning and includes representatives from different ministries. The Brazilian e-government's primary objective, according to the committee's website (<http://www.governoeletronico.gov.br/o-gov.br/principios>), is to promote citizenship and digital inclusion, encourage the use of free software, use knowledge management to articulate e-government and public policies, optimise resources and integrate actions with other levels of government (federal, regional and local). According to Sanabria *et al.* (2014:23), the main aims of the committee are to:

- promote citizenship and digital inclusion;
- encourage the use of free software;
- employ knowledge management as a means to articulate e-government and public policies;
- optimize resources; and
- integrate actions with other levels of government. (Sanabria *et al.*, 2014:23)

The Brazilian government also established the Secretariat of Logistics and Information Technology to oversee e-government programmes and to formulate ICT-related policies and regulations.

3.3.4.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

Different participatory platforms are implemented in metropolitan municipalities. To promote community engagement, the following initiatives to build public participation capacity are typically used:

- Participatory budgeting: The City of Porto Alegre introduced participatory budgeting as an initiative to promote protocols of good governance. This budgeting method convenes neighbourhoods as well as broader assemblies to identify spending priorities (Baicocchi, 2015). Since the introduction of this budgeting method, the metro has experienced positive trends in the general well-being of communities and also experienced rapid improvement in public participation.
- Public participation professional: This measuring instrument is used in Brazil to foster community engagement. Professionals are paid to design, implement and facilitate participatory platforms in various metropolitan cities, to harness dialogue and engagement (Nabatchi and Leighninger, 2015:27).
- Militant public official: This innovative initiative is used to design, facilitate and evaluate participation. Because of the revolutionary political background of the country, 'militant public officials' are expected to bring radical and often aggressive ideas into practice (Helene, 2020:6).
- Professional mobiliser: This initiative is aimed at mobilising heterogeneous audiences for participation. Professional mobilisers (e.g., community leaders) with an activist background are permanently appointed to organise public participation events. Their work mainly consists of rallying audiences and facilitating public dialogue. They are also expected to mobilise civil society networks. Their efforts are commonly regarded as more legitimate than conventional participation mechanisms since it offers an alternative to the perceived elitist and technocratic bias in policy-making processes (Bherer, Gauthier and Simard, 2017).
- Professional expert: This initiative is based on the specialised knowledge and insight of individuals. These professional experts are contracted by the government to develop solutions for governance-related issues (Bherer, Gauthier and Simard, 2017).

3.3.4.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

A desktop survey revealed several best practices that can be extracted from cities in Brazil. Two of the most innovative best practices to involve city stakeholders are outlined below.

- **Citizen-assistance centres:** These centres were established to offer support with the provision of more than 500 different public services and they are conveniently located in shopping malls or at other public amenities (Rinne *et al.*, 2001). The quality of service is enhanced by the reduced time that communities have to spend engaging the government on a 24/7 basis.
- **Time-saver centres:** These centres offer a bundle of public services and information at a single point of entry. They bring together different government department services and are located in public places near customers. Customer satisfaction surveys revealed that communities are highly satisfied (94%) with these centres since they promote better and higher quality services within a short period. Thus, they enhance a seamless, customer-centric approach (Ndou, 2004:10).

3.3.5 Case study 5: Ghana

As a case study, Ghana offers unique insights, mainly due to two reasons. The first reason is that the country is renowned on the continent for its successful government reform programmes. These programmes were mainly aimed at improving local governance and administrative processes to strengthen service delivery. The second reason is that the country is known for the significant role of policy institutes (known as think tanks) in sociopolitical processes. These think tanks enhance stakeholder engagement (Abraham, 2019). Abraham (2019) further postulates that the country has developed strong grassroots involvement from civil society and that civil society has also organised itself into think tanks to influence local governance. The main techniques used by these think tanks are lobbying, policy analysis, public debates, conferences, workshops, colloquia, capacity building and training. In addition, these

think tanks include family-owned, non-profit / non-government policy centres, profit-oriented institutions and academic centres.

3.3.5.1 Government ICT policy and regulation framework

Ghana's policy and regulatory framework on the utilisation of ICT is founded on the government's developmental mandate. This mandate intends to harness participatory local governance through human capital development (Abraham, 2019). Citizens should develop the capacity to influence public decision-making processes. The government's ICT policy and regulatory framework has evolved with administrative reforms and was formalised in 2003 with the establishment of the National ICT Policy and Plan Development Committee as a focused committee within the Ministry of Communication. This Committee designed the ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) Policy (Republic of Ghana, 2003). This policy is the foundation upon which Ghana's e-governance vision is built. In terms of Ghana's ICT4AD policy, the government has four types of e-Government services as part of its aim to harness participatory governance, promote accountability and increase government efficiency. Similar to what the case is in India, Torgby and Asabere (2014:39) summarise these four types of services as follows:

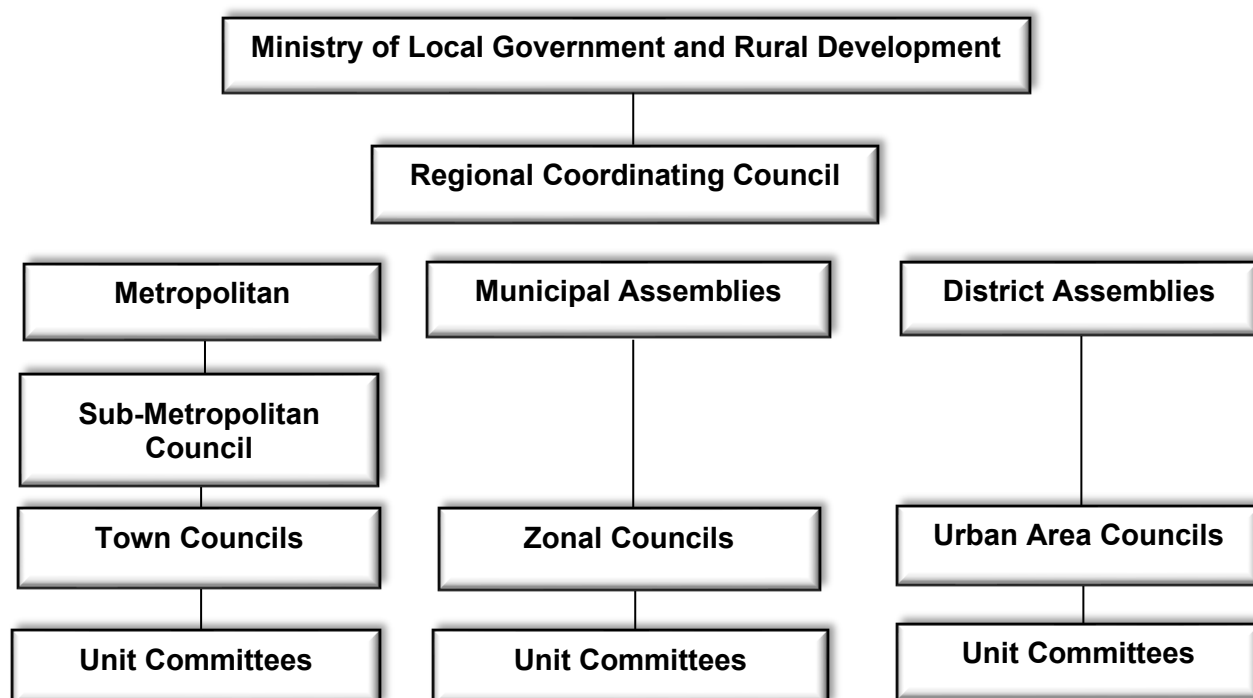
- Government to citizen (G2C): The G2C entails disseminating information to the public and providing key citizen services such as renewing licenses and filing tax reports. In addition, the G2C includes assistance with important services such as education, healthcare and hospital information—among other things.
- Government to business (G2B): G2B involves various sorts of customer service alternatives which are traded between the government and various groups or segments such as local businesses; small, medium and large firms; and youth organisations. One of the seamless services provided by this method of e-government system is e-Purchase, an online government supplier exchange for the acquisition of products and services by the government.

- Government to employee (G2E): G2E involves government-to-citizen services as well as services that are exclusively available to government personnel, such as human capital training and activities that improve a government system's everyday operating operations and interactions with citizens.
- Government to government (G2G): G2G involves services taking place at two different government levels, namely at the domestic or local and international levels. Fundamentally, G2G engage in dealings between the central and local government levels and between ministries and government agencies. To rephrase, the G2G mode of e-government in Ghana involves transactions between governments and can be used as a technique to strengthen international relations and diplomacy.

3.3.5.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

The government of Ghana embarked on various initiatives to facilitate discussion between government agencies, citizens and private sector enterprises. Several big government programmes have been launched to increase Ghana's public participation capacity. One example of such an initiative was the establishment of the Integrated Social Development Centre to advance accountability and transparency in government (Abraham, 2019). A further example is the establishment of 38 think tanks to host public debates, conferences, workshops and colloquia. These think tanks also provide input to the annual State of the Nation Address, the national budget and other policy concerns. Government initiatives are premised on the stipulations of the 1992 Constitution of Ghana. Based on these stipulations, legislative provisions have been adopted to facilitate public involvement in local government decision-making processes (Molepo, 2013:25). The institutionalisation of public participation in the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development is illustrated in Figure 3.2 below.

Graph 3.1: Public participation structures within the Ministry of Local Government and Rural Development



Source: Adapted from MLGRD (2005:72)

3.3.5.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

In Ghana, internet penetration has become one of the most important drivers for facilitating citizen dialogue and engagement as well as engendering stakeholder involvement in governance. This is implemented in such a way that it builds a culture of legitimacy, accountability and trust in government institutions. As a result, the country's ICT penetration has increased significantly in almost every sector of the economy including business, education and agriculture. Mensah (2016:62) supports this statement and adds that Ghana consistently ranks high in the United Nations' E-government Readiness Surveys. In addition, a study by the International Telecommunication Union on measuring the information society in 2015 found that Ghana's ICT Development Index has shown consistent improvement. According to Mensah (2016:67), an analysis of the Ghanaian government's efforts to improve stakeholder involvement and customer services reveals several best practices. These efforts aim to enhance access to government services and to improve the internal functioning of ministries, departments and agencies. The following is a synopsis of

best practices in Ghana for promoting stakeholder involvement as a customer service approach (Mensah, 2016):

- **Electronic services (e-Services):** The Government of Ghana's online services portal was created to act as a one-stop shop for services and information provided by all government agencies to both businesses and citizens. The e-Services portal provides a platform for online submission application services through the use of e-forms, an e-payment interface for payment of services, postal and delivery services and application security for various government agencies. These services were piloted with 13 Accra-based agencies before being officially introduced in 2014.
- The goal is to provide citizens with timely, effective and efficient government services to strengthen and encourage their participation in participatory governance. The platform's services include applying for birth certificates, lodging/catering establishments, police reports (fingerprint checks), applications for registration as a food product importer and online personal data submission for passport applications. Additionally, citizens can apply for and pay for marriage registration and marriage licenses through the Accra Metropolitan Assembly.
- **e-Payment:** The E-Payment portal allows residents and other individuals or corporate organisations who conduct business with the Government of Ghana through the electronic services (e-Services) platform to pay for government services. It allows for the payment of fixed fees, tangible products, services and ad hoc services. The e-Payment portal intends to broaden the scope of payment options, streamline payment processes and improve efficiency, particularly regarding payments and generally, in the service provision for all government ministries, departments and agencies. It shortens queues, encourages payment for government services online, increases public accessibility and eventually, leads to increased interaction between the government and civil society.
- **Government e-Workspace:** The government launched the e-Workspace system for 102 ministries, departments and agencies to reform government using ICT.

According to Mensah (2016:68), the e-Workspace system complements efforts already underway to create “a paperless government administration”. The system comprises the Correspondence Management System, the Document Management System and the Meeting Management System. These systems enable the preparation, processing, receipt and management of e-letters, e-dispatch, e-minutes, e-signing, data capturing and e-storage of documents. It further allows for the retrieval of electronic documents via searching as well as the application of document restrictions based on user roles and responsibilities.

- One-stop-shop centres: These centres provide integrated services and information from government institutions to citizens. Multiple services are conveniently located in one office at public amenities to improve access to typical services such as applications for identification and passport documents, the payment of utility bills and the submission of taxes.
- Mobile Technology for Community Health (MoTeCH): MoTeCH is part of Ghana's maternal health service delivery. It comprises two complementing applications namely a *Mobile-Midwife* application and a *Nurse* application. *Mobile-Midwife* sends information to pregnant women during specific phases of their pregnancy. This is part of the Ghanaian Ministry of Health's community-driven approach to healthcare services which aims to reduce maternal and childhood mortality.

3.3.6 Case study 6: Kenya

Kenya serves as a suitable case study since it has a constitutional democracy and a system of government that is comparable to that of South Africa. Article 201 of the Constitution of Kenya (2010) stipulates that the county (i.e., municipal) government should build the capacity of people by forming organised groups to represent their different interests. Adede (2017:47) stresses this statement when he argues that the Constitution offers a clear legislative basis for the enhancement of participatory local government through devolved county-level structures. As the supreme law of the nation, the Constitution provides for access to relevant and essential information (Moseti, cited in Adede, 2017:50–51) to ensure that the mechanism of stakeholder

involvement is transparent and consistent. Furthermore, Articles 118(1) and 196(1) instruct parliament to hold public meetings for county assemblies and facilitate and coordinate public participation in committees. Furthermore, as supported by Moseti (2017), Article 201(1) lays down transparency and accountability requirements, including participation by stakeholders, regarding public financial matters. One of Kenya's best global stakeholder engagement activities is Article 35 of the Constitution, which lays down the right to access information. There must be informative and constructive contact with stakeholders. This guarantees that all relevant information can be published to the public in advance. The values and principles of public service are set out in Article 232 of the Constitution. For example, sub-article (1) (f) provides for transparency and the dissemination of timely and accurate information to the public, which therefore, enables context-oriented public participation processes. Article 174(c) factors in that the object of devolution is to increase the participation of individuals in the exercise of the powers of the state and the decision-making processes concerning them. The constitution here envisages a model of democratic engagement tailored to a particular group or locality, which is why decisions are made at the individual level that concerns them (Adede, 2017). Based on this stipulation, the government embarked on several initiatives to promote stakeholder involvement and increase customer services.

3.3.6.1 Government ICT policy and regulations

Like the other cases analysed, the government of Kenya has established a comprehensive ICT policy and regulatory framework to direct its e-government initiatives. Wamoto (2015:906) argues that the extensive ICT applications in the commercial, business and government sectors generally lead to positive participatory outcomes. The policy framework gained prominence in 2004 with the establishment of the e-Government policy. This policy was supplemented with national ICT policies under the auspices of the Ministry of Information and Communication Technology. The government has since initiated several e-government customer service approaches with the objective of strengthening the protocols of good governance, transparency, accountability and trust within the local government sphere. According to Wamoto (2015) and IGRTC (2016), some of the most significant customer service approaches introduced include the following:

- e-Registry for business;
- e-Registration for passport and other applications;
- G-Pay as a financial processing system;
- the Integrated Financial Management Information System;
- the Integrated Personnel and Payroll Database;
- the Local Authorities Integrated Financial Operations Management System;
- the Education Management Information System; and
- the Integrated Taxation Management System.

Since the establishment of its e-Government policy in 2004, the Kenyan government has launched several policies, regulations and strategies. Among the most significant include the ICT Masterplan (2014), the Ministry of ICT Strategic Planning?Plan (2013–2017), Kenya Vision 2030, the ICT Strategic Authority Plan (2013–2018) and the World Economic Forum Global IT Report (2015). Findings from the UN E-Government Survey (2014)—which used the E-Government Development Index as a measurement instrument—and the Global Information Technology Report (2015)—which used the Network Readiness Index to assess the extent to which a government leverages digital technologies in the provision of services—revealed the Kenyan government's significant progress in e-readiness (Imbaba and Kimile, 2017:321). In addition, internet penetration is supported by private sector initiatives such as TEAMS, EASSy, LION, and SEACOM. These enterprises have offered government agencies, national and regional institutions, commercial service providers and individuals with high-capacity broadband access. Mobile money transfer systems have been established as a result of these technologies (ICT Masterplan, 2014).

3.3.6.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

Effective stakeholder engagement necessitates the development of strategies that facilitate dialogues between government agencies, citizens and businesses. Several large government programmes to strengthen Kenya's stakeholder involvement capacity have been initiated around the country. According to Adede (2017:46–57), the most significant initiatives in this regard include the following:

- **Study circles:** These are important for having discussions on any issue tabled and are usually done in stages. Study circles help to acquire new ideas among members of a given group and alternate views can be found that may not be possible when dealing with individuals or specific groups. It involves groups from diverse racial, educational and religious backgrounds, thereby offering different views on governance issues.
- **Public *Barazas*:** Public *Barazas* are meetings that are convened to provide opportunities for public interaction with policymakers. The national meeting is known as the Chief's *Barazas*.
- ***Bunge Mashinani*:** This refers to a form of stakeholder engagement that entails public interaction with the representatives of the county (i.e., municipal) to deliberate on issues affecting the particular local community.
- **Impeachment and recall proceedings:** These proceedings are aimed at senior state officials to promote their accountability. Officials who transgress codes of conduct and behave in an unprofessional manner can be recalled. This enhances responsiveness and trust in government.
- **Referenda:** Both the Constitution and county legislation provide for the holding of referenda on matters of public interest. This is an important national mechanism for public participation.
- **Citizens advisory boards:** The main aim of this instrument is to resolve concerns such as housing and economic development through public stakeholder participation. Anyone willing to volunteer may be a member of a citizens' advisory board and thus, is independent of control by the authorities. Consequently, these boards are generally regarded as unbiased and legitimate.

- Public hearings: Public hearings entail meetings represented by different political parties to address issues. People can express their views, opinions and inputs freely, which can, in turn, be debated by the regulator.
- Constitutional and statutory bodies: Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices have been established in Kenya in terms of Chapter 15 of the 2010 Constitution. Constitutional Commissions and Independent Offices are tasked by Article 249(1) of the Constitution with defending the people's sovereignty, ensuring the strict adherence to democratic values and principles by all state agencies and promoting constitutionalism. These commissions must ensure effective public engagement in their operational mandate to honour and uphold their constitutional obligation. Some commissions and legislative bodies have detailed and comprehensive laws demanding productive stakeholder engagement in their daily operational activities.
- Commissions, taskforces and working committees: The state occasionally appoints commissions or taskforces to investigate a specific issue of public concern.
- Written and oral submissions: Executive authorities at all spheres of government post a notice inviting stakeholders to make oral or written contributions to any new proposed policies or regulations. These notices are published in the press or distributed via county notice boards or *barazas*.
- Performance surveys and social audit reports: Performance reviews of state agencies by independent agencies provide an important avenue for public participation. Government–citizen engagement arises through the process of performance review opportunities. As such, the principles of accountability, trust and legitimacy are promoted.
- Public watchdog groups: According to Adede (2017:50), public watchdog groups involve individuals who are charged with keeping the authorities in check. These individuals act as community representatives who educate the

general public about government functions and activities. These groups also play a vital role in curtailing all forms of corruption since they seek openness and transparency in government decision-making.

- Sector working groups: These groups serve as a mechanism to bring stakeholders in contact with government decision-makers, particularly during budgeting processes. The sectors refer to clusters of government ministries, departments and agencies working in a related functional area of service delivery (e.g., health, transport, energy and education).

Apart from these national initiatives, Adede (2017:51) highlights the fact that the City of Mombasa also embarked on initiatives to promote public participation. Some of these initiatives include the establishment of county forums, budget planning forums, validation forums, town hall meetings and policy forums. These forums are usually well attended by community representatives and provide meaningful input to government decisions.

3.3.6.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

The government of Kenya has undertaken several customer service approaches regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance. These approaches accentuate the government's commitment to fostering local democracy in general and stakeholder involvement in particular. In this regard, Ngaru and Wafula (2015) and Khisa, Odima and Wafula (2020) highlight the following best practices:

- Huduma customer service centre initiative: These centres are digital hubs that facilitate customer service interfaces. They aim to strengthen the service delivery of public institutions through one-stop-shop models applied in other countries. Customers can access a variety of public services and information at a single location. To date, such centres have been established in Nairobi, Mombasa, Kisumu, Machakos, Nakuru, Eldoret, Kakamega, Nyeni, Embu and Narok. Some of these services can be completed entirely online, while others require the user to physically present oneself at the Huduma centre after

completing some aspects of the process online. The renewal of business and driver's licenses, online tax return submissions, reporting public complaints, student loan applications, and applications for passports and identification documents are just a few of the services available.

- Kenya Open Data Initiative (KODI): Launched in 2015, this initiative endeavours to make key government developmental, demographic, statistical and expenditure data available in a digital format that researchers, policymakers, ICT developers and the general public may use.
- Digital Literacy Programme (DLP): The government initiated this seamless customer service approach in 2013 with four primary components: technology and infrastructure, teacher and training, digital content and local assembly. The programme is aimed at integrating the use of digital technologies in learning and is open to students in all public elementary schools. It incorporates technology into the learning environment to bring about systemic change in basic and higher education by transforming and supplementing teaching and learning modalities.
- Presidential Digital Talent Programme: This programme intends to develop ICT leadership and raise the relevance of ICT in business principles in management and public service delivery. It also aims to increase government ICT technical competence for effective service delivery. Internships are available for ICT and engineering graduates for one year. Trainees are mentored in both private and public institutions. The ultimate goal is to produce a workforce capable of providing effective and efficient service delivery through the application of ICT.

3.3.7 Case study 7: Tanzania

As a developing country on the African continent, the researcher selected Tanzania a case study since it is largely comparable to the system of government in South Africa. Engel (2006) and Mdee and Thorley (2016) confirm that similar to South Africa, the government of Tanzania strongly emphasises local government accountability and the

fostering of local democracy. To substantiate this statement, Mdee and Thorley (2016:16) maintain that the Tanzanian government has joined the Open Government Project to strengthen good governance protocols in the country. The Open Government Project is a global initiative aimed at encouraging transparency, accountability, citizen empowerment, corruption prevention and the use of digital technologies to improve local governance (Mdee and Thorley, 2016:16). Charles and Adlyne (2019:16) also argue that there is ample evidence that the local sphere of government in Tanzania actively promotes stakeholder engagement for improving communities' quality of life. The authors further argue that participation is manifested by the citizenry's active role in governance structures like village or neighbourhood assembly meetings and public service committees such as water management committees and school committees (Engel, 2006:13).

3.3.7.1 Government ICT policy and regulations

The ICT policy and regulatory framework in Tanzania are primarily aimed at poverty reduction and the promotion of good governance protocols (De, 2006). In strengthening customer service initiatives, the country has also made significant progress in establishing the e-Government Agency to coordinate, administer and promote e-government activities in government. The framework is supported by the Public Organisation Ministry of Works, Transport and Communication ICT Policy's e-Government Standards (2016). Similarly, Tanzania's Medium-Term National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction, Mini Tiger Plan and Long-Term Perspective Plan 2011/12-2025/26 all stress the importance of technology in boosting productivity. Moreover, the government issued the National ICT Policy in 2013 (President Office, 2012; Sein and Harindranath, 2004). The implementation of this policy is supported by the Terrestrial National Optic Fibre Cable projects which cover a distance of 10 674 km and connects local authorities to central government institutions. As a result, the government has successfully deployed e-government-wide systems that enable the government to achieve key business processes more efficiently, effectively and reliably. According to the MWTC ICT Policy (2016) and the National e-Government Strategy (2013), some of the most significant systems include the following:

- National Payment System consisting of the Tanzania Interbank Settlement System, Electronic Clearing House, and the Retail Payment System
- Integrated Financial Management System
- Human Capital Management Information System
- Land Management System
- Health Information System
- Geographical Information System

The government of Tanzania recognises that investing in technology and innovation is critical to realising the ethos of the open government initiative characterised by openness, citizen participation, accountability and integrity. Policy initiatives that support this position include the following:

- The National Information and Communication Technology policy (2003).
- The Tanzania Beyond Tomorrow e-Education Development Programme to promote e-learning and internet connectivity at all institutions of higher learning.
- Telemedicine Services focusing on the provision of distance clinical healthcare and improving access to medical services.
- The Water Sector Management Information System for planning and monitoring of water distribution services.
- The Tanzania Global Learning Agency as a hub that links with 120 similar facilities globally for knowledge sharing.
- The e-Government Agency to oversee the use of ICT in public service delivery.

3.3.7.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

Similar to Ghana, government initiatives aimed at building public participation capacity in Tanzania are characterised by the strong role of policy forums. According to Engen (2006:6), these policy forums can be regarded as “civil society umbrella bodies” by facilitating meaningful participatory engagement in policy decisions. These policy forums were instrumental in the formulation and implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy, the Public Expenditure Review and Local Government Reforms. All these initiatives are aimed at poverty reduction and the decentralisation of

government decision-making (Policy Forum, 2003:5). According to Michael (2004:88), other initiatives aimed at building public participation capacity include the following:

- The formation of strategic coalitions between government and civil society organisations;
- the promotion of representation in political processes, especially in selecting suitable organisations to represent civil society sector given the limited number of spaces available; and
- the enhancement of community engagement through international support.

3.3.7.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

An analysis of the official documentation of the government of Tanzania such as the MoWI ICT Policy (2016), Public Service Management (Office of the Presidency, 2013) and the e-Gov Strategy (2013) revealed several best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement. Some of the most significant best practices include the following:

- The establishment of the Government Mailing System in 2015 as a customer service approach to minimise the use of disposable mail. According to Mwakyusa (2015), this practice has improved timely internal and external communication and information sharing due to reduced operating expenses for document printing. Furthermore, the system was designed to provide a safe and dependable government communication channel as well as a formal framework for sharing information between government agencies.
- The launch of the Water Utilities Information System to increase customer service in the water sector. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation has been using this system since 2011 to collate data and assess the monthly performance of water management institutions (e-Gov Strategy, 2013). The system improves data and information accessibility for monitoring, planning and decision-making as well as information dissemination to all stakeholders. It also enhances

auditing processes and the evaluation of commercially operated water utilities (Hamad, 2018).

- The government of Tanzania has embarked on the implementation of an extensive eHealth Strategic Plan intending to revolutionising healthcare delivery by allowing information access and supporting the healthcare process, management and decision-making. Since 2013, this stakeholder involvement plan in the health sector has aimed to modernise Tanzania's healthcare system by harnessing ICT to improve citizens' health and social welfare (Hamad, 2018).

3.3.8 Case study 8: Botswana

Like South Africa, Botswana has a representative democracy with a republican and cooperative government system. It also has a presidency and a national assembly. This case is unique because the legislative authority makes policy in consultation with the House of Chiefs. The House of Chiefs is responsible for advising the government on matters relating to traditions, customs and cultural practices (Obasi and Lekorwe, 2014:2). A further distinct characteristic of this case is that democracy in Botswana follows a *Kgotla* (public gathering, community council or traditional law court of a village) direct democracy model. The political culture and practice of *Kgotla*, therefore, constitute an important deciding factor in the culture of citizen participation in Botswana. As such, it offers unique insight into stakeholder engagement and customer care praxis in local government.

3.3.8.1 Government ICT policy and regulations

According to Phirinyane (2016:7), Botswana has taken certain steps to improve the use of ICT in its interaction with citizens. As a result, the country has moved quickly to enact several ICT-related policies and regulations. This includes the *Maitlamo* National Policy for ICT Development, Government Paper 3 of 2007, the Universal Access and Service Fund (2014) that governs ICT applications and the establishment of the Independent Regulatory Authority, called the Botswana Communication Regulatory Authority. The primary objective of the National Policy for ICT Development (2007) is

to maximise digital inclusion and encourage knowledge sharing in society. Some of the other legal instruments that govern ICT in Botswana include the following:

- Botswana Telecommunications Corporation Act (1980)
- Botswana Postal Services Act (1989)
- Telecommunication Policy (1995)
- Telecommunication Act (1996)
- Cybercrime and Computer Related Crimes Act (2007)
- National e-Government Strategy (2011–2016)
- Communications Regulatory Authority Act (2012)
- National e-Government Strategy (2011–2016)
- Communications Regulatory Authority Act (2012)

These policies and strategies are supported by participatory mechanisms like interactive websites and internet portals. Through its former National Vision 2016, the government recognises the importance of information and the development of efficient information systems and networks.

3.3.8.2 Government initiatives to build public participation capacity

As part of its commitment to act on fulfilling its constitutional mandate of harnessing participatory governance, the government of Botswana utilises the following initiatives to engage citizens:

- Construction of *Kitsong* centres: These centres act as government access points where citizens and businesses can make use of services such as internet searches, photocopying, scanning, paper binding, typing and printing.
- The founding of a traditional *Kgotla* system of participation: The *Kgotla*, or public meetings, are one of the most common forms of efficient and effective citizen engagement in Botswana. During these meetings, government officials or village chiefs can explain public policies and their implementation process as well as obtain input from communities. According to Obasi and Lekorwe

(2014:4), the traditional *Kgotla* system consists of the family, the extended family group and the village ward. These meetings are coordinated by the Ministry of Local Government. A *Kgotla* usually makes provision for questions and answer sessions where a minister, members of parliament or top government officials engage with the public on issues of concern.

- The creation of stakeholder consultative forums: These forums have become a common feature of the policy-making process in Botswana. Business consultative forums, for example, are guided by the Public Enterprises Evaluation and Privatisation Agency to assist public enterprises with commercialisation or privatisation. Other stakeholder forums include labour movements, tourism and agricultural groupings.
- The launch of the Community Needs Research Programme: This programme is aimed at establishing the development needs of communities in both urban and rural (village) settings. The *Kgotla* system is instrumental in this regard to provide input in a more organised way.
- The establishment of district administrations: This system is led by the president's designated district commissioner, whose primary function is to coordinate local and central government activities in different regions.
- The formation of town, city and district councils: These councils consist of democratically elected representatives and are headed by a council secretariat. As such, this form of a system acts as an instrument for, inter alia, performing legislative obligations in the areas of health, education, infrastructure development and social services.
- The institution of land boards: The primary function of these boards is to control and administer the allocation and use of the land of the Chiefs. They comprise 12 members (five elected by the *Kgotla*, five appointed by the Minister responsible for land affairs and two *ex officio* members representing the Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Commerce and Industry).

- **Setting up a Tribal Administration:** The chiefs oversee this structure with the primary role of administering justice through traditional or customary courts, maintaining the customs and traditions of members of the tribe, resolving local disputes, conducting and participating in ceremonial activities and serving as spokespersons for their people on customary issues. The Tribal Administration also consists of Village Development Committees which act as sub-committees for the *Kgotla*. These committees are forums to initiate, plan and implement small-scale village development projects and to raise funds for the socioeconomic development of citizens (Karlsson *et al.*, 1993).

3.3.8.3 Best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement

Similar to other cases analysed, the government of Botswana has embarked on certain schemes to involve stakeholders in decision-making processes. An assessment of these schemes revealed several best practices:

- **The introduction of a One-Gov model:** According to Kaboyakgosi and Marata (2013); Madala and Phirinyane (2016), this model is premised on the principles of e-governance and is aimed at integrating and aligning the activities and functions of institutions and agencies in all spheres and tiers of government. It is commonly regarded as a significant driver of customer service excellence since it promotes “seamless access to services across the length and breadth of the country” (Madala and Phirinyane, 2016:6). The model is supported by e-Services (access to government services) and e-Citizen (promote participation and accountability of public civil servants).
- **The establishment of e-Administration:** One of the best practices for citizen involvement strategies and seamless customer-centric service in the government of Botswana was the establishment of e-Administration. This model of good governance deals with the improvement of internal workings within the public sector environment. E-Administration includes cutting process costs, improving input, managing process performances and planning,

monitoring and controlling the performance of human resources and financial processes (Samboma, 2019:2).

- The launch of an e-Society approach: Another initiative that serves as best practice is the launch of this approach to stimulate excellence and good governance cooperation protocols between government institutions, private firms and civil society (Heeks, 2001).

From the preceding sections, it is evident that stakeholder engagement for the establishment of a customer service orientation in government is largely dependent on a variety of seamless customer service praxis and best practices. These customer service praxis and best practices are predominantly important for the purposes of this study since the CoE needs to extract best practices for sustainable stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches, to improve its customer interfacing protocols. Moreover, such interfacing protocols will help with integrating the citizenry, businesses and consumer services into government processes as well as assisting customer care centres in the CoE to make adequate provisions for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions. Similarly, the extracted customer service approaches and best practices will further assist in obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and to promote joint ownership of key municipal challenges. This concludes a summary of the selected best international practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement and customer service approaches. The next section will provide a synopsis of international best practices to identify potential gaps with those practices currently in the CoE. This will take the form of a comparative analysis and the identified gaps will be empirically verified in Chapter 5 of the study.

3.4 SYNOPSIS OF INTERNATIONAL BEST PRACTICES AND A GAP ANALYSIS PERTAINING TO STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT PRACTICES IN THE CoE

A comparative analysis of the best practices for stakeholder involvement that had been extracted from the selected cases and were explored in the previous section makes it

possible to identify potential gaps between current practices in the CoE and these cases. The nature and extent of these gaps will be verified in Chapter 5. As such, a synopsis of international best practices will aid in identifying dimensions, elements and aspects that should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. This stakeholder involvement strategy serves as the main purpose and contribution of this study. The comparative analysis of best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches—in both developed and developing countries—is influenced by the political, social and economic realities in these countries. Song *et al.* (2007) and Shkarlet *et al.* (2020) argue that the context of local governance is significant and should be considered in any scholarly inquiry. For this study, the comparative analysis is directed by the following dimensions:

- Government initiatives to build public participation capacity.
- Government ICT policy and regulation framework.
- The use of technology and e-government initiatives to respond to pervasive service delivery constraints in government settings.

Since the focus is placed on metropolitan municipalities' (i.e., CoE as the unit of analysis) particular praxis observable from metropolitan municipalities in the selected countries will be emphasised for the purposes of comparison. Table (3.2) details observable disparities and best practices for strategies pertaining to stakeholder involvement and customer service approaches below. These disparities and best practices are compared with current practices in the CoE.

Table 3.2 Comparative analysis between the CoE and selected countries on strategies pertaining to stakeholder involvement

Dimension: Government initiatives to build public participation capacity			
Developed countries	Developing countries (Africa)	Best practices	City of Ekurhuleni
South Korea (City of Seoul)	Kenya (City of Mombasa)		

• Public meetings/ hearings • Referenda • Town hall meetings • Citizen surveys/ polling • Citizen Advisory Committees • Activist protests • E-People (Online Petitions and Discussions) • Electoral participation voting	• Public meetings/ hearings • Study circles • Public <i>Barazas</i> • <i>Bunga Mashinani</i> • Impeachment/recall proceedings • Referenda • Constitutional and statutory bodies • Written oral submissions • Public watchdog groups • Performance surveys • Social audit reports	Use of multiple mechanisms for participation and stakeholder involvement. Impeachment/recall proceedings. Promotion of municipal accountability. Enhance the legitimacy of municipal decisions. Promote trust in elected officers and officials and public confidence in municipalities.	It is evident that various gaps exist between best practices in developed and developing countries and what is currently utilised in the CoE. There is, however, full congruence as far as the intend of the use of these methods are concerned; namely to harness participatory municipal governance. The e-People (Online Petition Discussion) initiative exposes a gap with international practices.
India (City of Mombasa) • Neighbourhood committees • Institutional structures	Botswana (City of Gaborone) • Public meetings /hearing • Questions and answer sessions	Institutional structures Involves proper consultation on matters of urban planning undertaken	A distinguishing factor is the significant role that traditional

• Advocacy groups	• Client orientates feedback machinery • District Councils • Land Boards • District Administration • Tribal <i>Kgotla</i> Administration	with the broadest range of stakeholders including ward committees, Neighbourhood Groups (NHG), and Neighbourhood Committees. Tribal <i>Kgotla</i> Administration This is the best modern practice to advance the democratic imperative of increasing civic involvement in public policymaking.	leaders play in urban governance. Traditional leaders are commonly regarded as cooperative partnership with municipalities, especially in policy and service delivery decisions that impact rural communities.
Brazil (City of Porto Alegre) • Public participation professionals • Participatory budgeting • Neighbourhood groups • Militant public officials • Professional mobilisers • Professional Experts	Tanzania (City of Dar Es Salaam) • Policy forums • Formation of strategic coalitions	Participatory budgeting This form of innovative technique aims to promote protocol of good governance in government environments. Policy forums Ensure meaningful engagement in shaping policy	The IDP of the CoE is the key strategic instrument to promote protocols of good governance. The IDP Representative Forum is the main platform for community engagement.

		decisions and implementation	
UK (City of Portsmouth) • Public meetings • Interviews • Questionnaires • Citizen's juries • Citizen panels • Community empowerment networks • Participatory budget meetings • Local area forums • Service user panels • Consensus conferences	Ghana (Greater Ghana Metropolitan Area) • Public debates • Conferences • Seminars • Workshops • Colloquiums • Capacity building and training	Citizen juries or panel strategy Involve a small group who are randomly chosen to adjudicate on a particular matter. Selected panels represent the interest of the public. Policy institutes Also known as think tanks. This form of strategy is used in Ghana intending to promote communication between government agencies, citizens and businesses. It also includes lobbying, policy analysis, public debates, conferences, workshops, colloquia and capacity building and training.	The CoE uses multiple mechanisms that are also commonly applied in other countries to harness participatory local governance. However, the administration process of the petition system is still done manually and not digitally as in other countries.

Source: Researcher's compilation

Table 3.3 Best practices pertaining to ICT policy and regulation framework

Dimension: The use of ICT policy and the regulatory framework initiatives

Developed countries	Developing countries (Africa)	Best practices	CoE
South Korea (City of Seoul) • e-Korea Vision 2006 • U Korea Master Plan	Ghana Greater Ghana Metropolitan Area) • ICT for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD)	• e-Korea Vision 2006 which laid solid foundation for e-government initiatives such 3G wireless technology. • The U-Korea Master Plan introduced a seamless citizens' customer service centric approach. • ICT4AD acts as macro plan upon which Ghana's e-governance vision is built, promoting participatory governance, accountability and efficiency.	Pockets of excellence exist where electronic interaction between municipality, business and citizens occur. However, the CoE's inability or unwillingness to harness the potential of the global technological revolution through a coherent ITC regulatory and institutional policy framework to support protocol of good governance remains a challenge. Information technology systems are not fully integrated and do not support a new customer orientation and electronic customer interfacing channels. A gap in addressing these challenges through a coherent

			IT governance policy framework exists.
UK (Portsmouth City) • White paper on communities in control. • The governmental portal (www.data.gov.uk)	Tanzania (City of Dar-Es-Salaam) • Open Government Project • Tanzania's Medium Term National Strategy for Growth and Poverty Reduction	• The Open Government Project aimed at encouraging transparency, accountability, citizen empowerment, corruption prevention and the use of digital technologies. • Various white papers on community participation. • IT policy mandate local authorities to engage communities in their functions. • Publication of government guidelines on local government functions and decision-making protocols, inclusive of participatory democracy.	A cooperative system of governance with provincial oversight, financial grants and support programmes. However, no comprehensive regulatory framework (IT policy) is in place, especially to foster local democracy and public accountability.
Brazil (City of Porto Alegre)	Kenya (City of Mombasa)	Kenya initiated a policy initiative called "Kenya Vision	

• Apart from the contextual uniqueness of the city, no particular best practice is observable	• Kenya Vision 2030 • ICT Master Plan (2014) • Strategic Authority Plan	2030” in a concerted effort to strengthen the protocol of good governance, transparency, accountability and trust within the local government sphere.	
India (City of Mumbai) • National e-Governance Plan of 2006	Botswana (City of Gaborone) • Maitlamo National Policy for ICT	National e-Governance Plan to foster responsiveness, transparency, and accountability in government. It also acts as a regulatory framework for seamless customer services in local government. <i>Maitlamo</i> National Policy for ICT which is aimed at maximising digital inclusion and encouraged knowledge sharing in society.	The CoE has made little progress in meeting the needs, expectations and demands of citizens through their service delivery programmes. A need exists to establish a consolidated customer interfacing department to operate under the umbrella of the CRM departments. There is also a need for a coherent ICT regulatory framework. In its absence, departments and management teams pursue different customer interfacing protocols.

Source: Researcher's compilation

Table 3.4 Best practices pertaining to the use of technology and e-government initiatives

Dimension: The use of technology and e-government initiatives			
Developed countries	Developing countries (Africa)	Best Practices	CoE
South Korea (City of Seoul) • e-Procurement services (KONEPS) • e-People Online Petition System • E-Customs systems (UNI-PASS)	Ghana (Greater Ghana Metropolitan Area) • MoTeCH: Mobile Technology Community Health Information System: to develop health IT for mobile phones in promoting the dissemination of health information.	• Sub-contractor Payment Systems • E-Immediately Online Project Manager Payment Systems: Subcontractors are no longer obliged to provide copies of their bankbooks in order to get payment information. Now that banks are promptly making funds transfer information available to subcontractors, they can trace remittances into their accounts in real time. • Construction <i>ALLIMI</i> and On-line PIMS: the public receives	The CoE has not yet moved out of paper-based, manual systems as far as paying contractors and sub-contractors are concerned. Payments are done manually and by clients visiting customer centres physically to submit the invoices. Most service providers wait for unreasonable periods before they get remunerated. The CoE does not have a system for attaining effective health information systems in the primary healthcare sector. The CoE has the eHealth instrument but has not yet implemented some of its domains.

		information about municipal projects in the city, inclusive of progress reports and web camera images to monitor construction sites in real time.	
UK (City of Portsmouth) E-Health Services of National Hospitality services	Tanzania (City of Dar Es Salaam) Water Utilities Information System	Water Utilities Information Systems: increase access to clean and safe water in rural areas of Tanzania. It makes provision for the Domestic Heat Renewal Incentive System and the Non-Domestic Heat Renewal System.	The CoE currently utilise the EMIS system, which is mainly used to report water interruptions, burst pipes, sewerage overflow. However, the EMIS system does not make provision the collation of data for the assessment of monthly performance of water management institutions.
Brazil (City of Porto Alegre) - Time saver centres - Citizen assistance centres	Kenya (City of Mombasa) Huduma customer service centre initiatives	Huduma Digital Centres: aim at strengthening customer service delivery of public institutions through a one-stop shop model with emphasis on	In terms of the current Customer Management Strategy the CoE, the city has 20 customer care centres aimed at rationalising all existing customer

		customer service excellent. Citizen Assistance Centres: support the provisioning of more than 500 different public services. Time Saver Centres: offer a bundle of public services and information in a single point of entry and enhances a seamless customer service approach.	contact points such as walk-in centres, call centres and online contact centres to form a uniform and seamless customer service. This ideal has not yet been achieved. Some key responsibilities of call centres still resort under the Department of Emergency Services (DEMS) and the Customer Relations Management Department. Current praxis does not make adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in municipal decisions. Additionally, information technology systems are not integrated and do not support a new customer orientation and electronic customer interfacing channels.
India (City of Mombasa)	Botswana (City of Gaborone)	Central Vigilance Commission: An e-	The CoE currently uses a fraud toll-free

• Central Vigilance Commission	• One Government model • E-services / E-citizens	government customer service approach, creating a website with the objective of reducing and enhancing transparency by sharing a vast amount of information on corruption with the general public. One Government Model: premised on the principles of e-governance and is aimed at integrating and aligning the activities and functions of institutions and agencies on all spheres and tiers of government. It enhances transparency and accountability in local government by developing a culture of openness through participation of citizens.	hotline number to report fraud, corruption and malfeasance. However, whistleblowers are reluctant to share information on corruption because of fear of victimisation. An international best practice that CoE should consider is adopting online service that will create a website where citizens can report corruption and fraud without revealing their personal details.

Source: Researcher's compilation

The information presented above revealed that the comparative analysis of best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics in both developed and developing countries is influenced by political, social and economic realities in these selected countries. The focus was on metropolitan municipalities (i.e., CoE as case study). Table 3.3 which focused on dimensions pertaining to government initiatives in building public participation capacity, for instance, revealed that there are many observable disparities in best practices pertaining to strategies of stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis which were compared with the current practices in the CoE. Additionally, the table shows that the current practice at the CoE uses multiple mechanisms that are also commonly applied in other countries to harness participatory local governance. However, some of the selected countries like, e.g., South Korea add a unique dimension to its utilisation compared to emerging African countries in the sub-Saharan regions. E-People, an online petition and discussion portal strategy facilitates people's participation in policymaking by processing people's grievances and suggestions via a single window. This customer praxis exposes a potential gap with those practices currently in the CoE as far as a seamless customer service approach is concerned. A good example of best practice with this instrument is that it allows consumers to check the outcomes of their respective results online, as emphasised by Chung (2015:119). The administration process of the petition system in the CoE involves the following:

- Receiving: Upon receipt of petitions from the Office of the Executive Mayor, the speaker and the council, respectively, they are referred to the public participation office.
- Registering: Petitions are then registered and referred to the relevant departments, ward councillors or customer care area for attention, noting and advancing a prompt response on the issues raised.
- Petitions committee: This committee considers the department's responses and where applicable, close the petition or order further investigations.
- Matters of national and provincial competency are referred to the provincial legislature for attention (CoE Public Participation Policy: MC 03-10-2000).

The existing procedure is cumbersome and time-consuming, and it exposes a potential gap in terms of expediting service delivery and providing petitioners with a faster and more timely response. As a result, the CoE should also consider administering the petition process digitally, as this will allow petitioners to receive faster responses to their concerns. Similarly, the CoE should prioritise the adoption and advancement of IT and ICT online services to strengthen its customer service interfacing protocols. Table 3.4 deals with dimensions pertaining to ICT policy and a regulatory framework. This table presents the argument that the presence of a coherent e-government policy, regulatory and institutional frameworks as well as legal frameworks are a prerequisite for an effective and efficient e-government and ICT development in metropolitan municipalities in general and CoE in particular. At the moment, there are just a few pockets of excellence at the CoE where electronic contact between municipalities, businesses and citizens is possible. However, the CoE's failure or unwillingness to harness the promise of the global technological revolution through a unified ITC regulatory and institutional policy framework to promote good governance protocols remains one of the pervasive service delivery impediments.

In terms of the current customer management strategy for instance the CoE has 20 customer care walk-in centres, the focus was on rationalising all existing customer contact points such as walk-in centres, call centres and online contact centres to form a uniform and seamless customer service since the customer relations management (CRM) departments monitor service delivery performance of other departments by ensuring that they comply with council approved customer service standards and practices. Unfortunately, this is not currently the practice in some of the departments. For example, some key responsibilities of call centres still resort under the Department of Emergency Services (DEMS) and the Department of Customer Relations. This type of practice that is currently implemented at the CoE demonstrates information technology systems that are not integrated and do not support a new customer orientation and electronic customer interfacing channels. As such, the idea of rationalising all existing customer contacts to form a uniform and seamless customer service won't be realised. Furthermore, this is an indication of a weak, fragmented and contradictory IT governance framework that hampers the successful prospects of strengthening seamless customer service praxis and metrics in the city. Current praxis does not make adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in municipal decisions.

The information above presents a dysfunctional state of affairs regarding the provision of a seamless customer service approach. As such, a potential gap exists in addressing this impending and pervasive service delivery challenge through the presence of a coherent and un-contradictory IT governance policy framework in the CoE. In addition, the e-Immediately Online Project Manager Payment System for both contractors and sub-contractors exposes a potential gap in a seamless customer service approach is concerned. As such, the CoE has not yet moved towards a paperless system for payments to contractors and sub-contractors. Hence, the Mobile Technology Community Health Information System (MoTeCH) is another customer service approach that exposes a disparity between South Africa and the selected countries in revolutionising healthcare delivery. As demonstrated in Table 3.5 above, the e-Health Services of the National Health Service in the UK is a website designed to assist citizens in moving, living, studying, working or simply travelling abroad while avoiding unnecessary inconvenience and health-related red tape. The e-Health Strategic Plan in Tanzania is aimed at modernising the healthcare system by harnessing ICT to improve citizens' health and social welfare. The MoTeCH initiative in Ghana comprises two complementary applications namely the *Mobile-Midwife* and *Nurse* applications. Ghana's Ministry of Health—which has a community-driven approach to healthcare services—aims to reduce maternal and childhood mortality utilising this technique. These initiatives expose a potential disparity between South Africa and the selected countries regarding customer service praxis and metrics. The CoE currently has an instrument called the eHealth System about which it is not yet clear what services are offered, except that it allows people to provide their details and which clinic is closer to their location.

This concludes an overview of the comparative analysis between South Africa and the selected countries. The next section will delve into lessons for South Africa to be learnt from the international experiences of the selected countries.

3.5 LESSONS TO BE LEARNT FROM THE INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

A discrepancy or comparison between South Africa and selected countries allowed researcher to identify several lessons that can be extracted from international experience. This knowledge should be incorporated in the design of a stakeholder

involvement strategy for excellence in customer service in metropolitan municipalities. The following particular lessons are evident:

- The presence of a coherent e-government policy and regulatory, institutional and legal frameworks are prerequisites for effective e-government and ICT development. A deficit of political will and support and a lack of strong and inconsistent municipal leadership, including some weak and contradictory IT governance frameworks as well as continuous political and bureaucratic infighting will hamper the successful prospects of e-government to strengthen seamless customer service praxis and metrics in government environments. Accordingly, a coherent local governance and good customer service approach can only be realised through resilient, visionary and agile leaders who are suited to influencing the customer service landscape through the advancement in information and communication technology.
- The lack of adequate ICT infrastructure and connectivity is one of the significant barriers to the provision of e-government services and it hampers efforts to modernise the government's seamless customer service praxis and metrics in government agencies and institutions. ICT penetration in emerging countries in sub-Saharan Africa will cease to exist if basic physical infrastructure and persisting limitations in the electricity supply are not addressed. All communications systems require an existing physical infrastructure to provide energy and to generate and receive signals (Unwin, 2009). The lack of a basic and reliable electricity supply throughout the continent remains one of the greatest handicaps to its development.
- E-government is an enabler of suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument for developing countries on the African continent to ensure its successful implementation and effective use by the citizenry.
- E-government has the potential to allow the integration information technology systems to support customer service orientation and electronic customer

interfacing channels both in public and government entities in developing countries. This concerted effort will further assist in obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions; communicating the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders; promoting joint ownership of pervasive municipal service delivery impediments as well as establishing a common vision for South African metropolitan municipalities.

- The successful implementation of e-Government in government settings will lead to better customer service praxis and metrics in local governance which will allow adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions. Furthermore, there is little doubt that e-government has the ability to improve areas such as general public service delivery, financial administration, electronic consumer interface channels and public involvement.
- One of the most important factors for developing countries to remember during an e-government implementation stage is to examine socioeconomic and demographic factors. Age, gender, education, wealth distribution, language variety and the percentage of the population living in poverty-stricken rural areas are all important determinants of user behaviour and the adoption of online and IT/ICT services. Tribal and ethnic languages, for example, are widely spoken in rural areas and parts of sub-Saharan African countries, whereas English is mainly not read or understood. As a result, when establishing e-government services, it is critical to examine the issue of language variety as pointed out by Torgby and Asabere (2014:44).

3.5.1 Essential lessons for local government

From the preceding sections it is evident that the analyses of case studies provide *prima facie* evidence that stakeholder involvement in local government has instrumental value in strengthening customer service praxis and metrics, both in public and government environments. The notion of bringing “government to the people” is not only significant for strengthening civil society, but also for mobilising the citizenry

to implement the programmes of reconciliation and development that are necessary to transform civil society, hoping to establish a coherent local government since it is closer to the people (Fourie, 2001:216). The foundational tenet of a democracy is civil society participation (Edbon, 2002:275). Similarly, in the local sphere of government, grassroots democracy is about empowering stakeholders and communities to actively participate in municipal decision-making. For instance, Chapter 2 of the Rural Development Framework (2013) titled *Building Local Democracy and Development* (one of the statutory stipulations for local government) confirms the need to strengthen customer orientation and stakeholder involvement in local governance. Citizens look to public servants to serve, provide services and inspire them. As a result, to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics in a government environment, local government, in particular, should be outward-looking, people-oriented and citizen-centred. Bourgon (2007) and Pollit (2007) suggest that local government must collaborate with stakeholders, including corporate and non-profit organisations to find effective solutions to the barriers that impair effective and productive public service delivery in government settings. Therefore, the role of local government should be altered from one that primarily regulates society to one that sets the national structural agenda reforms involving all stakeholders as well as brokering solutions.

3.5.2 Lessons for stakeholders

Stakeholder involvement is often viewed as a vital ingredient of a healthy democracy (Tau, 2013: 54). As evidenced by the theoretical exposition presented in the previous chapter, one of the most significant ways for promoting and strengthening participatory governance in local government is to engage stakeholders. This argument is underscored by Reddy (1996:5) who argues that a stakeholder involvement instrument in government environments allows citizens to voice their desires and foster popular participation in matters of governance that influence their well-being. By placing democracy in a local governance context, Reddy (1996:4) argues that the local sphere of government was created purposefully “to bring government to the grassroots by giving ordinary citizens a sense of inclusion in the democratic process”. Regarding the application of suitable strategies for stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics in public administration, it should be noted that countries, constitutions and national legislation typically make provision for the adoption of

certain values, principles and practices in government institutions. Indeed, the White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997 outlines key principles of service delivery, known as *Batho Pele* (people first) principles. Van der Waldt (2004:1); Subban *et al.* (2007:34) confirm that these principles have a strong customer service focus. The statutory prescripts to encourage stakeholder involvement and customer orientation are encapsulated in the vision statement of “We belong, we care, we serve” (Subban *et al.*, 2007:34). As emphasised by Van der Waldt (2004:9), the following listed four principles have a direct bearing on stakeholder involvement.

- Consultation: Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of services they receive and should be given a choice about the services that are offered, if possible.
- Service standard: Citizens should be told what level and quality of public service they will receive so as to know what to expect.
- Information: Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to get.
- Openness and transparency: Citizens should be told about how service departments are run and how much they cost and who is in charge. (Van der Waldt, 2004:9)

It is clear from the analysis of the case studies described above that suitable stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service methodology and metrics in the government environment have specific benefits for citizens, businesses and government. In order to operationalise such benefits, the researcher needed to get an international perspective on stakeholder involvement in local governance and assess the present degree of stakeholder involvement, customer service praxis and metrics in the CoE. The primary objective of doing such a critical exercise was to identify best practices for effective techniques to encourage stakeholder participation. This will serve as a baseline against which the CoE's current stakeholder engagement methods can be measured. Additionally, conducting such an exercise allowed the researcher to extract dimensions and aspects from a number of selected countries which will be incorporated into a stakeholder involvement strategy as a tool for improving customer service praxis and metrics in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and

the CoE in particular. This concludes a synopsis of the most pertinent lessons for the CoE to learn from international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and best practices for suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument. The next section will interrogate critical successful factors emerging from case studies between South Africa and selected countries.

3.6 CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS UNCOVERED FROM THE SELECTED CASES

The data supplied and analysed above reveals that there are observable crucial success variables in each case study between South Africa and selected countries in terms of both proper stakeholder involvement techniques and customer service approaches. For the sake of this study, however, it may be argued that crucial success elements relating to appropriate stakeholder involvement techniques and customer service praxis and metrics both in public and government institutions are fully dependent on political, social and economic considerations. This point is emphasised by Song (2002) and Song *et al.* (2007) who state that the main successful characteristics of e-government (on the broad provision of public services to citizens, businesses and government) include political, social, economic and industrial dimensions. When these critical success criteria are organised from a system perspective, the factors become environmental input (political resolve and leadership, vision and policy objective, and project priority), transformation (implementation system), output (performance), feedback (distribution of human, financial, and technological resources among institutions, as well as a good cooperative organisational structure. The following listed factors are the key components that emerged from the case studies between South Africa and selected countries in terms of appropriate stakeholder involvement and customer service techniques both in public and government settings.

3.6.1 Political administrative system

Coherent and successful local governance depends on strong political legitimacy and leadership. To improve government efficiency in accelerating service delivery,

resistance to change should be eliminated. As such, there is a need for an urgent paradigm shift in the minds of political principals toward strong political leadership, to pioneer the concept of e-government both in public and government settings, as emphasised by Cloete (2012:139). Administrative reforms are another important component that emerged from the case studies. Accordingly, the findings of the case studies revealed that developed countries such as the United Kingdom, Brazil, South Korea and India have undergone organisational changes towards public management reforms and are better positioned to adopt e-government than countries that have not (Torgby and Asabere, 2014:43). The authors continue that this is especially true in sub-Saharan Africa because most African countries' administrative capacities are underdeveloped in general, leaving management liabilities uncompensated by the use of technology. Song (2002) identifies the following important success elements of suitable strategies for stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics in developing countries.

- Strong political leadership, driven by the head of state and parliament
- Strategic and long-term sustainable plans
- Nationwide change management programmes
- Aligning e-government projects with performance-based evaluation systems.

3.6.2 The advancement of ICT infrastructure and connectivity

Access to basic ICT infrastructure and connectivity remains one of the most pervasive service delivery impediments in Africa. To mitigate and overcome such impediments, developing African countries should form cooperative working relations among themselves and collaborate with other developed industrialised countries like Korea, India, Brazil and the UK to overcome such accessibility obstacles. To rephrase, there is a need to develop ICT infrastructure that will enable public and government agencies to link and employ e-government to improve service delivery to residents, businesses and government. Similarly, Samboma (2019:5) argues that aspects like electricity supply and the internet should be prioritised for local populations to have internet connectivity.

3.6.3 Customer-oriented e-government services

Continuous administrative reforms will, for instance, assist in identifying and removing overlapping functions and processing informatisation. It will also streamline inconvenient civil services and reduce corruption and malfeasant government and prioritise initiatives that have the most potential to impact the well-being and livelihoods of ordinary citizens like resident registration, vehicle customs clearance, employment statistics management and become the solid foundation for e-Government

3.6.4 One-stop-shop centres

One-stop-shop centres were also identified as a major success element in the selected case studies with adequate stakeholder involvement and customer service techniques. Most industrialised countries view this policy as a commitment to ensuring that the general public has easy and quick access to public services, resulting in residents receiving timely, effective and efficient government services. Furthermore, as Mensah (2016:69) advocates, this will enhance and encourage citizen participation in governance. Therefore, it is incumbent upon government to implement such a strategy as part of its mandatory commitment to harness participatory governance and accelerate public service delivery. This will aid in the provision of integrated government services and information to citizens as part of a comprehensive strategy to alleviate the stress and difficulties associated with obtaining public and social services to improve their lives.

3.7 CONCLUSION

Stakeholder involvement in local government has instrumental value in strengthening customer service approaches in government environments. The previous chapter identified, highlighted and analysed factors that influence good governance protocols guiding public participation in local government. To extract best practices for sustainable strategies for strengthening stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument, a detailed and comprehensive discussion on the international perspective in fostering stakeholder involvement in local governance was presented. In addition, best practices for stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service

approaches were uncovered. Moreover, a synopsis of an analysis of international best practices between South Africa and selected countries was presented. This serves as a baseline against which the current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be measured. The chapter also identified observable disparities on suitable strategies pertaining to stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics between South Africa and selected countries, which will be empirically verified in Chapter 5 of the study and involved in the strategy to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, as the main contribution in the last chapter of this study. The next segment of this study will expound on the statutory stipulations, official prescripts and regulatory obligations of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement. The statutory and regulatory requirements that promote the effective and productive functioning of stakeholder involvement in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and in the CoE, in particular, will be analysed and summarised within the applicable conceptual categories. Furthermore, the chapter will present several pieces of legislative instruments and policy initiatives such as the White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997, to provide legislative balance, accountability and building legitimacy. The developmental framework and strategies harnessing participatory governance and accelerating service delivery throughout South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, will also be analysed.

CHAPTER 4

LEGISLATIVE AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK GOVERNING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter explained international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance. As a result, factors that influence the protocols of good governance in guiding public participation in local government were identified, highlighted and analysed. Best practices for suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement and customer service approaches were uncovered. As such, this served as a benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the City of Ekurhuleni (CoE) can be gauged. Additionally, the chapter identified potential gaps through comparative analysis. These gaps will be verified empirically in Chapter 5 of the study and will be addressed in the design of a strategy to strengthen stakeholder involvement as a customer service praxis in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. The South African government has promulgated abundant legislation and regulatory guidelines in an attempt to enhance and regulate stakeholder involvement in the local sphere of government. To operationalise the third research objective, the purpose of this chapter is to explore the statutory and regulatory stipulations and official prescripts that frame stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa. The statutory and regulatory prescripts serve as a further dataset with which current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be triangulated and gauged. Compliance with these stipulations will be empirically verified in the next chapter and will also be incorporated in the design of a stakeholder involvement strategy as the main contribution of this study.

4.2 THE LEGISLATIVE (STATUTORY) FRAMEWORK GUIDING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Legislation can be regarded as a collection of statutes or national policies devised by and enforced by the government to regulate virtually all aspects of social life (Van der

Waldt, 2004:5). National legislation provides government institutions with the mandate and authority to perform certain functions and to uphold the rule of law. Molepo *et al.* (2015:350) emphasise this statement as they argue that law has a direct effect on all matters of governance. They note that the implementation of various pieces of legislation in government aims to provide specific guidelines on different aspects of governance. In the spirit of the Constitution as the highest authority in the country, national legislation embraces the notion of participatory and open governance and the advancement of a constitutional democracy. This also applies to the local sphere of government. Mello (2002:108) argues that “national legislation transforms local government and make it more developmental”. The legislative framework encompasses all the constitutional and legal provisions that allow citizens to participate in municipal decision-making (Muronda, 2017:55). The purpose of this section is to explore statutory obligations and regulatory stipulations that frame local government’s mandate to promote broader community engagement, stakeholder involvement and customer service. Some of the most significant pieces of legislation as well as regulatory and official prescripts guiding stakeholder engagement in local government are analysed chronologically below.

4.2.1 The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996

South Africa is a constitutional and democratic society in which its constitution is the fundamental guarantee of democratic values and human rights (Smit and Oosthuizen, 2011:56). Thus, the ultimate authoritative source on the notion of stakeholder involvement in local government is the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Section 152 (1)(a) stipulates that one of the core values of democracy is to encourage the involvement of communities and community organisations in matters of local governance. It obligates local, district and metropolitan municipalities to actively engage local communities. In addition, Chapter 2 of the Constitution outlines the right of citizens to have their basic human needs met. Furthermore, Section 195 (1) (e) states that “people’s needs must be responded to, and the public must be encouraged to participate in the policy-making process”. This far-reaching declaration places an immense responsibility on municipalities to involve their primary stakeholder, the community. Hence, the involvement of stakeholders is not simply an act of courtesy but a statutory obligation. In this regard, Molepo, Maleka and Khalo

(2015:350) argue that the “Constitution puts a strong focus on participatory governance, namely, involving civil society in decision-making”. Section 195 (1)(e) of the Constitution underscores the importance of stakeholder participation by stipulating that municipalities, like other institutions of government, must respond promptly to people's needs, wants and desires, and encourage the citizenry to participate in policymaking and decision implementation processes. These two principles are central to good public administration. Other values associated with good municipal governance include human dignity, equality, openness, responsiveness and responsibility (Van der Walddt, 2004:5). Govender and Reddy (2011:61) support this statement and add that the Constitution acts as an overarching framework for good local governance. Tau (2015:154) also reiterates this point by stating that the Constitution provides for the participation of stakeholders in the construction, execution and assessment of integrated development planning. According to Muronda (2017:56), municipal councils usually give expression to Section 157 of the Constitution by utilising ward committees and councillors to facilitate community participation. In addition, Chapter 7 of the Constitution outlines in detail a municipality's obligations and responsibilities. It also makes provision for the separation of powers between the legislative and executive branches of a municipality. The legislature (i.e., council) is responsible for law-making, monitoring and community engagement. Section 160 (1) specifies that a municipal council is responsible for making decisions concerning the exercise of all powers and the execution of all municipal responsibilities, making the council the ultimate decision-making authority in a municipality. However, Section 156 (3) stipulates that a municipal council may not make a by-law that disagrees with national or provincial laws. The executive authority is vested in the municipal administration spearheaded by the municipal (or city) manager.

4.2.2 Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 177 of 1998

The main aim of the Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998 (MSA) is to provide for various categories and types of municipalities to be created. In addition, the act's intention is to direct municipalities' internal processes, structures, functions and office bearers. To promote and organise community involvement, the ward participatory structure of a municipal government requires the creation of ward

committees. The creation, roles and powers of ward committees in the South African local government system are covered in Chapter 4, Part 4 of the MSA. The idea is to promote the engagement of neighbourhoods and community groups in local government matters. It further stipulates that the Executive Committee or the Executive Mayor must annually report on the involvement of communities and community organisations in the affairs of the municipality (Heleba, 2008:3). These ward-based systems represent the community's and the residents' interests as they form a bridge by fostering a proper medium of contact between the council and the citizens it represents. In this regard, Raga and Taylor (2005:141) maintain that Chapter 4 of the MSA mandates municipalities to promote participatory governance by performing the following functions:

- Receive, process and consider petitions and complaints lodge[ed] by members of the public;
- notify communities about council meetings and gain public comment;
- hold engagement meetings to promote dialogue with the public; and
- embark on consultative meetings with various stakeholders, and report back to council regarding the outcome of these meetings. (Raga and Taylor, 2005:141)

The MSA allows municipalities to build a culture of stakeholder engagement with the primary objective of improving participatory governance in the third tier of government (Nzimakwe and Reddy, 2008:668). Nzimakwe (2010:511) and Masango *et al.* (2013:91) emphasise this point when they claim that there are numerous mechanisms by which stakeholders might be engaged, namely public engagement meetings, consultative meetings and report-back meetings, and mayoral community outreach programmes like *izimbizos*. The suitability and effectiveness of these mechanisms should be compared and contrasted with those identified in the cases (i.e., selected countries) in the previous chapter. According to Napier (2008:170), a ward committee consists of no more than ten members, including the ward councillor who serves as the committee's chairperson. The ward councillor acts as the sole “conduit of information” between the ward committees and the municipal council (Maseko, 2018:54). The composition of this community structure should be broadly

representative of the ward population and be gender sensitive. As such, women, youth, disability groups, children organisations, religious groups, business leaders, CBOs, NGOs, FBOs and traditional leaders should be represented in the membership composition of the committee as espoused by Reddy and Sikhakhane (2008:681). The spirit of the MSA is undeniably to foster stakeholder engagement in local government and to improve customer services. As a result, it cannot be viewed solely as a mere piece of legislation with certain legal consequences. Rather, its mission is to improve the well-being, living conditions and socioeconomic prosperity of communities by providing services of high quality (Phago, 2008:248).

4.2.3 The Local Government Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000

The Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000 was promulgated to establish a framework for planning, performance management, the effective utilisation of resources and organisational change. As such, this piece of legislation provides for the core values, frameworks and procedures that are necessary to enable municipalities to gradually step towards local communities' social and economic upliftment. Chapter 4, Section 16(1) of the Act, for example, deals with community involvement and offers a thorough and systematic description of the growth of a culture of community involvement. Section 17(1) delves into the structures, processes and procedures for the involvement of communities. Accordingly, this section advocates that local citizens' involvement in community affairs should be promoted through the following mechanisms:

- Political structures;
- the mechanisms, processes, and procedures for participation in municipal governance established in terms of this Act;
- other appropriate mechanisms, processes and procedures established by the municipality; and
- councillors. (MSA, 2000:8)

In addition, Section 17(2) stipulates that a municipality must develop adequate structures, processes, and procedures to allow the local community to engage municipal decision-makers. In particular, a municipality must provide for the following:

- Receipt, processing and consideration of petitions and complaints lodged by members of the local community;
- notification and public comment procedures, when appropriate;
- public meetings and hearings by the municipal council and other political structures and political office bearers of the municipality when appropriate;
- consultative sessions with locally recognised community organisations and, where appropriate, traditional authorities; and
- report-back to the local community. (MSA, 2000:9)

When setting up community participation mechanisms, processes and procedures, the municipality must take into consideration the special needs of individuals who cannot read or write, people with disabilities, women and other disadvantaged groups (MSA, Section 17[3]). Since meetings of a municipal council and those of its committees are open to the public, Section 19 of the MSA stipulates that municipal managers must give public notice of the time, date and place of any ordinary council meeting. Chapter 5 of MSA makes provision for the formulation of the municipality's integrated development plan (IDP). One of the pillars of the IDP is the participation of communities and organised stakeholders in its formulation. The participation of affected stakeholders ensures that the IDP addresses the prioritised developmental needs of residents. As such, the IDP acts as a participation mechanism to structure stakeholder input on issues such as municipal budgets, land management and local economic development in a systematic manner. Municipal councils need to develop strategies for public engagement in the IDP process. This strategy must then be approved by the municipal council and adopted by the IDP steering committee (Van der Walddt, 2004:8). The strategy for participation must involve a decision on topics such as:

- [The] roles of different role players during the participation process (e.g., councillors, IDP Steering Committee, the IDP Representative Forum, and other officials and consultants);
- means of encouraging representative[s] of unorganised groups;
- participation mechanisms for different phases of the methodology;
- available resources for participation;
- frequency of meetings and workshops;
- appropriate venue for meetings and workshops;
- time frames to allow responses, comments and inputs;
- appropriate participation instruments;
- means of information dissemination; and
- means of eliciting and collecting community needs (including documentation of participation inputs). (IDP Guide Pack, 2000:26)

Section 6 of the MSA further specifies that the IDP must incorporate the interests of communities and be addressed by the municipal administration. Municipalities should therefore establish processes that promote community interest in civic affairs (Khan *et al.*, 2013:128). As such, the MSA aims to fulfil the constitutional obligations of local government by providing essential services. In addition, as specified in Sections 18 and 19 of this Act, municipal councils need to promote local democracy by educating communities about their constitutional rights and raising awareness about their democratic civic duties.

4.2.4 Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000

To give effect to Section 32 of the South African Constitution, i.e., the right of people to access any information kept by the state, the Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000 was promulgated. The Act aims to promote a culture of openness, transparency, trust and accountability in public institutions. The secondary aim of the Act is to encourage a culture in which knowledge is accessible to the public to allow them to exercise and protect their rights (Mzimakwe, 2010:511). Section 2, Chapter 1 of this legislation stipulates that citizens must have access to information held by public institutions, inclusive of municipalities. Therefore, municipalities should make

provision for access to non-confidential council records as well as the appointment of information officers to liaise with stakeholders. The accounting officer (i.e., Municipal Manager) of a municipality must appoint such an officer in terms of Section 82 of the MSA. Upon appointment, information officers must develop guidelines to assist stakeholders who request certain information. However, Part 2, Chapter 4 of the Act allows for grounds for refusal of access to requested information, inclusive of municipal records. Typical grounds for such refusal to access information include the protection of privacy of third parties, information that may jeopardise the health and safety of communities, commercial agreements and personal information (Van der Walddt, 2004:9). Part 2 of the Act outlines the safeguarding and mandatory protection of the following types of information:

- commercial information
- agreements with third parties
- personal information
- individual safety
- property protection
- law enforcement and legal proceedings
- records of the South African Revenue Services
- records associated with legal proceedings.

4.2.5 Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000

The Promotion of Administrative Justice Act 3 of 2000 gives effect to the right to administrative action that is lawful, reasonable and procedurally fair. It also provides for the right to obtain written reasons for any administrative action taken by public institutions. The Act seeks to promote efficient administration and good governance arrangements in all government institutions, inclusive of municipal administrations. The Act further aims to establish a culture of accountability, openness and transparency in government administrations. This also applies to the exercise of certain powers and authority in the execution of the functions of these institutions. Such a culture should be promoted by ensuring that stakeholders are involved in government institutions and be treated in the spirit of the Act.

4.2.6 Local Government: Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003

The Municipal Finance Management Act 56 of 2003 (MFMA) was promulgated to ensure sound and effective management of the financial affairs of municipalities and other local government agencies and entities. Section 2 of the MFMA sets out the aim of the MFMA which includes ensuring financial transparency and accountability for the participation of local municipalities, local municipal authorities, and national and provincial state bodies in financial relations with local municipalities. The Act aims to preserve a stable financial environment in the local government sphere by concentrating not only on local government agencies but also on organisations dealing with public institutions. The MFMA ensures that local municipalities remain accountable by encouraging sound local government financial practices and ensuring the engagement of stakeholders in the municipality's financial affairs and guiding local municipalities to consult and report to the community on budgetary matters. It also sets treasury guidelines and standards for the local sphere of government. The MFMA also provides for community involvement in the determination of local budgets (Mafunisa and Xaba, 2008:454). In the budgeting process of municipalities, the MFMA plays a central role in engaging key stakeholders. This includes procedures for making information about municipal finances available to the community. This is confirmed by Section 23 of the MFMA which stipulates that “when the annual budget has been tabled, the municipal council must consider any views of the local community”. Furthermore, Section 121 of the Act states that the municipality is required to prepare an annual report for the purpose of documenting the activities of the municipality or municipal entity during the financial year to which the report relates and to include a detailed financial performance report. The majority of municipal decision-making is done through official reports and statements to the council. Section 71 of MFMA prescribes that “the accounting officer must by no later than 10 working days after the end of each month submit to the mayor of the municipality and the relevant provincial treasury a statement in the prescribed format on the status of the municipality’s budget”. This statement must reflect the following:

- Actual revenue per revenue source;

- actual borrowings;
- actual expenditure per budget vote;
- the amount of any allocations received; and
- actual expenditure on those allocations. (MFMA, Sec.71)

In addition, Section 72 of the MFMA requires that accounting officers must assess the performance of the municipality during the first quarter of the financial year by 25 January of each year and submit a report on such assessment to the mayor of the municipality, National Treasury and the relevant provincial treasury. The accounting officer must also make recommendations on whether an adjustments budget is necessary and recommend revised projections for revenue and expenditure. Furthermore, in terms of Section 52 (d) of the MFMA, the mayor of the municipality must submit a report to council on the implementation of the budget and the financial state of the municipality within thirty days of the end of each quarter. In terms of section 129 of the MFMA and within two months from which the annual report is tabled in council, a municipality must adopt an oversight report containing comments on the annual report. In terms of Section 21(b) of the MFMA, the mayor of the municipality must coordinate the processes for preparing the annual budget and for reviewing the municipality's integrated development plan and budgeted related policies at least 10 months before the start of the budget year. As confirmed by Napier (2018:175), the MFMA prescribes several detailed and comprehensive prescriptions, dates and deadlines for municipalities to ensure a sound and sustainable management of financial affairs in municipalities. It also promotes the involvement of stakeholders, especially in the budgeting process and financial performance auditing and accounting procedures.

4.2.7 The Traditional Leadership and Governance System Act 41 of 2003

A factor that distinguishes South Africa from other western countries is the significant role of traditional leaders in the lives of citizens. The Traditional Leadership and Governance System Act 41 of 2003 aims to direct this role and to incorporate traditional leadership in municipal politics. The Act also intends to integrate traditional leaders in broader governance frameworks and policy-making processes. As far as

stakeholder involvement in municipal affairs is concerned, traditional leaders can play an important role by encouraging their subordinates to engage municipal councils on matters that influence their daily lives. As such, traditional leaders are commonly regarded as in cooperative partnerships with municipalities, especially in policy and service delivery decisions that impact rural communities. They are encouraged to mobilise rural people to participate actively in rural governance to realise socioeconomic development objectives and to promote local economic development initiatives. It is expected that municipal councils engage traditional leaders on policies and programmes that may affect tribal areas and consult them on matters pertaining to customs, traditions and other cultural practices. The stakeholder involvement plans and client service strategies of a municipality should thus reflect these practices or run the risk of being rejected by traditional communities.

4.2.8 Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004

The Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004 governs a municipality's ability to enforce property rates. The Act allows municipalities to introduce a consistent and equitable scheme of exemptions, reductions and rebates regarding property. As far as stakeholder involvement is concerned, the Act stipulates that it is imperative that any rates of the municipality that must be increased or reduced be commented on by the people who are affected. This must be done when the municipality embarks on a public participation engagement process with stakeholders.

4.2.9 Intergovernmental Relations Framework Act 13 of 2005

The Intergovernmental Relation Framework Act 13 of 2005 is significant because it establishes a framework for strengthening and facilitating intergovernmental ties between the three spheres of government. Part 4 of Chapter 2 of the Act, for example, deals with the creation of local intergovernmental forums. Municipal Intergovernmental Forums (MIF) function as consultative forums with the sole purpose of strengthening decision-making processes and partnerships in the provision of public service in both district and local governments. Furthermore, for district and local governments to share the benefits of socioeconomic development and improve overall service delivery outcomes in all spheres of government, they must collaborate and integrate as much

as possible by promoting mechanisms and procedures that facilitate intergovernmental relations. The MIF plays an important role in local government when it comes to tackling the most persistent service delivery issues. As a result, they should compel all state institutions from various governments to form intergovernmental organisations that would improve adequate local governance mechanisms and strengthen customer service initiatives at government levels. The mayor of the district municipality and the local municipalities make up the district intergovernmental forum. A district intergovernmental forum's purpose is to provide a consultative forum for the district municipality and the local municipalities in the district to debate and consult on issues of mutual concern. Having explored the statutory requirements that promote stakeholder involvement in South African municipalities, it becomes apparent that the local sphere of government has a multitude of obligations regarding the engagement of civil society in local decision-making. It is also evident that legislation makes particular provision for the mechanisms that municipalities should utilise to obtain input from stakeholders and to incorporate such input in customer service approaches and methods. The next section focuses on the regulatory framework and official prescripts of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement.

4.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK AND OFFICIAL PRESCRIPTS GUIDING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Sustained local democracy and developmental local government are dependent on positive relationships between municipalities and their constituencies (Van der Walddt, 2004:1). Municipalities are regarded as the body of government that is the closest to civil society and therefore, have to consult with communities as typically represented by community-based organisations (CBOs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), faith-based organisations (FBOs), business leaders, developers, taxpayer associations and other stakeholders. Such consultative processes should ultimately benefit the entire community and incorporate input regarding community concerns and development priorities. Such concerns and priorities should be addressed by accelerated service delivery and customer service excellence. To regulate the interaction between government and civil society, the national government has established a comprehensive regulatory framework, inclusive of official prescripts and

rules. It also launched several initiatives aimed at guiding stakeholder engagement in local government. This includes the drafting of various white papers (e.g., The White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme, 1994; The White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997; and The White Paper on Local Government, 1998). The purpose of this section of the study is to analyse some of the most significant and influential regulatory documents and prescripts guiding stakeholder engagement in local government. This framework is supplemented with broader continental and national strategies to foster local democracy. This framework will serve as a further dataset against which current stakeholder involvement praxis in CoE can be gauged.

4.3.1 The White Paper on Reconstruction and Development, 1994

South Africa has undergone dramatic transformation at all levels of government since democratisation in 1994. The White Paper on Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) was designed to act as an overarching framework for this transformation. The RDP expressed the firm commitment of the government to effectively and productively address the widespread barriers linked to the consequences of poverty and acute social inequality. As a regulatory obligation of local government on community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement, Chapter 7 of the RDP, for instance, gives a commentary on the significance of the processes of consultation, popular participation and capacity building. As such, the programme was implemented through the widest possible consultation and participation of the citizenry of South Africa. Such consultation and participation processes were (and still are) guided by the RDP's six basic principles:

- Integration and sustainability;
- people[-]driven;
- peace and security;
- nation building; and
- meeting basic needs and building infrastructure. (RDP, 1994:6)

The RDP was implemented by functional departments in the three spheres of government as well as by parastatals. Structured stakeholder involvement methods were utilised to guarantee that citizens are involved in policy development, planning and project implementation. The empowerment of civil society institutions is a key goal of the government's approach to achieving national agreement. The government's commitment to this process attempts to harness local knowledge systems and input from stakeholders. As such, the government supports the capacity-building initiatives of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement.

4.3.2 The White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997

Following the White Paper on the Reconstruction and Development Programme, the government designed a framework to transform public service. These transformation processes were geared at improving public service delivery in all spheres of government. The White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery stipulates that public institutions and government agencies need to optimise access to quality public services and have to make real efforts to involve the citizenry in public decision-making processes. To this effect, the white paper outlines eight transformational priorities for transforming public service delivery, all of which apply to local government. The eight *Batho Pele* (people first) principles have strong significance for stakeholder involvement and a customer orientation in service delivery:

- Consultation: Citizens should be consulted about the level and quality of services they receive and should be given a choice about the services that are offered, if possible.
- Service standard: Citizens should be told what level and quality of public service they will receive to know what to expect.
- Information: Citizens should be given full, accurate information about the public services they are entitled to get from government. Information should be provided at all service points and including in local media and languages. Contact numbers and names should appear in all departmental communication.

- Openness and transparency: Citizens should be told about how service departments are run and how much they cost and who is in charge.
- Access: Citizens should have equal access to the public service to which they are entitled. Service delivery targets extending access to both public servants and services must be set. Furthermore, improved service delivery for people with disability should be implemented.
- Courtesy: It is always important to handle customers with courtesy and consultation. In addition, service customers should not tolerate any form of treatment that is insensitive. In their Code of Ethics, standards and training programmes, all organisations must define and incorporate requirements for public care. It is important to regularly check the performance of workers and discourtesy should at all times be discouraged.
- Redress: Citizen dissatisfaction on the level of service provided should spark positive action. Mechanisms for recording any public outcry must be established and staff must be capacitated to handle service delivery complaints fast, effective[ly], and efficiently. Regular and prompt feedback responses on the outcomes must be adhered. Moreover, if the promised quality of service is not provided, the customers of [the] service should be given an apology, a full thorough clarification and a speedy a successful solution. When service delivery grievances are made customers of service should receive a compassionate positive response.
- Value for money: The money ought to be wisely spent (*sic*). The line departments of the municipality should provide evidence that successful savings and enhanced delivery of customer service top the agenda. Similarly, public service delivery should be delivered economically and efficiently in order to have the highest possible value for money for service users. (WPTPSD, 1997:8)

Van der Waldt (2004:1) and Subban *et al.* (2007:34) confirm that these principles have a strong customer service focus. The prescripts to encourage stakeholder involvement and customer orientation are encapsulated in the vision statement of the white paper: We belong, we care, we serve (Subban *et al.*, 2007:34). Local government councillors and government officials will be instrumental in giving effect to these principles and

they should be the focus of any local government capacity building programme. It is therefore significant for political principals and government officials to be active and accountable partners in the development and implementation of the policies and approaches to training and capacity building that are now emerging for local government. The WPTPS also provides a detailed and comprehensive mechanism for national and provincial governments to establish departmental service delivery strategies. These strategies would be needed to support ongoing changes in the quantity, productivity and equity of service delivery. Chapter 11 of the WPTPS for instance makes it mandatory for both national and provincial government departments to identify, among others:

- A mission statement for service delivery;
 - Services to be provided;
 - Service standards and performance indicators;
 - Monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.
 - Plans for staffing tailored to service delivery needs.
 - Financial plans that link budgets directly to service needs;
 - Public Private Partnerships (PPP) which will provide more effective forms of service delivery; and
 - The development of a culture of customer care service and customer service approach that is non-discriminatory in terms of gender, race, and disability.
- (WPTPS)

As such, improving service delivery both in public institutions and government agencies settings should be the ultimate goal of the public service structural reform programme. To put it in another way, the *Batho Pele* principles reflect the foundations of a new public service ethos, geared towards strengthening the standard of public service delivery and fostering stakeholder involvement in all spheres of government. A schematic representation for transforming service delivery priorities is illustrated in Figure 4.1 below.

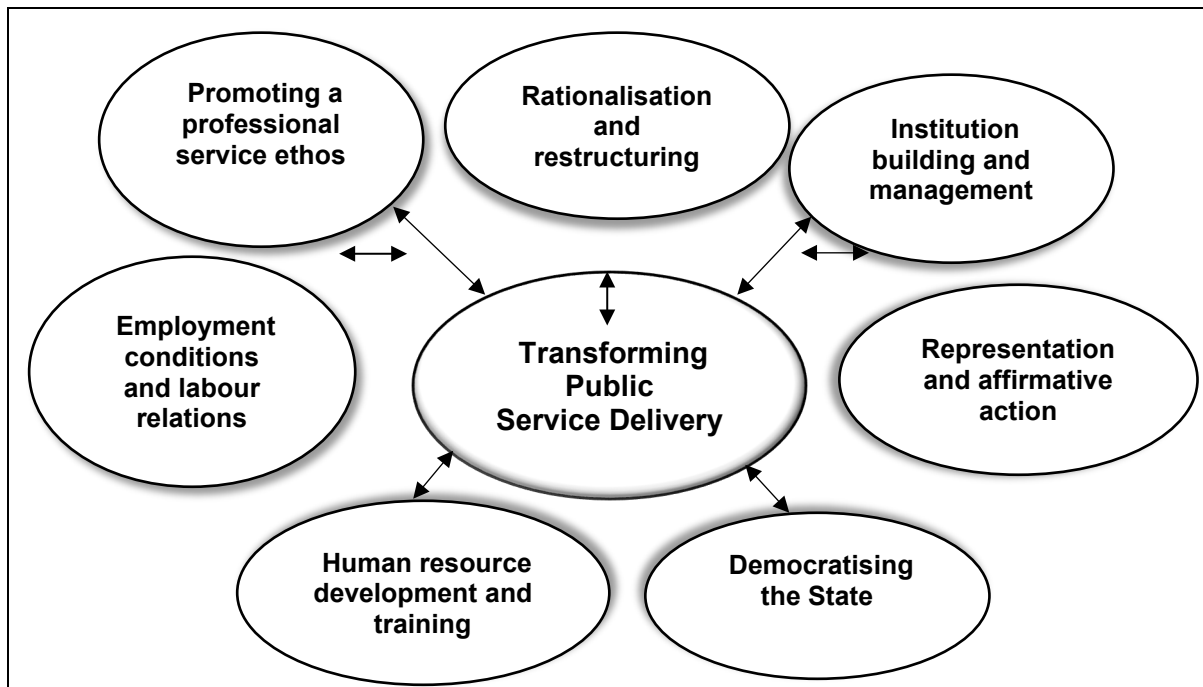


Figure 4.1 Transformation priorities for service delivery

Source: White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery (1997:8).

4.3.3 White Paper on Local Government, 1998

The White Paper on Local Government (WPLG), 1998 requires active participation by citizens. It stipulates that building local democracy is a central role of local government; hence, municipalities should develop strategies and mechanisms to continuously engage with citizens, businesses and community groups to advance constitutional reform. Such reform for instance should promote the involvement of stakeholder groupings in the monitoring and evaluation of municipal programmes and projects. According to this regulatory prescript, the following approaches listed below can assist to achieve this:

- Forums to allow organised formations to initiate policies and/or[/] influence policy formulation, as well as participate in monitoring and evaluation.
- Structured stakeholder involvement in certain Council committees, in particular[,], if these are issue-orientated committees with a limited lifespan rather than permanent structures.
- Participatory budgeting initiatives aimed at linking community priorities to capital investment programmes and

- Focus group participatory action research conducted in partnership with NGOs and CBOs that can generate detailed and comprehensive information about a wide range of specific needs, wants and values. (WPLG, 1998:7)

In addition, the white paper sets out a road map for institutional change and local government modernisation that supports engaging with local people to find sustainable ways to improve the quality of their livelihoods. It offers three approaches that can allow communities to develop further; namely, integrated planning and budgeting for development, performance management and collaborating with local people and partners (Van der Walddt, 2004:5). In addition, the author postulates that municipalities should pursue inclusive approaches facilitating stakeholder involvement, including initiatives aimed at eliminating barriers to and actively supporting the inclusion in the local community of disadvantaged stakeholder groups such as women and youth. Citizens should be afforded the opportunity to provide inputs on service delivery issues that affect their well-being through robust consultative processes and decision-making mechanisms such as ward committees, budget consultations and Integrated Development Planning Forums (IDPF). The WPLG notes that municipalities, as they are in the third level of government, require the active participation of people at four levels:

- As voters: To ensure maximum democratic accountability of the elected political leadership for the policies they are empowered to promote.
- As citizens: Who express through various stakeholder associations, their views before during and after policy development process in order to ensure that policy reflect[s] community preferences as far as possible.
- As consumers and end users who expect value for money, affordable services and courteous and responsive, and
- As organised partners involved in the mobilisation of resources for development through profit business, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs). (WPLG, 1998:8)

The WPLG stresses the importance of stakeholder engagement in both public institutions and government agencies by providing for the implementation of a people-

centred approach to improve the delivery of customer service in efforts to respond to the adverse effects of separate development. In addition, the WPLG laid down a road map for local government institutional change and modernisation that supports engaging with local communities to find effective ways to improve the quality of their livelihoods. This indicates ways in which municipalities across the country's length and breadth can include stakeholder groupings and community organisations in the setting of government to enhance participation. In addition, the WPLG allows for local governance to cooperate with local stakeholders to accomplish local government goals (Tau, 2013:158).

4.3.4 Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations, 2001

The Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations were gazetted on 24 August 2001 (Regulation Gazette No 22605). Chapter 4 of the regulations advocates for community participation in respect of integrated development planning and performance management. In the absence of acceptable municipal-wide organisations for community engagement, Section (1) (a) stipulates that a municipality must construct a forum that will improve community participation by drafting and implementing the municipality's integrated development plan; and monitoring, measuring and reviewing the municipality's performance in relation to the key performance indicators and performance targets set by the municipality.

Before creating a forum in accordance with paragraph (a) above, a municipality should encourage the local community to identify persons to serve on the forum through appropriate means (including representatives from ward committees) if any. Similarly, such a forum must be representative of the local community of the municipality in question. Edbon (2000, cited in Van der Waldt, 2004:4) believes that grassroots democracy is about empowering all people to actively participate in the realisation of their well-being and fulfilment as active citizens. This point is emphasised by Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:199) who state that when communities, as essential stakeholders in municipalities become more involved in local affairs, it leads to more effective and productive planning as well as better informed policy and by-law

formulation. As a result, this usually leads to better customer service. Section 2 (a) of the regulations mandates that a municipality should hold frequent meetings of the forum to:

- discuss the process to be followed in drafting the IDP;
- consult on the content of the IDP;
- monitor the implementation of the IDP;
- deliberate the development, implementation, and review of the municipality's performance management system; and
- monitor the municipality's performance in relation to the key performance indicators and performance targets set by the municipality. (Section 2 [a])

It has become increasingly evident that the value of stakeholder involvement in government settings lies in their willingness to collaborate with grassroots groupings to strengthen customer service. As a result, compliance with statutory responsibilities, increased transmission of local governance-related information to communities and tapping into local knowledge networks are all advantages of stakeholder involvement for municipalities (State Government Victoria, 2011:2). Additionally, Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201) assert that continuous involvement of communities as stakeholders is significant for developing mutual trust and building legitimacy and accountability in the third sphere of government. This concludes a brief exposition of regulatory stipulations that govern stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government. In the next section, developmental frameworks and strategies that guide and inform customer service and stakeholder involvement in strengthening popular community engagement in local governance are highlighted.

4.3.5 The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS), 2000

The publication of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) in November 2000 is a further instrument aligned with the government's commitment to guide local government towards guiding community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement in promoting popular participation in local governance. This strategy serves as a blueprint for concerted efforts towards rural development in

South Africa (Kole, 2005:22). As such, it presents an opportunity for South Africa's rural citizenry to realise their potential and contribute to creating a meaningful enabling environment for their country's future (Van der Waladt, 2004:15). The implementation approach of the ISRDS makes use of the rural development initiative to respond to the pervasive service delivery backlogs in rural communities. Moreover, the ISRDS aims to make rural development sustainable through economic improvement, the provision of social amenities and the establishment of viable institutions (ISRDS, November 2000). The Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy (ISRDS) of the South African government strongly emphasises increased stakeholder involvement in rural development. Similarly, the ISDRS defined several principles that have an impact on the strategy's level of stakeholder involvement. For example, these ideas were utilised to establish key project milestones for achieving sustainable rural development (ISRDS, 2000:4):

- targeting poverty and poverty alleviation;
- local economic development;
- improved co-ordination and integration across government;
- decentralisation of decision-making.
- demand-driven approach; and
- community partnership and participation. (ISRDS, 2000:4)

4.3.6 African Charter for the Public Service, 2001

At a meeting held in Windhoek, from 5 to 6 February 2001, ministers of the public service of several African countries met to design and introduce a public service charter for Africa. The main aim of this charter (which was signed by the Government of South Africa) is to strengthen the professionalism and ethics of public service in Africa. The charter outlines the core principles of public service in Part II; namely fair justice, neutrality, legality and continuity of service. The rules regulating ties between the public service and the users of its services (Part III of the charter) apply to this study in that it stipulates that the public service of African countries should represent users (i.e., stakeholders) in compliance with the following criteria:

- proximity and accessibility of services;
- participation, consultation and mediation;
- quality effectiveness and efficiency;
- evaluation of services;
- transparency and information;
- speed and responsiveness; and
- reliability and confidentiality of information. (African Charter for the Public Service, 2001:4)

Van der Waldt (2004:12) argues that these criteria mandate public institutions to ensure that the interests of consumers and public service workers are maintained. It is the duty of the public service to create, through an institution with appropriate moral and social authority, a mediation mechanism that allows both users and public service staff means of redress other than administrative and/or legal remedies. Public administrations must establish the necessary customer service approaches and methods in order to assist users and staff with obtaining access to services and documenting their views, inputs, suggestions and service delivery grievances.

4.3.7 Municipal–Community Partnership Programme, 2004

The extended statutory and regulatory framework guiding municipal governance in South Africa is founded on the premise that municipalities must formulate and implement service delivery strategies that meet the needs of the citizenry in the context of limited administrative capacity, and inequitable and inefficient settlement. In this context, the challenge is to strengthen the democratic social contract by promoting accessibility, enhancing representativity, and strengthening accountability and responsiveness. Given this context, the municipal-community partnership (MCP) programme was launched as a means to facilitate and promote democratic, participatory praxis. The main purpose of the MCP is to promote positive engagement between municipalities and communities. This engagement should lead to the establishment of a partnership for the development, social upliftment and economic prosperity of the community. In this respect, Van der Waldt (2004:11) argues that their ability to complement municipal capacity, enhance financial sustainability and improve

the productive and cost-effective acceleration of public service delivery are the key motivational factors for MCPs. Additional driving factors to stimulate and accelerate service delivery include the potential for MCPs to reinforce and encourage the idea of transparency, empowerment and community ownership in service delivery projects. There are some barriers and obstacles to the establishment of an MCP. Some of the most significant barriers entail the absence of municipal capacity development initiatives to support the formation and maintenance of an MCP; the non-existence of service delivery arrangements, agreements and contracts; as well as the absence of performance indicators to gauge the outputs of MCPs. Despite these barriers and obstacles, it is evident that MCPs hold significant benefits for community participation, stakeholder engagement and customer service.

4.3.8 Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS), 2009

The Local Government Turnaround Strategy (LGTAS) was published in November 2009. Since local government is the tier of government closest to the people, it is seen as a critical component of the country's restoration and development efforts. Similarly, this strategy aims to resist influences that are eroding the country's local government structures like municipalities that have demonstrated performance failures. One of the goals of the turnaround strategy is to revitalise the vision of local government growth. To this end, the LGTAS aims to improve municipal organisational and political performance as well as service delivery. The goal is to enhance residents' lives by gradually meeting their social, economic and material needs; thereby restoring community confidence, accountability, legitimacy and mutual trust in government. Because many flaws have been detected in the current municipal structures and institutional systems it will be important to assess proper procedures and practices to make the necessary changes. This could lead to some regulatory requirements being relaxed as well as policy and legislative revisions. The following issues underpin the implementation of the LGTAS:

- compliance with the statutory and regulatory frameworks governing municipal governance;
- adequate national and provincial support for municipalities;

- addressing internal and organisational factors as well as external inputs and deficiencies hampering municipalities in adherence to their constitutional, developmental mandate;
- effective intergovernmental cooperation, coordination and support; and
- municipal oversight, monitoring and evaluation.

In addressing these and other related issues, it is expected that municipalities will enhance their ability to engage stakeholders and promote customer service excellence. Apart from national regulatory strategies and programmes, municipalities are also steered by international guidelines. Some of the most significant in this regard include:

- African Charter on the Values and Principles of Decentralisation, Local Governance and Local Development
- EOI: Local Government Climate Change Support Programme
- European Charter of Local Government
- International Union of Local Authorities
- Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI)
- OECD's United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG)
- Summit of Great Cities of the World
- United Nation's Cities, Local and Regional Governments and Human Rights programme
- United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat)
- United Towns Organisation
- USAID Local Governance Support Programme
- World Association of the Major Metropolises

A detailed exposition of all these treaties, conventions and protocols aimed at supporting local government falls outside the scope of this chapter. However, it is necessary to consider the overarching framework within which these treaties, conventions and protocols are designed and executed. This framework is known as Local Agenda 21.

4.3.9 Local Agenda 21

Local Agenda 21 is about a global partnership that builds on the premises of the United Nation's General Assembly Resolution 44/228 of 22 December 1989, which was adopted when the nations of the world called for the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and on the acceptance of the need to take a balanced and integrated approach to environment and development questions. Local Agenda 21 addresses pressing socioeconomic and environmental impediments and guides the national, provincial (regional) and local governments of nations with moving communities towards a better future. It reflects a global consensus and political commitment to addressing challenges associated with development and the environment. Its successful implementation is primarily the responsibility of decentralised government. Local Agenda 21 strongly emphasises the need for widespread public participation and the active involvement of non-governmental organisations and other groups (i.e., stakeholders). Local authorities' initiatives in support of Local Agenda 21 are the subject of Chapter 28 of the treaty, which emphasises that each municipality should enter into a dialogue with its citizens, local organisations and private enterprises and adopt a 'local' Local Agenda 21. Through consultation and consensus-building, local authorities should learn from citizens and local, civic, community, business and industrial organisations and thereby, acquire the information needed for formulating the best strategies. The process of consultation would increase household awareness of sustainable development issues. Local authority programmes, policies, laws and regulations to achieve Local Agenda 21 objectives would be assessed and modified, based on local programmes adopted. Strategies could also be used in supporting proposals for local, national, regional and international funding. Partnerships should be fostered among relevant organs and organisations such as UNDP, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and UNEP, the World Bank, regional banks, the International Union of Local Authorities, the World Association of the Major Metropolises, Summit of Great Cities of the World, the United Towns Organisation and other relevant partners, to mobilise increased international support for local authority programmes. An important goal would be to support, extend and improve existing institutions that work in the field of local authority capacity-building and local environmental management. Strengthening the role of Major Groups is the subject of Chapter 23 of Local Agenda 21, which

emphasises that broad public participation in decision-making is one of the fundamental prerequisites for the achievement of sustainable development. Furthermore, the need for new forms of participation has emerged in the more specific contexts of environment and development. This includes the need for individuals, groups and organisations to participate in environmental impact assessment procedures and to know about and participate in decisions, particularly those that potentially affect the communities in which they live and work. Individuals, groups and organisations should have access to information held by national authorities that is relevant to environment and development, including environmental protection measures and information on products and activities that have or are likely to have a significant impact on the environment.

4.4 CONCLUSION

This chapter encapsulated the legislative and regulatory framework guiding stakeholder engagement in local government. Several legislative stipulations, official prescripts and regulatory obligations of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement were analysed. Additionally, the statutory and regulatory requirements that promote the effective and productive functioning of stakeholder involvement in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, were summarised. The primary intention of this chapter was to realise the third research objective; namely, to analyse the statutory and regulatory framework that governs stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government. The last section of this chapter expounded on the developmental frameworks and strategies in local government. The next chapter of the study will delve into the status of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in the CoE through an empirical investigation. Typical pervasive impediments and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE, in particular, will be determined. In addition, the chapter will investigate the underlying driving and constraining factors that lead to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. The perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city will be analysed.

CHAPTER 5

THE STATUS OF STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN STRENGTHENING CUSTOMER SERVICE IN THE CITY OF EKURHULENI: EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

Data collection is one of the most significant and time-consuming elements of the research process. This statement is underscored by Robson (1993:303), who argues that data collection is the most essential aspect of any scholarly investigation. Research methodology generally refers to how data is obtained and analysed within the context of a particular inquiry. As such, Chapter 5 outlines the research methodology that has been applied in this study towards addressing the research problem, as presented in Section 1.2. Hence, this chapter will expand on the qualitative research design that was followed. The aim of this empirical investigation; namely, to probe the status of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in the CoE, will be operationalised by reporting on the results and interpreting the findings of the research. This includes an analysis of the typical impediments and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular. Furthermore, the chapter will report on the underlying, driving and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. The perceptions and opinions of appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city will be analysed in this regard.

5.2 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The primary objective of this study was to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to design a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for the strengthening of customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. This research followed a qualitative design to gain in-depth knowledge and understanding of how stakeholder involvement is effective and efficient in strengthening customer service praxis and

metrics in the CoE. A qualitative approach was chosen because it allows the researcher to explore and understand the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem. Secondly, this approach was preferred because it enables the researcher to collect data in the field, at the site where the participants experience the issue or problem under study (i.e., stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service). Du Toit *et al.* (2002:421) support this notion when they argue that qualitative research helps the researcher to understand people and the social and cultural contexts within which they live. The goal of understanding a phenomenon from the point of view of the participants and its particular social and institutional context is largely lost when textual data are quantified. Moreover, a qualitative approach was followed because the process of research involves emerging questions and procedures; data that are typically collected in the participants' setting and data analysis that is conducted by inductively building from particulars to general themes (Creswell, 2014:4). The qualitative research approach was also preferred since it allowed the participants an opportunity to express themselves on issues pertaining to stakeholder involvement in the CoE.

5.2.1 Target population and sampling

According to McMillian and Schumacher (2001:164), one of the crucial steps in designing qualitative research is to choose a sample. Conversely, Unrau, Gabor and Grinnell (cited in De Vos, 2008: 224) state that the term *sample* comprises elements or a subset of a population being considered for inclusion in the study. It can also be viewed as a subset of measurements drawn from a population in which we are interested. Barker (2003:380) corroborates this explanation when he postulates that sampling is studied to understand the population from which it was drawn; as such, a sample is a small portion of the total set of objects, events or persons from which a representative selection is made. Curtis *et al.* (2000) identify the following six criteria:

- The sampling strategy should be relevant to the conceptual framework and the research questions addressed by the research.
- The sample should be likely to generate rich information on the type of phenomena which need to be studied.

- The sample should enhance the transferability of the findings.
- The sample should produce credible descriptions/ explanations (in the sense of being true to real life).
- The sample should take ethical preconditions (such as vulnerability, informed consent, etc.) into consideration.
- The sampling should be feasible in terms of money and time, and practical issues of accessibility have to be considered. (Curtis *et al.*, 2000)

For this study, two target populations are relevant, namely managers of customer care centres at CoE (N=20) and a representative sample of stakeholder organisations that interact with these centres including CBOs, NGOs; small, medium and macroenterprises (SMMEs); faith-based organisations (FBOs) and sport organisations. A total of six representatives of the total population of 18 organisations were randomly sampled. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$). These customer care centres are Tsakane CCC, Germiston CCC, Kwa-Thema CCC, Springs CCC, Tembisa 2 CCC and Kempton Park CCC. These managers are purposively sampled since they are well conversant and have appropriate experience with the challenges faced by stakeholders. Purposive sampling means that the researcher makes specific choices about which people, groups or objects to include in a sample (Bertram and Christiansen, 2014:60). It is regarded as an important type of non-probability sampling where researchers rely on their experiences, ingenuity and/or previous research findings (Welman and Kruger, 1999:63; Maseko, 2018:42). Interviews were conducted in accordance with the COVID-19 safety protocols and policies of the CoE. In addition, a semi-structured questionnaire was conducted with randomly sampled representatives of 18 stakeholders' organisations, thereby representing three organisations per customer care centre.

5.2.2 Data collection methods

An important element of research in social science is the decision about how data will be collected. As a result, data for qualitative research can be gathered from a variety of sources including literature reviews, document analyses, interviews and

questionnaires. For source triangulation, both primary and secondary data were obtained from a literature review and semi-structured interviews. Primary data were collected through interviews with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$) and six sampled municipal stakeholder organisations representing NGOs, CBOs, FBOs, SMMEs and sport organisations through their engagement with the respective customer care centres. These methods enabled data triangulation and fostered the validity and reliability of the findings. It also enabled the researcher to cross check findings by comparing and contrasting responses from different cohorts. Both the primary and secondary data were used to study stakeholder involvement and to propose a strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE.

5.2.2.1 Semi-structured interviews

After the ethical approval of this study which was acquired from the Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (RERC) of the North-West University and the initial contact with the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality (i.e. Office of the City Manager), the researcher obtained written permission from the gatekeepers to conduct the study within the customer relations management component of the CoE, as well as written consent from the participants and participants to participate in the survey. As such, interviews were conducted with the Customer Care Area Managers since they are well conversant and have appropriate experience about challenges facing stakeholders. Customer Care Area Managers of Tsakane CCC, Germiston CCC, Kwa-Thema CCC, Springs CCC, Tembisa 2 CCC and Kempton Park CCC were sampled. The customer care area managers were interviewed in their respective offices and after hours in order to minimise any inconvenience in the functioning of their operational duties. The interviews were conducted during different times slot based on the managers' preferences and availability. Furthermore, the interviews were extended to representatives of six stakeholder organisations which were randomly sampled from main stakeholder groupings of the City of Ekurhuleni namely, CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, FBOs and sport organisations. To facilitate the interviews, an interview schedule (see Appendix A) was designed to ensure that all the different dimensions of the investigation had been covered. The purpose of the interview schedule was to ensure that the researcher remained consistent during the interviews. A pilot study (i.e., pre-testing) of the interview schedule was done with four participants to ensure that the

instrument is valid and that all the questions are clear, well-understood and that there is no ambiguity. The success of using interviews as a data gathering technique depends on the following listed factors which were adopted for the interview process as emphasised by McMillian and Schumacher (1997:263–267), Denzin and Lincoln (2008:142) and Maree (2008:87–89):

- From the onset, the interviewer explained the procedure to be followed (i.e., that the participant will not receive any incentive for participating in the interview and that there are no disadvantages or penalties for not participating).
- The interviewer explained to the participants that should they experience any form of distress or discomfort, the interview process will be stopped or resumed at another time.
- The researcher guaranteed participants' confidentiality and anonymity and confirmed that interviews will be conducted on a voluntarily.
- Participants were informed that they were free to withdraw at any time or choose not to answer any question, should they not want to.
- The participants were made aware that the interviewer would like their permission to audio-record the interview using a mobile device.
- The researcher used probing and clarification questions during the interview process, to gain a clearer understanding of the participants' perceptions, opinions and understanding of stakeholder involvement. Consequently, leading questions were avoided.
- The researcher observed the participants' non-verbal communication and responded accordingly.

With the permission of the participants, all the interviews conducted for this research project were audio recorded for transcription purposes. Kgaffe (2001:73) asserts that the use of digital recording tools ensures accuracy and eliminates the challenges associated with selective hearing and note-taking during the interview process, as this will assist the researcher in minimising distortion and taking down the participants' responses verbatim. Due to COVID-19 restrictions and protocols, some interviews with representatives of the stakeholder organisations could not be conducted face-to-face. Therefore, the interview schedule was slightly adjusted to serve the purpose of a

questionnaire. The researcher solicited the assistance of administrative staff at each customer care area manager's office to submit the questionnaire to stakeholder organisations where they would be able to share their opinions and views in writing. The completed questionnaires were then collected and analysed. Both closed and open-ended questions as well as Likert scale-type questions (i.e., 4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree) were used, similar to the original interview schedule. The researcher complied with the following listed considerations as suggested by Bertram and Christiansen (2020:90-91):

- Only information required to answer the research questions was obtained.
- The vocabulary used was consistent with the participants' language proficiency, expertise and experience.
- No questions were asked that could have been interpreted differently.
- No leading questions were asked.

5.2.3 Research ethics

The ethics of science concerns what is considered 'wrong' or 'right' when conducting scientific research. Mouton (2009:240) describes scientific research as a form of human conduct; it follows that such conduct has to conform to generally accepted norms and values. Furthermore, Welman and Kruger (1999:181) indicate that the primary principle that governs ethics in research is the best interests of the participants, including their welfare and safety. Sanjari *et al.* (2014) conversely state that researchers who venture into qualitative research must be particularly aware of the ethical impediments that will be posed by researchers owing to their subjective and personal involvement in their research. For this study, the researcher obtained written permission to conduct the study within the customer relations management component of the CoE and also obtained written consent to participate in the survey from the participants. Participants were assured of their anonymity and the confidentiality of their responses. Furthermore, an ethical clearance certificate was obtained (NWU-00956-22-A7) and the conventions and protocols prescribed by the Ethics Committee of North-West University were fully adhered to.

5.2.4 Research limitations

Due to operational constraints such as limited time, finances and assistance with logistical arrangements, the focus of the enquiry was limited to only six of the twenty customer care centres in the CoE. Below are some of the specific challenges encountered during the investigation.

- The lack of timeous responses from the gatekeepers to grant permission to conduct the study seriously constrained the commencement of the investigation. It took almost eight months before final permission to conduct the study was granted. Prior to that, e-mails were sent to the relevant senior managers in the Office of the City Manager (including the city manager), yet telephone calls were not answered.
- Some of the participants confirmed their availability for interviews, only to cancel scheduled appointments due to pressing work commitments, a few minutes before they were to commence. The same situation affected appointments that had been pre-planned with other Customer Care Area Managers including key stakeholder organisational groupings. Interviews had to be rescheduled. Through persistence, all sampled participants were interviewed eventually, resulting in a response rate of 100%.

In broader terms, the primary limitation of this research is that a case study design was chosen and as such findings cannot be generalised to all municipalities in the country. However, the strategic instrument to strengthen customer service that will be proposed is generic and as such comparable to other municipalities. The empirical investigation was further confined to the responses of particular units of analysis, namely the customer care area managers (CCAM) and key stakeholder organisational groupings in the identified customer care centres (CCC).

5.3 RESEARCH RESULTS: ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

Data analysis can be regarded as a continuous activity that occurs throughout the qualitative research process (Maseko, 2018:43). It refers to the methods used by researchers to put data into numerical form and analyse it thematically or statistically (Babbie and Rubin, 2005:552; Denzin and Lincoln, 2008:142). As a result, the goal of analysis is to convert acquired data into an understandable and interpretable format so that the relationships between research problems can be investigated and tested, and conclusions produced (Kgaffe, 2001). Thus, data analysis in a qualitative study is the simplification of data collected from participants. The semi-structured interviews were coded and thematically analysed using a methodical process. The following considerations were employed to interpret data as advocated by McMillian and Schumacher (2001:364) and Strauss and Corbin (1992:67):

- Transcripts were read once.
- Relevant words, sentences or phrases were underlined and named according to themes.
- Themes were categorised and then analysed by utilising *ATLAS.ti* (Version 8).

In this section, the results of the empirical investigation are presented and examined. The section commences with an examination of the demographical profile of participants based on information obtained during interviews and through the questionnaires (i.e., interview schedule). Following that, the opinions and perceptions of participants are analysed.

5.3.1 Results and findings: Customer care area managers

As stated, the researcher conducted interviews with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$) of customer care centres located at Tsakane CCC, Germiston CCC, Kwa-Thema CCC, Springs CCC, Tembisa 2 CCC and Kempton Park CCC.

The interview questions were divided into two sections: the demographical profile of participants (Section A) and aspects pertaining to stakeholder involvement in the CoE (Section B).

5.3.1.1 Section A: Demographical profile of participants

The demographical profile is significant for analysing the responses of participants. Demographical information obtained included (i) the current position or job title of the participants, (ii) years of experience in the current position, (iii) years of experience in local government in general and (iv) years of involvement in customer service-related issues. The participant profile is summarised in the tables below.

A1. Current job title

Customer Care Area	Current job titles of participants
Tembisa 2 CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [1]
Springs CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [2]
Kempton Park CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [3]
Tsakane CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [4]
Kwa-Thema CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [5]
Germiston CCC	Customer Care Area Manager [6]

These participants were all managers of customer care centres in the CoE. As such, they are mandated to coordinate customer services at their respective customer service centres by engaging stakeholder groupings.

A2. Years of experience in current position

Manager	Years of experience in this position	Total (%)
Manager 1	4 years	8%
Manager 2	8 years	15%
Manager 3	11 years	21%
Manager 4	18 years	35%
Manager 5	8 years	15%
Manager 6	3 years	6%

Managers 1 and 2 had less than five years working experience compared to Managers 2, 3, 4 and 5 who had more than five years' experience in their current positions. It is

evident that the majority of the participants has extensive working experience and are thus conversant with the typical challenges and barriers facing stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular. Furthermore, these managers are responsible for assisting the CoE in realising its strategic objective of bringing a “one-stop-shop” multi-service approach and “single points of entry” for customer queries and pervasive service complaints around the city (CoE, 2019). Thus, they are expected to assist the CoE with providing provide a dynamic and positive customer experience which is underpinned by the notion of “bringing government closer to the people”.

A3. Years of experience in local government

Manager	Years of experience in local government	Total (% of <i>n</i>)
Manager 1	15 years	28%
Manager 2	8 years	15%
Manager 3	21 years	40%
Manager 4	24 years	46%
Manager 5	18 years	34%
Manager 6	20 years	38%

The above presentation reflects that Customer Care Area Managers 1 to 6 have been involved in customer service-related issues. Managers 1, 4 and 5 have been involved in customer related issues (36% and 34%, respectively). Managers 3 and 6 have 21 and 15 years’ involvement in customer-related matters. Manager 2 has 8 years’ involvement. Thus, it is evident that participants are suitably placed and experienced to provide meaningful input regarding stakeholder engagement and customer service-related issues.

5.3.1.2 Section B: Stakeholder involvement in the CoE

The empirical findings presented in this section are based on the perceptions and opinions expressed by participants during semi-structured interviews which were conducted with six of the 20 customer care area managers ($n=6$). Findings obtained

from the literature review (i.e., theoretical perspectives, statutory and regulatory frameworks, and international best practices) will be cross-referenced and integrated with the findings to reflect possible congruencies, gaps or inconsistencies.

Question B1: *What are the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and CoE in particular?*

This question sought to ascertain whether customer care area managers are adequately familiar with the typical impediments and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular. The responses obtained are outlined below.

You know, I don't know but just to be frank and truthful, stakeholders don't have information on how government function, particularly local government. They even fail to understand the inter-relationship between the three spheres of government, that's where it hits mainly on the negative impact in terms of discharging basic service delivery to the people. Furthermore, one of the hindrances is that the CoE has not yet advanced the e-government initiative to improve service delivery to residents. Due to the demographical challenges in certain areas, residents have not yet embraced the paperless way of doing things. Things like *Twitter, Facebook* initiative[s] have not yet been advanced satisfactory to strengthen customer service. (Manager 1)

Unwillingness from the City's leadership to pioneer the concept of e-government is seen as one of the typical pervasive impediment and major barrier that is faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and CoE in particular. The CoE is still resorting to the traditional ways of doing things. (Manager 3)

One of the common challenges is that stakeholders come with expectations on issue being resolved on the ground. In the CoE for instance we have the departments that have service standards, and the service standards ranges from eight hours to 72 hours. Even a small query has its own service standards. So, stakeholders have to understand that a service delivery complaint can't be resolved immediately due to its service standard. However, we do find a common ground at the end. (Manager 4)

It differs from one stakeholder to another. A school, for instance, can raise a concern regarding the non-cutting of overgrown grass which can result as a hideout for criminals or faith-based organisations can raised barriers pertaining to the non-availability of land for public worship purposes. It basically depends on the nature of the stakeholder organisation. (Manager 5)

From these responses, it is clear that managers are well-versed in and have relevant expertise in the typical difficulties that stakeholders face. Furthermore, when communities—as essential stakeholders in municipalities—become more active in municipal affairs, it usually results in more effective and productive planning as well as more informed policy and by-law formulation. Consequently, it usually leads to better customer service. It must, therefore, be borne in mind that municipalities have statutory obligations (see Chapter 3) to engage and collaborate with various stakeholders, including corporations, NPOs, CBOs, FBOs, SMMEs and sport organisations, to find effective and productive solutions that will remedy typical challenges and barriers that impair effective and productive service delivery. As agencies of the state, municipalities should assist the government in moving from a regulatory governance paradigm to a more participatory and transparent paradigm.

Question B2: *What are the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to [the] non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE?*

As a follow-up to Question B1, Theme B2 intended to obtain underlying and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. The literature review covered aspects pertaining to their role in strengthening customer service in the CoE. Below are the responses obtained.

Lack of effective and efficient communication strategy is one of the underlying factors leading to non-participation of key stakeholder organisation groupings in the CoE. (Manager 1)

Disillusionment from the stakeholders is one of the underlying and constraining factors leading to non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. Where we are now as the country[’s] citizens are disillusioned. People are not getting the services they expect from us as the city. We are making

promises that are not fulfilled. As such this leads to non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. (Manager 2)

Lack of interest to participate from stakeholders themselves is one of the constraining factors leading to non-participation. For example, due to the geographical spread of some of the areas in the city, the CoE has grown so vast to a point that transport logistics are not organised to ferry stakeholders to IDP meetings for them to participate. Lack of transport leads to non-participation. (Manager 3)

When the CoE fails to meet the expectations of the community in improving their livelihoods through coherent service delivery programmes that leads to non-participation of key stakeholders. Moreover, when they are called to come and participate on government programmes, they are reluctant to do that due to service delivery promises being made and not fulfilled. (Managers 4 and 5)

In my opinion, allegations of hotbed corruption and malfeasance have a bearing [effect] leading to non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. (Manager 5)

From the responses above, it can be deduced that the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE impacts service delivery negatively. For instance, to expedite the provision of services to the communities, the government depends on stakeholders since they breach the gap between the community and the government. From the preceding section, it also emerged that the absence of a coherent and effective communication technique is seen as one of the typical constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE. Further, stakeholder involvement in government environments can, for instance, be achieved through the application of effective and productive communication instruments. To wit, the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE in harnessing participatory governance, might impair the deepening of the tenets of local democracy between the state and civil society and the enhancement of overall service delivery outcomes. When citizens perceive that the cost of a relationship outweighs its perceived benefits, theory predicts that they will choose to leave the relationship (not participating in the democratic process), as postulated by Van der Waldt (2017).

Question B3: *What are the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and [the] status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the CoE?*

This question aimed to elicit ideas and insights that would assist the researcher in better understanding the perceptions and opinions of elected political principals and appointed officials in the CoE about customer service and the state of the CoE's present stakeholder participation instruments.

In my view, the perception and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the CoE is extremely poor. There is no commitment, dedication and teamwork from both elected and appointed officials. Moreover, there is no continuous capacity to develop their capabilities. As [a] result, this leads to them not being motivated in the performance of both their operational and oversight duties. (Manager 1)

They don't take stakeholders very seriously, as such there is no concerted effort to reach out to them. Moreover, the CoE is reactive to their plight instead of being pro-active. (Manager 3)

Their perceptions are that things cannot be done or not achieved. Not understanding that certain typical service delivery impediments in the CoE are multi-disciplinary. For instance, Water Department can attend to a service delivery complaint of a leak or burst water pipe which can constitute a certain percentage in terms of the department service standards and another percentage can be undertaken by another department (i.e., Real Estate) for the complaint to completely resolved. (Manager 4)

The perception and opinions of elected representatives is that they understand the significance role played by stakeholders regarding customer service in the CoE. (Manager 5)

The elected or public representative's perspectives differ in that, when public engagement meetings are sanctioned, communities do not attend. Furthermore, when the city wishes to express something positive, attendance is low and when the city wishes to say something negative, attendance is high. Another perspective is that there is a gap in the working relationship between officials and elected or public representatives in terms of enhancing a solid communication technique to improve customer service in the CoE. (Manager 6)

The responses above reflect varying views, insights and substantive inputs regarding the opinions and perceptions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE on customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the CoE. This could be the result of prompt responses already provided to Questions B1 and B2 in relation to the non-participation of stakeholders in strengthening customer service in the CoE. Therefore, it is evident that stakeholder involvement is recognised as one of the key strategies to promote and strengthen participatory governance in local government. It enables the citizenry to express their wishes on issues of governance, thus promoting and strengthening popular participation (Reddy, 1996:5).

Question B4: *Why have stakeholders abdicated their responsibility of strengthening customer service in the CoE?*

The question above was asked to solicit possible reasons for key stakeholders in the CoE abdicating their responsibility of strengthening customer service.

Hotbed of corruption, maleficence (*sic*), graft, nepotism and favouritism have led to key stakeholders abdicating their responsibility of strengthening customer service in the city. As a result, protocol of good governance instruments which are designed to strengthen and track the capacity and performance of the municipality by fostering interaction between a municipality and its citizens has been compromised. (Manager 2)

They are tired of banging [on] our doors with no response as such their contributions is not being valued and taken seriously. (Manager 3)

Stakeholders claim that they are doing their part of fulfilling their developmental mandate of harnessing participatory governance and reporting service delivery complaints, yet the CoE still fails to place its obligation of improving the quality of public service delivery by increasing their involvement in municipal decision-making. Moreover, they indicate that they are paying their rates and levies account but still not getting proper and adequate services. (Manager 4)

People are beginning to lose trust and confidence on how government is run. There is no more enthusiasm from the public, mainly because we are being accused of promising much and delivering less. (Manager 5)

From these responses, it is evident that there is limited trust between stakeholders, elected public representatives (i.e., councillors) and municipal officials. The complaint was mainly about service delivery promises that are made and not fulfilled which leads to a trust deficit. It is also evident from the responses expressed above that the absence of trust and power transfer involvement programmes will not produce authentic participation by various stakeholders to strengthen customer service. As a result, citizen distrust may trigger greater disappointment and alienation because stakeholders feel that they are not taken seriously.

Question B5: *What possible strategies do you think municipalities can use to strengthen customer service in general and in the CoE in particular?*

This question sought to obtain suggestions for possible strategies that metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, can use to strengthen customer service in government environments. Furthermore, its purpose was to uncover conceptions, typologies, principles and approaches that have a bearing on the more effective utilisation of stakeholder involvement as a customer orientation instrument. Theron, Ceasar and Davids (2009:116) and Muronda (2017:39) postulate that the democratic dispensation in South Africa has accelerated the design and implementation of certain strategies to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders, particularly in the third tier of government. As such, these strategies are aimed at deepening democratic practices by ensuring that society participates in the business of government. Given this context and in line with Question B2, this question sought to obtain the views and insights that would aid the researcher in better understanding possible strategies that municipalities can use to strengthen customer service in general and in the CoE in particular.

The CoE should invest in the capacity and capabilities of its employees. Once employees are empowered through capacity-building programmes to strengthen customer service. Furthermore, legislation requires municipalities to contribute to building the capacity of local communities to enable them to participate in the affairs of their municipality. (Manager 1)

I think it has to do with the Workforce and Human Resource of employing the corrected employees that will be in a position to drive the vision of the City. (Manager 2)

Possible strategies like [a] call centre and an app to log service delivery complaints will assist in strengthening customer service in general and in the CoE in particular. (Manager 3)

The city should have continuous engagement with stakeholders and establish partnership with them. Stakeholders should not be engaged on intervals but continuously. (Manager 4)

Engage stakeholders through public meetings to strengthen customer service. (Manager 5)

Use robust interaction with the community as one of the possible strategies to strengthen customer service. (Manager 6)

In further interrogating these responses it is evident that the CoE should make use of various strategies to strengthen customer service. As a result, such strategies may promote joint ownership of municipal initiatives aimed at enhancing stakeholder involvement and promoting an excellence in customer services in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. Moreover, it is evident from the responses expressed above that to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics in a government environment, local government, in particular, should be outward-looking, people-oriented and citizen-centred.

Question B6: *In your opinion, in what ways can stakeholders strengthen customer service in the CoE?*

This question sought to establish the perceptions and opinions on how stakeholders can strengthen customer service in the CoE.

In my opinion, the customers need to complain. If they remain quiet, we may think that we are doing the right thing as the city. Furthermore, I don't think it's right for people just to accept things the way they are. (Manager 2)

Customers should give prompt feedback response to the municipality on the level of public services they received, whether good or bad. Moreover, they

must demand their role to be seen in the city and ensure that the service standards that are published by the CoE's departments are strictly adhered too. They must also rate the level of service they received from us. (Manager 3)

By using all available services on digital platform i.e., *Facebook*, *Twitter*, call centre[s], online services and *Siyakhokha Siyathuthuka* initiatives. Also, through the usage of this digital platforms the customers will assist the CoE to strengthen customer service. (Manager 4)

Stakeholders must ensure that the CoE is accountable to what it does. Likewise, they must attend all government programmes that are aimed at giving space for them to participate i.e., participating in establishment of ward committees and outreach service delivery programmes. Such measures will aid stakeholders to strengthen customer service in the city. (Manager 5)

Stakeholders must petition Council and request accountability from the city on the conduct of business with its customers. They must not stay away, but rather they must interact, engage and liaise with the city so that customer service praxis and metrics in the length and breadth of the CoE can be strengthened. (Manager 6)

From these responses, it is evident that one of the most critical values of stakeholder engagement in urban environments is that it should ensure that municipalities are responsive to the developmental needs, wants and desires of communities as maintained by Reddy (in Muronda, 2017:27). In sum, one of the main findings emanating from the above section is that protocols of good developmental governance should always be at the epicentre of operations in local government. Such instruments require a new approach for the government to partner and collaborate with the citizenry in matters relevant to their livelihoods. The primary intention should be to obtain stakeholder insight and input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, enhance the service delivery outcomes of decisions-making processes and strengthen strategic priorities and actions.

Question B7: Which dimensions and aspects should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as [an] instrument for strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular?

Participants were requested to suggest dimensions and aspects that should be incorporated into a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.

Batho Pele principles are one of the dimensions or elements that should be incorporated in the design and development of a new strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE. (Manager 2)

The use of digital technology elements. i.e., Wi-Fi services, online services, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* should be incorporated in the stakeholder involvement strategy of the CoE, this will also result in strengthening the engagement between elected representatives, official and the community on public service-related issues. (Manager 4)

Effective communication strategy should be incorporated on the stakeholder involvement strategy. This will enable the city to reach out to all sectors of the community inclusive of designated groups. (Manager 5)

Government should speak with one voice. Messages should be coordinated among the respective spheres and institutions of government, inclusive of different departments in the municipality. (Manager 6)

The sentiments expressed above are in line with what was found during the literature review in Chapter 2, as emphasised by Sebola (2017:26) who conversely, states that political communication should be at the “epicentre of gathering political relevant information in a democracy”. As such, promoting and maintaining sound interrelationships in local government requires comprehensive communication strategies, which include the utilisation of various mechanisms and structures to facilitate the flow of information between stakeholders and local government structures (Fletcher, 1999:125; Savigny, 2006:6).

An observation emanating from these responses is that stakeholder engagement for the establishment of a customer service orientation in government settings is largely dependent on a variety of uniform and seamless customer service praxis and metrics. These customer service praxis and metrics are of paramount significance to this study since the researcher intends to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement model

that will incorporate the dimensions and aspects of sustainable stakeholder involvement strategies and customer approaches to improve its customer interfacing protocols. Moreover, such interfacing protocols would help in integrating the citizenry, businesses and consumer services with government processes as well as assisting customer care centres in the CoE to make adequate provisions for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions. These customer service approaches and praxis would further assist in obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and promote joint ownership of key typical municipal service delivery impediments.

Question B8: *Please consider the draft stakeholder involvement strategy and make recommendations and suggestions to further refine and improve it.*

The purpose of the aforementioned question was to request participants to make recommendations and suggestions on the draft stakeholder involvement instrument and to further refine it.

Make use of legislation as guideline to determine dimensions, elements or aspects that can be incorporated in the proposed strategic instrument.
(Manager 1)

The proposed instrument must strengthen the communication strategy between the municipality and the community. It must make provision of adequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision to improve the current customer interfacing protocols in the CoE. (Managers 2 and 6)

It must eliminate traditional methods of doing things and ensure that our client-based participate in the strengthening of customer service in the CoE through e-governance approaches. The municipality should use information technology systems to support the existing customer interfacing channels. As such, tools, techniques and instrument[s] like Wi-Fi, *Twitter* and *Instagram* must make available to people to engage with government.
(Manager 3)

The key recommendation to further refine and improve the draft stakeholder involvement strategy is that it should strengthen the engagement process with both appointed officials and elected political principals. (Manager 4)

My only recommendation in the design of the proposed model to strengthen customer service is that it must be uniform and be compatible with the needs of our client base[d] and the organisation. Moreover, departments must offer support and assistance to the available initiatives, they must also speak in 'one voice'. For instance, the department of economic development will encourage stakeholders to set up small business structures where they live, then another department in the same municipality in form of City Planning for instance will object to such initiative. This is a clear demonstration that different management teams with the municipality pursue different customer interfacing protocols that confuses the community. (Manager 5)

The responses presented above demonstrate the need for an effective and productive stakeholder involvement instrument that will place the community at the centre of service delivery. Furthermore, such an instrument will assist in continuously engaging with citizens, businesses and community groups as well as assisting customer care centres in the CoE to make provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions.

5.4 RESULTS AND FINDINGS: SAMPLED STAKEHOLDER ORGANISATIONS

This section provides an analysis of the information gathered from representatives of 18 stakeholder organisations, thus representing three organisations per customer care centre. As such, the sample of the study included three stakeholder organisations randomly sampled from six main stakeholder grouping types of the CoE namely CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, FBOs and sport organisations. The questionnaire (i.e., adapted interview schedule) gathered information about the role and functions of stakeholders in strengthening customer service in the CoE. Participants were drawn from six of the 20 customer care centres. These customer care centres are Tsakane CCC, Germiston CCC, Kwa-Thema CCC, Springs CCC, Tembisa 2 CCC and Kempton Park CCC. As shown below, Questions A1, A2 and A3 were posed to establish the demographical profile of the participants. It should be noted that the term 'participant' is maintained, although strictly speaking the term 'respondent' should be used in the case of quantitative studies with the use of questionnaires. However, due to COVID-19, the interview schedule was merely adjusted to solicit input from the representatives in writing.

Customer Care Area	Number of Questionnaires per Customer Care Area	Number of Questionnaires returned
Tsakane CCC	3	3
Tembisa 2 CCC	3	3
Kwa-Thema CCC	3	3
Germiston CCC	3	3
Springs CCC	3	3
Kempton Park CCC	3	3
Total	18	18

The extent of the participants' cooperation was excellent and a response rate of 100% of the target population was obtained.

5.4.1 Section A: Demographical participant profile

Section A of the interview schedule with the stakeholder organisation contains the participant profile. This profile is essential for deductions to be made based on the responses as well as quantifying the findings. The demographical profile of the participants depicts the following questions, namely (i) current position (ii) years of experience in current position and (iii) total number of years in local government. The participant profile is summarised below.

Questions A1: Current position

Stakeholder group	Sample	Reference code
Tsakane CCC CBO= SO1 SMME= SO2 NGO= SO3	3	SO1.1 = Participant 2 from CBO SO3.3 = Participant 13 from NGO SO2.2 = Participant 17 from SMME
Kwa-Thema CCC FBO= SO4	3	SO4.4 = Participant 1 from FBO SO5.5 = Participant 8 from NGO

NGO=SO5 CBO=SO6		SO6.6 = Participant 14 from CBO
Germiston CCC SMME=SO7 SPORT ORGANISATION=SO8 FBO-SO9	3	SO7.7 = Participant 7 from SMME SO8.8 = Participant 10 from Sport/Org SO9.9 = Participant 12 from FBO
Kempton Park CCC CBO=SO10 NGO=SO11 FBO-SO12	3	SO10.10 = Participant 4 from CBO SO11.11 = Participant 6 from NGO SO12.12 = Participant 18 from FBO
Springs CCC FBO=SO13 CBO=SO14 CBO=SO15	3	SO13.13 = Participant 5 from Sport /Org SO14.14 = Participant 9 from SMME SO15.15 = Participant 15 from CBO
Tembisa CCC SPORT ORGANISATION=SO16 NGO=SO17 SMME=SO18	3	SO16.16 = Participant 3 from Sports/Org SO17.17 = Participant 11 from NGO SO18.18 = Participant 16 from SMME
Total	18	

These stakeholder organisations are mandated by legislation to promote and strengthen participatory governance in local government. Similarly, they represent a significant portion of the urban community and thus enable citizens to express their views on issues of city governance.

Questions A2: Experience

Table 5.1 Years of experience in current position

	1–5	5–10	10–15	+15	Total
Years of experience in current position	3	9	2	4	18
Years of experience in local government	2	7	6	3	18

Table 5.2 Percentage of experience of the participants



The reflection above shows that the majority of stakeholder organisation representatives have extensive experience both in the current position they occupy and in local government in general. Some of these participants hold senior management positions and are also members of resident associations and civil society movements. This demonstrates a high level of appropriate experience in both the practical and theoretical terms as the participants were able to share their views and insight regarding stakeholder involvement and customer service in the CoE.

5.4.2 Section B: The role and function of stakeholders in strengthening customer service

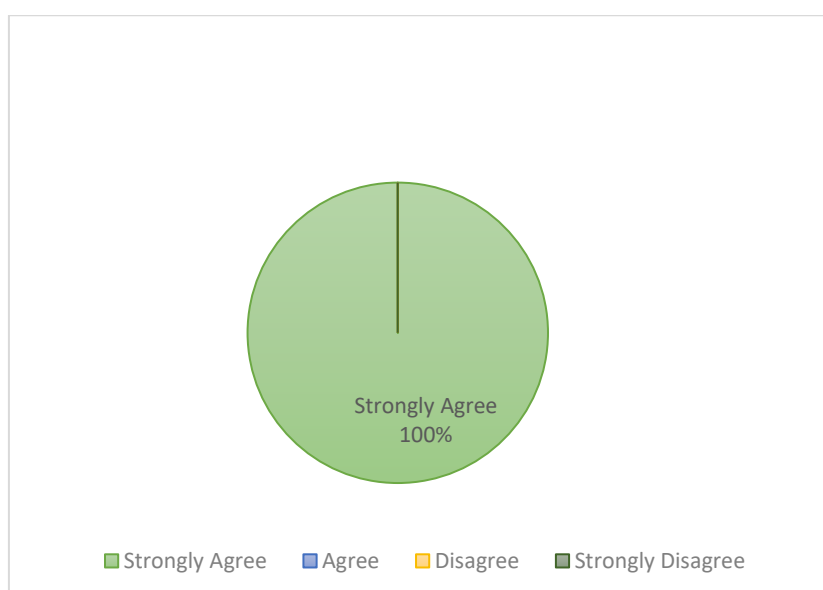
This section investigated the role and function of stakeholders in strengthening customer service in the CoE. As emphasised throughout this study, compulsory integrated development plans (IDPs) of municipalities, for instance, enshrine the significance of a customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement in municipal planning. Pieces of legislation such as the Local Government: Municipal System Act 32 of 2000 stipulate that municipalities must design public participation initiatives that will enhance stakeholder involvement in local governance matters. Moreover, municipalities such as the CoE should involve local communities as key stakeholders in socioeconomic development planning and in the actions necessary to satisfy their well-being as postulated by Van der Waldt (2004:14).

As established in Chapter 2, the involvement of broader society through different stakeholders such as development agencies, organised labour, business, taxi association, religious groupings, and interest and pressure groups will generally foster local democratic praxis.

Question B.1: *Involving stakeholders can effectively strengthen customer service*

The findings of the study revealed that all participants (SO1.1 to SO18.18) agreed that involving stakeholders can effectively and productively strengthen customer service.

Graph 5.1: Strengthening customer service

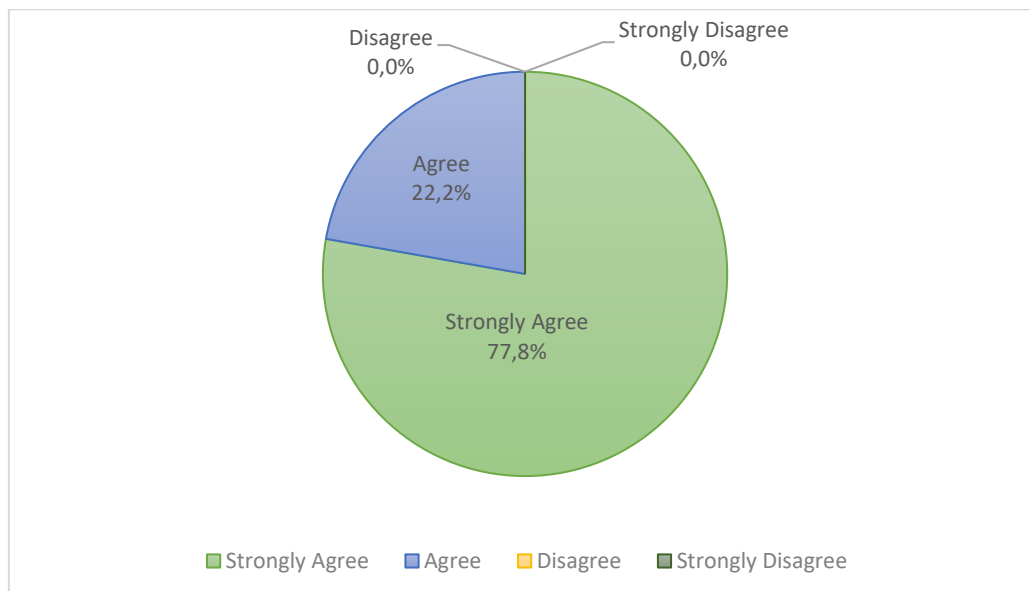


As outlined in Chapter 2 of this study, for these stakeholders, some of the benefits associated with involvement include the opportunity to communicate their needs, aspirations and priority concerns and as such, contribute to decision-making processes in municipal councils. For municipalities the benefits of stakeholder involvement include compliance with statutory obligations, improved dissemination of local governance-related information to communities and tapping into local knowledge systems (State Government Victoria, 2011:2). Additionally, Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201) assert that the continuous involvement of communities as stakeholders are essential for developing mutual trust and building legitimacy and accountability in local government. In the study, the evidence from the literature also revealed that involving stakeholders in customer service not only strengthens customer service, but also represents a paradigm for government to engage with citizens effectively and productively. It focuses on continuous interaction and positive dialogue with civil society, pressure groups and other community stakeholders. Such involvement should promote customer service by fostering high-level, two-way engagement between the municipality and the community. To wit, as observed in the theoretical chapter of this study, when communities as key stakeholders of municipalities become more involved in local affairs, it generally leads to more effective planning and better-informed policy and by-law formulation. As such, it generally leads to improved customer service as opined by Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:199).

Question B.2: [Does the] non-participation of stakeholders impact customer service?

This question sought to establish whether the non-participation of stakeholders has a direct impact on the promotion of service delivery. Participants SO1.1, SO2.2, SO3.3, SO7.7, SO8.8, SO9.9 and SO11.1 stressed that the lack of trust, the municipality being a 'hotbed of corruption', graft and malfeasance are some of the pervasive service delivery impediments that have led to the non-participation of stakeholders.

Graph 5.2: Impact of non-participation on customer service



These sentiments are in line with what was found in the literature review in Chapter 2, where Maseko (2018:57) argued that most stakeholder groupings have “abdicated their responsibility of harnessing participatory governance at local government level due to lack of trust in council”. In addition, the Public Information and Communication Service (2013) framework? maintains that inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making and policy implementation continues to have a bearing on the delivery of services in South African municipalities. In support of the above-mentioned sentiments, Manager 5 reiterated that:

People are beginning to lose trust and confidence on how government is run. There is no more enthusiasm from the public to

participate in government programmes, mainly because we are being accused of not delivering services. We promise much and deliver less.

Manager 3 corroborated this sentiment:

Our people are tired of banging [on] our doors with no response, as a result, they feel that their contributions are not being taken seriously by the CoE. This, therefore, leads to their non-participation which ultimately impact on the acceleration of service delivery.

The responses depict that the non-participation of stakeholders in local government has a significant influence on the nature and quality of customer service. The responses revealed that 77.8% of participants strongly agree that non-participation of stakeholders in government environments will impact customer service, compared to 22.2% who agree.

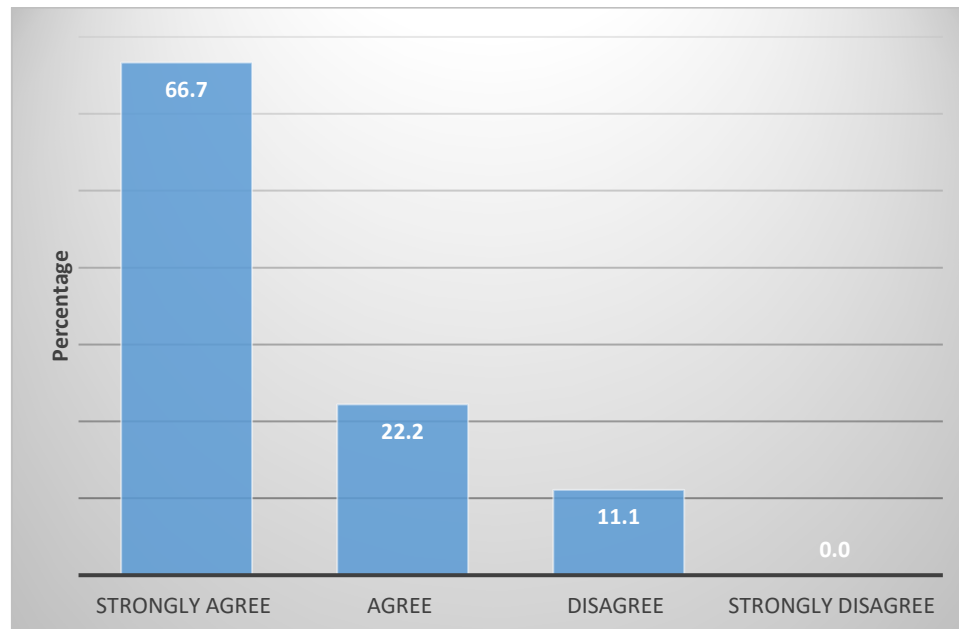
Municipalities like the CoE depend on stakeholders since they breach the gap between the community and the government. As such, the non-participation of stakeholders in harnessing participatory governance will impair service delivery and may potentially result in waves of service delivery protests if such promises of delivering public services by the government are not fulfilled. The empirical study also reveals that stakeholders come with expectations of issues being resolved on the ground and if such expectations are not fulfilled, they start to employ delaying tactics and end up abdicating their responsibility of deepening tenets of democracy and harnessing participatory governance, which ultimately, impact the acceleration of customer service in government environments. Furthermore, the lack of an effective and productive communication strategy was highlighted as one of the typical service delivery impediments that also contribute significantly to the non-participation of stakeholders in strengthening customer service in government environments. Should such impediments continue to persist, increasing accountability and transparency—which increase representatives' and the public's confidence in government in general and municipalities in particular—will cease to exist. In a democracy, political communication is at the epicentre of the collection of politically-relevant information and the emergence of proposals for legislative action (Powell and Cowart, 2003:3).

Accordingly, strengthening and maintaining such an interrelationship on a local government level requires a comprehensive communication strategy, which includes the utilisation of various initiatives and structures to facilitate and coordinate the flow of communication between the citizens and local government structures (Fletcher, 1999:125; Savigny, 2005:6).

Question B.3: *[Is] involving stakeholders in the development of their community the responsibility of local government?*

This question sought to establish whether the promotion of stakeholder involvement is regarded as the sole responsibility of municipalities. In response, SO4.4, SO5.5, SO6.6, SO13.13, SO15, SO16 and SO18 strongly agree that involving stakeholders in the development of their community is the responsibility of municipalities as they are mandated to promote local democracy.

Graph 5.3: Involvement as a municipal responsibility



These responses were confirmed in Chapters 2 and 3 by scholars such as Reddy (1996) and Molepo *et al.* (2015). The benefits of participating in local government affairs include personal individual benefits, benefits for communities as a whole and benefits of specific involvement activities. As postulated by Van der Molen *et al.*

(2002:63) and Mzimakwe (2010:506), on a personal level, the benefit of involvement include:

- Self-development by becoming more aware and educated as far as the role and responsibilities of local government are concerned as well as becoming more cognisant of the role and responsibilities of citizens in a democracy.
- The promotion of human dignity and self-sufficiency for the individual.
- The contribution to more reasonable citizenship since ordinary individuals can learn useful skills such as active listening, problem-solving and innovative thinking by becoming involved in areas of their wellbeing.

According to Cernea (1988:17-19), Mzimakwe (2010:503), Davids *et al.* (2015:70), Molepo *et al.* (2015:346), and Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201), in a broader community context, involvement holds the following benefits:

- It serves as a channel through which their insight, information and knowledge can benefit the soundness of municipal policies and decisions.
- It gives marginalised and vulnerable people such as the elderly, women, people with disabilities, the poor and the uneducated an opportunity to air their views and concerns.
- It creates a national dialogue on priority concerns and issues.
- It encourages the poor to engage and thereby, gain more control over the quality of their lives in matters that concern them.
- It promotes accountability since stakeholder organisations in the community as watchdogs to make sure that municipalities act in accordance with democratic principles and constitutional obligations.
- It encourages the poor to engage and thereby, gain more control over the quality of their lives in matters that concern them.

As emphasised by Bovaird and Loffler (2004:190), Ndevu (2011:1252), Mzimakwe (2010:506), and Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018:201), the empirical findings in the document analysis from this study, among others, reveal the following listed benefits of stakeholder involvement in municipalities:

- facilitating greater and faster interaction between the public and government;
- increasing accountability and transparency, which increases representative and public confidence in government in general and municipalities in particular;
- improving decision-maker awareness of the needs, wishes and desires of all segments of society;
- increasing the political legitimacy of municipal decisions and thus, decreasing the likelihood of public protest and the potential destruction of municipal property;
- creating a more responsive administration and a customer orientation;
- providing the opportunity for diverse interest groups, including minorities to have a say in key issues affecting their lives in the interest of inclusivity and equality;
- enhancing transparency and accountability in local government by developing a culture of openness through the participation of stakeholders;
- enhancing information exchange by tapping into local expertise and getting the ability to test stakeholder solutions and ideas, thus improving the quality of policymaking by allowing the government to tap wider sources of information, perspective and potential solutions;
- tapping into resources of individuals and stakeholder groups within the community; and
- gaining the ability to evaluate policy changes and other initiatives with stakeholders prior to implementation.

In this regard, SO1.1 responded:

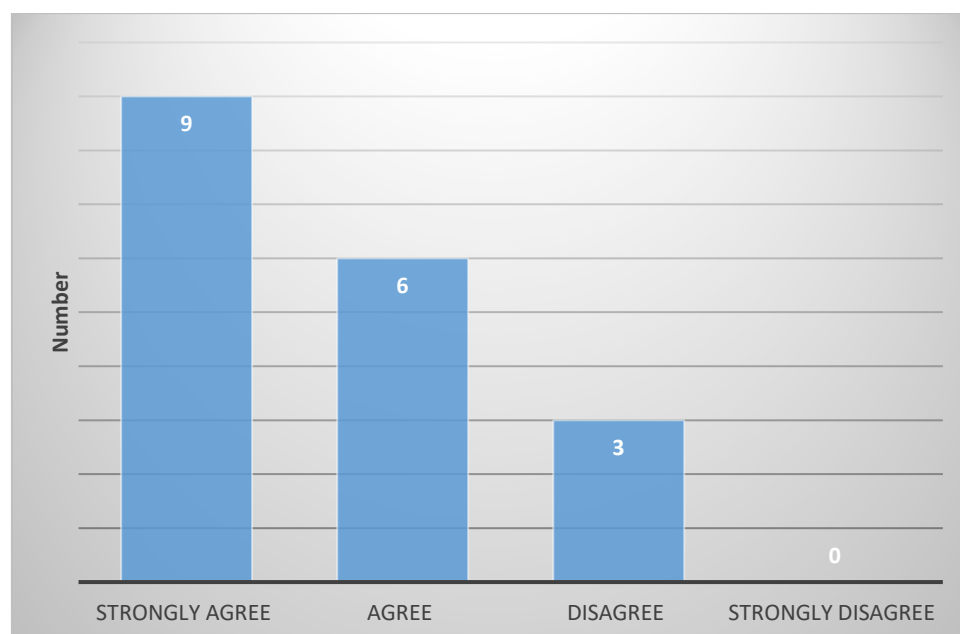
As stakeholders, we are not involved on customer related issues that affects us as decisions are taken by the CoE without consulting us.

The empirical findings above confirm that the involvement of stakeholders in government can be regarded as an integral element for the deepening of local democracy and harnessing participatory governance. It is evident that stakeholder involvement holds certain benefits for individuals, the community and the municipality.

Question B.4: [Does] the City of Ekurhuleni make constant contact with stakeholders using a wide variety of formal and informal methods?

The significance of this theme in the study is that it sought to ascertain if participating participants were aware whether the CoE uses a wide variety of formal and informal methods to contact various stakeholder organisations.

Graph 5.4: CoE's level of stakeholder contact



SO3.3, SO4.4, SO5.5, SO11.11, SO12.12, SO14.14 and SO16.16 stressed that they are aware that the CoE is making constant contact with key stakeholder organisations using a variety of both formal and informal methods. However, SO15.15, SO17.17 and SO18.18 disagree with those sentiments. The information shows that 67% of participants strongly agree that they are aware of this, compared to 23% who agree. Only 10% of the participants disagree. The contact use of both formal and informal methods to engage stakeholders in the CoE will allow for diverse interest groups, including minorities and designated groups, to have a say in key public service delivery issues affecting their wellbeing, in the interest of inclusivity and equality. However, the document analysis evidence from this study revealed that there are several strategies to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders in customer service settings. Esteemed

scholars such as Theron, Ceasar and Davids (2009:116) and Muronda (2017:39) postulate that the democratic dispensation in South Africa has accelerated the design and implementation of certain strategies to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders, particularly in the local government sphere. The strategies are aimed at deepening democratic principles by ensuring that society participates in the affairs of government. One key informant, Manager 6, who supported this substantive input and view remarked:

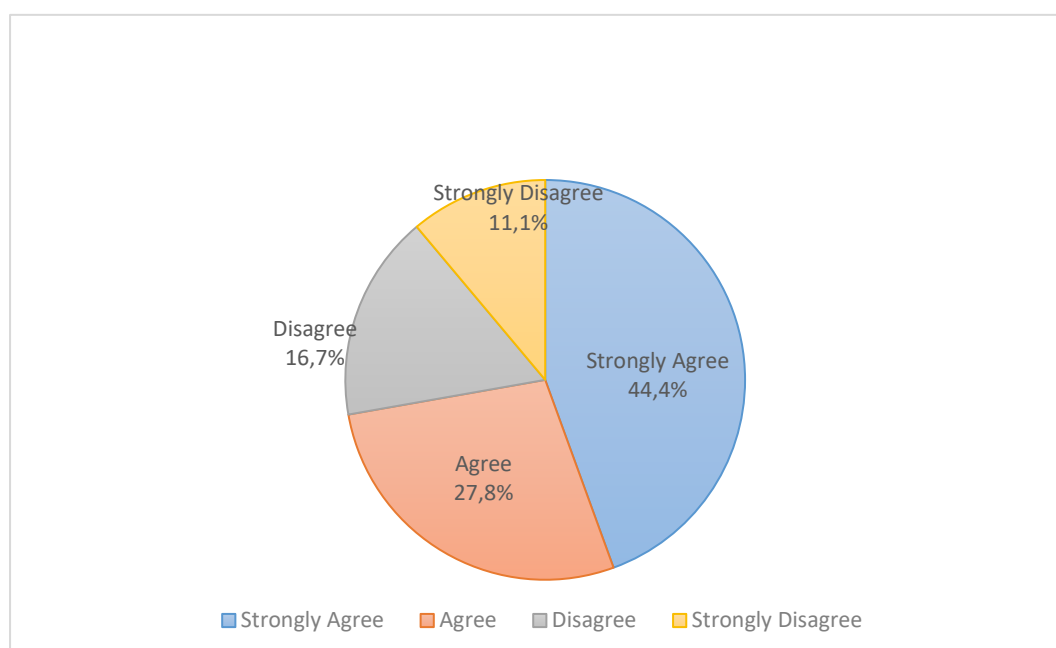
I think the CoE must improve and strengthen authentic engagement with the citizen, business and key stakeholder organisation groupings through various methods such as public meetings, summit and conferences.
(Manager 6)

Manager 6's response is supported by DEAT (2002:14) which posits that the route to effective and efficient stakeholder involvement depends on selecting the right combination of both formal and informal strategies. As such, these strategies increase the levels of engagement and influence with the sole purpose of strengthening the involvement of stakeholders in customer service settings.

Question B.5: Officials and political principals in this municipality work hard to maintain good working relationship with stakeholders

This question sought to establish if officials and elected political principals in the CoE succeed in maintaining a healthy working relationship with key stakeholder groupings. Under this theme, data were presented in the form of the most popular substantive input, views, insight, opinions and perceptions that came from the semi-structured interviews with key stakeholder groupings, supported by their direct, verbatim statements, where appropriate.

Graph 5.5: Success in maintaining a working relationship with stakeholders



The empirical findings of the study revealed mixed opinions among the key stakeholder groupings that participated in the study. The dominant responses expressed in this theme strongly agree that an ingredient of a strong healthy relationship between appointed officials and elected political principals indeed exists. One of the participants expressed his viewpoint during the semi-structured interviews conducted with six of the 20 customer care centre managers responded as follows:

Appointed officials in the CoE understand the significance played by elected political principals in strengthening customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement between the municipality and the government.
(Manager 5)

The responses expressed above demonstrate that official and elected political representatives of the CoE work hard to maintain a healthy working relationship. Forty-four per cent strongly agree, compared to 27.8% who agree. Nonetheless, 16.7% disagree with this statement, compared to 11.1% who strongly disagree. However, based on the expressed responses, it can be argued that the absence of trust and poor working relations between the officials and elected political representatives will not produce authentic participation as far as strengthening customer service is concerned. Based on the information shown above, the researcher argues that a good

working relationship between the officials and appointed elected representatives will not only improve the political legitimacy of municipal decisions in strengthening customer service in the CoE, but will also facilitate greater and faster interaction between the public and government. This could create a more responsive administration and customer orientation which must be seen as a critical benefit of harnessing participatory governance and deepening local democracy.

Question B.6: *This municipality enlightens stakeholders about meetings and other participating outreach programmes well in advance*

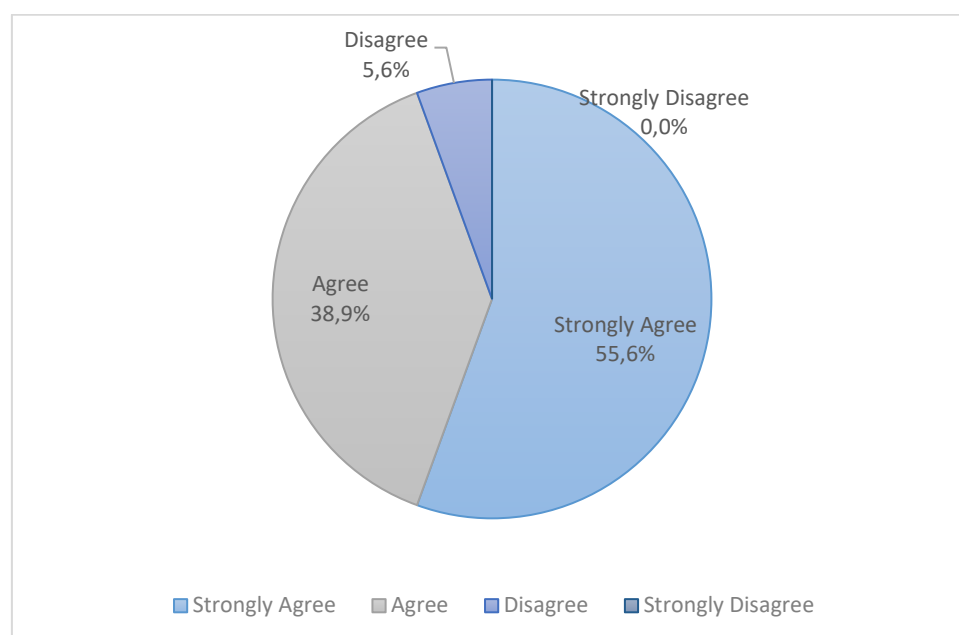
This question sought to establish whether participants are aware that the CoE is enlightening key stakeholder organisation groupings about meetings and other participating outreach awareness programmes well in advance. The data from key informants in the above regard were further corroborated with findings from the literature reviewed. For instance, the study revealed that the South African government has promulgated an abundance of legislation and regulatory guidelines in an attempt to enhance and regulate stakeholder involvement in the local sphere of government. For instance, the study revealed that Section 195 (1)(e) of the Constitution underscores the importance of stakeholder participation by stipulating that municipalities, like other institutions of government, must respond promptly to people's needs, wants and desires and encourage the citizenry to participate in policymaking and decision implementation processes. This far-reaching declaration places an immense responsibility on municipalities to involve their primary stakeholder, the community. The involvement of stakeholders is thus not simply an act of courtesy but a statutory obligation. In this regard, Molepo, Maleka and Khalo (2015:350) argue that the Constitution puts a strong focus on participatory governance; namely, involving civil society in decision-making. The sentiments expressed above were corroborated by one of participants during the semi-structured interviews with customer care area managers. Similarly, Manager 4 underscores this statement by reiterating:

The CoE must make use of various strategies like monthly meetings, public meetings and other participating outreach programmes to engage with

stakeholders, such engagement will assist in strengthening customer service. (Manager 4)

Manager 6 also stated that the CoE must embark on robust interaction and create an enabling environment by engaging with the community.

Graph 5.6: Information regarding meetings and other outreach programmes



The information presented above shows that the municipality enlightens stakeholders about various techniques, tools and methods of participation and other participating outreach programmes well in advance. Fifty-five point six per cent of key informants strongly agree, compared to 38.9% of participants of agree. Only 5.6% of participants disagree that the municipality enlighten stakeholders about meetings and other authentic participation mechanisms well in advance to strengthen customer service.

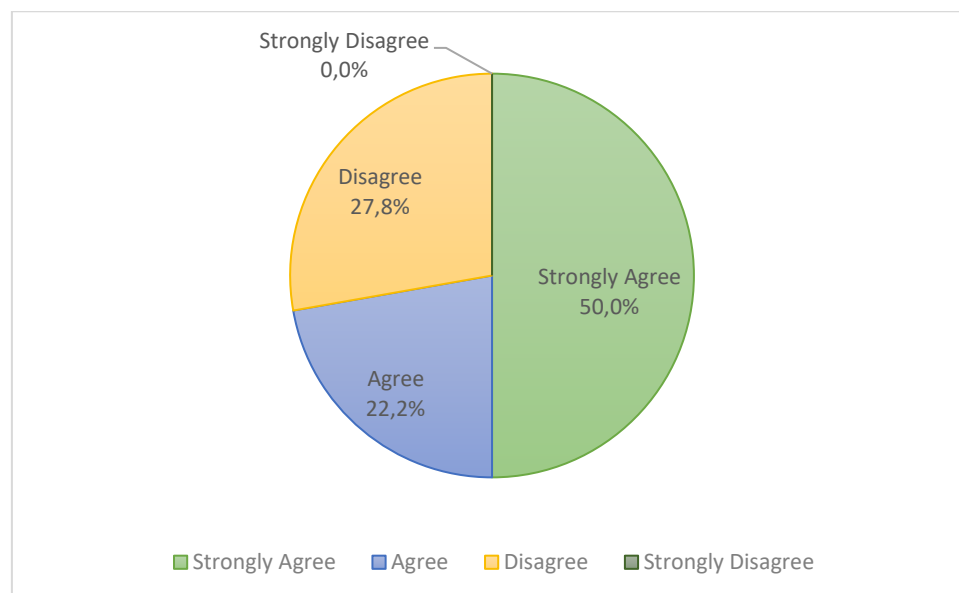
Question B.7: *The municipality sees stakeholders as essential partners in strengthening customer service*

This question sought to establish if the CoE regards stakeholder organisation groupings as essential partners in strengthening customer service. As such, the data in this theme were presented according to the substantive inputs, views, insights, opinions and perceptions of the key informants and reinforced by evidence from

document analysis. In support of this theme, one of the central theoretical statements of this study, conversely, states that stakeholder organisations in local governance such as business enterprises, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations should, therefore, become partners in decision-making and the prioritisation and mobilisation of resources for development. In addition, stakeholders, thus, become co-owners of local development initiatives and share in the benefits of socioeconomic development. The responses from the document analysis clearly demonstrate that the municipality sees stakeholders as essential partners in strengthening customer service. In support of this view, Manager 5 remarked during the semi-structured interviews:

No way can government run without stakeholder organisation groupings. Government, in its nature is here to serve, as such, it exists as a result of essential partners such as business enterprise, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations. (Manager 5)

Graph 5.7: Partnerships for customer services



According to the views and insights expressed above, 50% of participants strongly agree that the municipality sees stakeholders as essential partners in strengthening customer service, compared to 22.2% who share the same sentiments. Nonetheless, only 27.8% of participating participants are not sharing the same sentiments. To wit,

the above responses clearly demonstrate that government can't exist without stakeholders. Moreover, it emerged from the semi-structured interviews that elected political principals and officials understand the significance played by stakeholders in strengthening customer service in the CoE.

Question B.8: *The City of Ekurhuleni does not have time to involve stakeholders in its affairs*

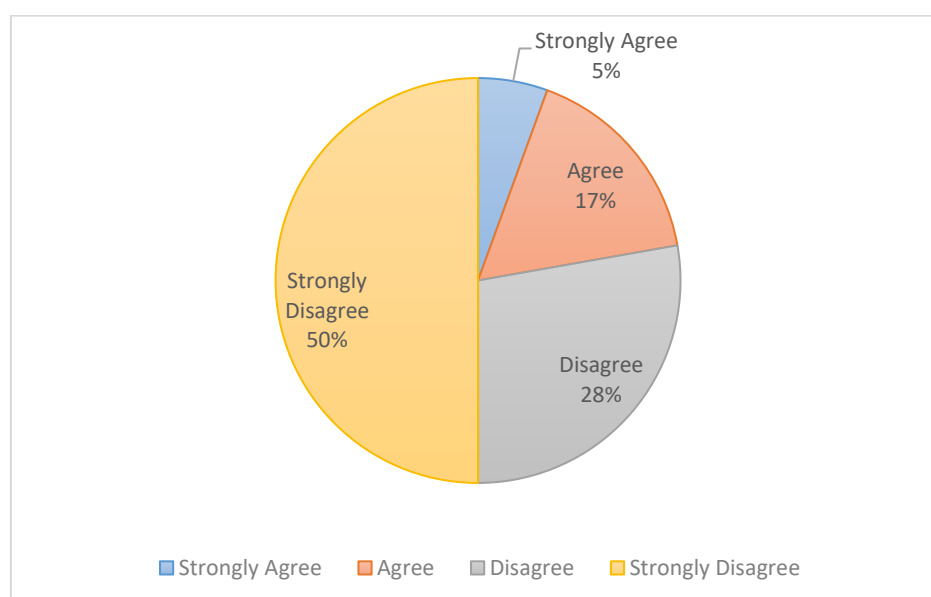
This question sought to establish if the CoE creates an opportunity to involve stakeholders in its municipal affairs. Under this theme, data were presented in the form of the most popular substantive inputs, insights, views, ideas and expressed responses that came from the key informants supported with their direct verbatim where necessary. Furthermore, data from these empirical findings were corroborated by evidence from the document analysis. For instance, for grassroots democracy to succeed, citizens must be given some role in processes associated with a democracy. This role is usually embedded in national legislation and the utilisation of various participation structures following the political culture of a municipality as espoused by Van der Waldt (2010). Local democracy denotes a political system in which the eligible people in a polity participate actively, not only in determining who governs them, but also by participating in shaping the policy output of their government (Reddy, 1996:52). Additionally, the findings of the study revealed that municipalities such as the CoE should, therefore, involve local communities as key stakeholders in socioeconomic development planning and in the actions necessary to satisfy their well-being (Van der Waldt, 2004:14). The involvement of broader civil society through different stakeholders such as development agencies, organised labour, businesses, taxi associations, religious groupings and, interest and pressure groups will generally foster democratic praxis. In support of the responses expressed above during the semi-structured interviews, some of the key informants SO4.4 and SO6.6 from the key stakeholder organisation groupings responded as follows:

Involve people in what we are doing, take them along in everything we do, even if we fail. (SO4.4; SO6.6)

These sentiments were also shared by SO5.5 during the semi-structured interviews with the key stakeholder organisation:

The CoE must not only involve stakeholders in its municipal affairs for purposes of compliance, but should also involve them in both the planning, implementing and decision-making stage in an attempt to strengthen customer service. (SO5.5)

Graph 5.8: Involvement of stakeholders in CoE affairs

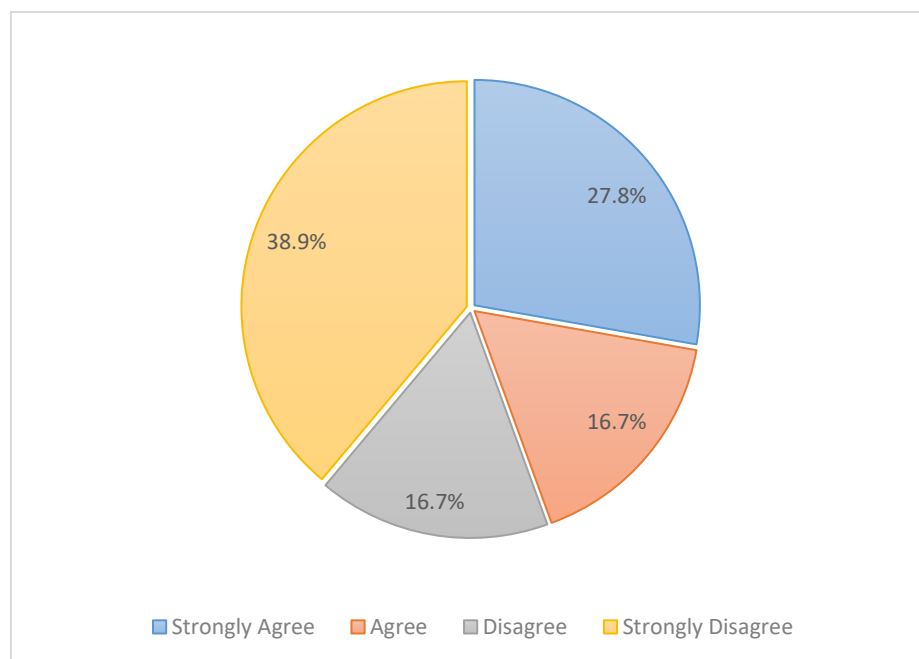


The responses expressed above indicate that the CoE is indeed creating time to involve stakeholder in its municipal affairs. From the pie chart in Graph 5.8, 50% of the participants strongly agree, compared to 28% of participants who disagree. Only 5% of participants strongly agree with the statement, compared to only 17% of participants who agree with it. The responses expressed above clearly demonstrate that the involvement of stakeholder organisations in government settings is seen as an integral element for deepening local democracy and harnessing participatory governance as far as strengthening customer service municipalities is concerned.

Question B.9: *Stakeholder involvement is ineffective in strengthening customer service in the City of Ekurhuleni*

This question aimed to establish whether stakeholder involvement is ineffective in strengthening customer service in the CoE. To this end, the data presented and analysed from the empirical findings reflect the expressed substantive inputs, popular views, perceptions and opinions of the key informants who were interviewed. The data from key informants were further corroborated with findings from official documents reviewed.

Graph 5.9: Effectiveness of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service



The empirical findings of the study concerning this theme reveal that the majority of the key informants strongly disagreed that stakeholder involvement is ineffective in strengthening customer service in the CoE. In an attempt to respond to this theme, this study conducted a robust literature review to develop a comprehensive conceptual and theoretical framework on stakeholder involvement as the central construct of this study. Furthermore, as indicated, this study traced the paradigmatic development of public administration to explore the nature and dimensions of customer service in government. Additionally, the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of the study are intrinsic to determining its main principles and approaches. This study also located the significance of stakeholder involvement within the customer service domain. The notions and conceptions of customer orientation and stakeholder

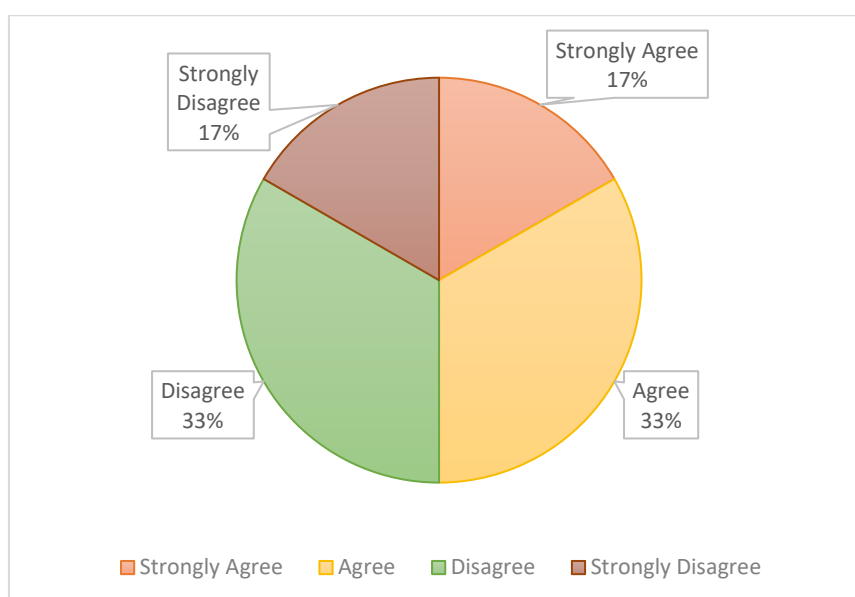
engagement in public service, inclusive of local government and how they have evolved from the early ages of the paradigmatic development of public administration were scrutinised. The esteemed scholars, Edbon (2002) and Tau (2013) maintain that stakeholder involvement can be regarded as an essential success factor for a healthy local democracy. They further argue that stakeholder involvement has contributed to a stronger civil society and that it strengthens a more people-oriented focus on local development. Edbon (2002:275) is adamant that grassroots democracy is about inspiring people to voluntarily engage as stakeholders in the realisation of their well-being.

Similar sentiments were also shared by SO4.4 who held the view that “stakeholder involvement in the CoE can only be effective in strengthening customer service if appointed officials from respective line departments can set up relationships with the community they serve”. As such, another key informant (Manager 3) argued during the semi-structured interviews that the “CoE must [have] continuous engagement with stakeholders and establish a sound public private partnership aimed at strengthening customer service”. The responses provided above reflect mixed views from the participants on whether stakeholder involvement is ineffective in strengthening customer service in the CoE. Thirty-nine point nine per cent of participants strongly disagree with the question, compared to 27.8% of participants who strongly agree. Nonetheless, only 16.7% agree while the empirical findings of the study reveal that a further 16.7% of participants disagree that stakeholder involvement is indeed ineffective in strengthening customer service in the CoE.

Question B.10: *Stakeholders are involved in the decision-making processes of the municipality*

This question aimed to determine whether various stakeholder organisational groupings in the CoE are embraced and involved in the decision-making processes that impact their well-being, concerning the acceleration of service delivery in the municipality. The data presented and analysed reflect the substantive inputs, insight, views, opinions and perceptions of the key informants who were interviewed.

Graph 5.10: Involvement of stakeholders in decision-making processes



The findings of the study revealed that a local community typically comprises various groupings or segments such as local businesses, small, medium and macro enterprises, youth organisations, faith-based organisations, taxi associations, non-governmental organisations and community-based organisations (Van der Walddt, 2019:8). The study revealed that all these represent key stakeholders for municipalities. As such, for these stakeholders, some of the benefits of involvement include the opportunity to community their needs, aspirations and priority concerns contribute to decision-making processes in municipal councils. As opined by Davids *et al.* (2014:18), the evidence from the document analysis in this study revealed that the lack of stakeholder involvement in the decision-making processes, policy agenda setting and policy implementation has, therefore, been seen as one of the main typical impediments towards the acceleration of service delivery in government settings. In addition, the study also revealed that inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making processes and policy implementation continues to affect the delivery of services in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and in the CoE in particular. Participant SO5.5 from a non-government organisation (Respondent 8) corroborated the sentiments above:

I think in its attempt to strengthen customer service the city should involve the community in matters that affect them from the planning, implementing

and decision-making process stage in as far the acceleration of service delivery is concerned. (SO5.5)

This question aimed to probe if the CoE involves stakeholders in the decision-making processes of the municipality. The information depicted above clearly demonstrates that the CoE still lags behind in involving stakeholders in the decision-making processes of the municipality. A third (33%) of participants disagree that this is happening while the other 33% of participants hold a different view. Moreover, 17% of the participants seem to strongly agree with the sentiment that the CoE involves stakeholders in the decision-making processes of the municipality, opposed to 17% of other participants who strongly disagree. Based on the responses expressed above, it can be argued that the authentic participation of stakeholders in decision-making will result in enhancing transparency and accountability in local government by developing a culture of openness through the involvement of stakeholders. Furthermore, the involvement of broader society in government settings through different stakeholders such as development agencies, organised labour, business, taxi association, religious groupings, and interest and pressure groups will generally foster local democratic praxis.

Question C.1: Barriers to engagement

The purpose of this question was to ascertain whether stakeholders were aware of any barriers and impediments that prevented them from taking part in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular. As a result, the participants understood the typical obstacles and barriers encountered by participants in strengthening customer service in the CoE, as outlined below:

Corruption in local government is one of the barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular. As a result, it seriously impedes [on] the involvement of stakeholders. (SO3.3)

Poor communication between the municipality and key stakeholder groupings is one of the barriers faced by stakeholders in municipal affair in general and CoE in particular. The lack of extensive budget dedicated to

communication and the way we communicate as the municipality with stakeholders is barrier on its own. (SO4.4)

Access to reliable resources, transparent communication and[/]or unreliable information given through to the general public by officials. (SO8.8)

In my opinion, one of the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by key stakeholder organisation participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular is the weaknesses of internal systems in as far as the acceleration of customer service is concerned which also leads to the waste of public resources. (SO9.9)

One of the major challenge or barriers we experienced is political interference, many times our elected political principal's step on our day-to-day operational duties, leading to some of our key stakeholder organisational groupings being reluctant to participate in our municipal affairs. (SO11)

The lack of common purpose and politically motivated appointments of people who are placed in positions where they don't qualify or meet the expected criteria inclusive of appropriate experience. Furthermore, unions creating an atmosphere of fear amongst stakeholders in matters pertaining to the strengthening customer service. SO14.4

The results of this study are consistent with the evidence from the document analysis, as postulated by the State of Local Government reports (CoGTA, 2009:4). Some typical challenges for local government include the absence of strategic stakeholder involvement and effective community engagement. SO17.17, drawn from the non-governmental organisations, expanded on these remarks:

One of the general challenges is doing (stakeholder involvement) for the sake of compliance but without following the fundamental principles of stakeholder engagement. Furthermore, the platforms that are normally used for stakeholder involvement i.e., the media platforms are not entertained by the general public, as such, they are also not accommodative in terms of giving other people a fair chance of representation. (SO17.17)

A participant (Manager 2) reiterated thus:

One of the pervasive challenge and barriers is that the stakeholders are currently disillusioned on what is currently happening in the country. The

current political climate exacerbates their fear to actively participate in municipal affairs. (SO17.17)

From the responses expressed above, it is unmistakable that stakeholder involvement is central to the government's agenda of inclusive participatory governance. In addition, for metropolitan municipalities to win the battle of poor customer service in government settings and minimise the resultant waves of violent service delivery protest action and a lack of public involvement, inclusive of low levels of public satisfaction on the state of local government and poor customer service delivery in the country, they should continuously engage local communities as key stakeholders in municipal affairs. To rephrase, metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, should focus on continuous interaction and positive dialogue with civil society, pressure groups and other stakeholders to accelerate service delivery.

Question C.2: Factors impeding the CoE's efforts to strengthen customer service

As a follow-up question to Question B1, Question B2 sought to identify the underlying and impeding causes preventing key informants in the CoE from strengthening customer service. Furthermore, to understand the effects of the lack of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in the CoE, data from evidence analysis were further utilised in this study to comprehend its empirical findings.

Favouritism, nepotism and [a] hotbed of corruption and[/]or incompetence (inadequate knowledge of municipal official's applying local authority legislation, delegation and[/]or procedures, passivity amongst officials, inclusive of wasteful and fruitless expenditure) are some of the underlying driving factors that are leading to non-participation of stakeholders in the CoE. (SO1.1; SO8.8)

Uncertainties from government pertaining to non-funding of stakeholders is one of the leading factors leading to their non-participation in government programmes. (SO2.2)

One of the underlying and constraining factors leading to non –participation of key stakeholder in the CoE is that as stakeholder organisations we are not taken seriously by the government. (SO3.3)

One of the critical constraining factors leading to non-participation of key stakeholder groupings in the CoE is that there is a disconnection between what the community is expecting from the government and what the government is expecting from the community. As such, this disconnection leads to non-participation of key stakeholder groupings in enhancing participatory governance to strengthen customer service in government environment. (SO4.4)

Lack of timeous response, inclusive of implementing Council resolutions aimed at strengthening customer service in government environments by appointed officials leads to non-participation. (SO5.5)

Corruption and[/]or incompetence (inadequate knowledge of municipal officials' applying local authority legislation, delegations and/or procedures). Ineffective and/or inadequate service delivery methods by municipal officials to stakeholders. Nepotism and the appointment of unqualified officials in executive positions inclusive of passivity among council officials. (SO8.8)

Poor service delivery and poor stakeholder engagement on the part of the municipality are the most underlying and constraining factors leading to non-participation of stakeholder in the CoE. (SO18.18)

In support of the above-mentioned sentiments, one participant (SO14.14) who had been drawn from the SMMEs as Participant 9 commented as follows:

To me, underlying driving factors will be the lack of common purpose and resource availability to ensure that enough staff is appointed to assist the public that they understand what service delivery to the public is, what does it mean to be prompt, friendly and efficient to the public. However, on the other hand, constraining for me will be politically motivated appointments where employees in the CoE are placed to positions where they don't even meet the criteria and have no required qualifications nor appropriate experience to perform their duties. (SO14.14)

Similar and supportive sentiments regarding the above were echoed by one participant (Manager 5) during the semi-structured interviews with customer care area managers in the CoE, who reiterated that:

Allegations of [a] hotbed of corruption in the CoE have a bearing [effect] to (*sic*) key stakeholder organisation participating in municipal affairs, as such, this leads to their non-participation. (Manager 5)

These responses are in line with what was reviewed in the literature; Gwayi (2010), for instance, postulates that “one of the key typical challenges and barrier to customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities leading to non-participation of key stakeholders is inadequate stakeholder involvement in decision-making”. In addition, the Public Information and Communication Service (2013) maintains that inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making and policy implementation continues to affect the strengthening and delivery of customer service in South African municipalities. Furthermore, these sentiments are in essence, aligned with the concern raised in evidence analysis by Maseko (2018:57), who argued that most stakeholder groupings, including ward committees, have “abdicated their responsibility of harnessing participatory governance at local government level due to lack of trust in Councils”.

The evidence presented above conveys that many key stakeholder organisation groupings who participated in this study had a consensus that their participation as key stakeholders was hampered by several underlying and constraining factors including poor service delivery, a ‘hotbed’ of corruption, maladministration, inefficiency and ineffective stakeholder involvement practices. As such, this state of affairs generally resulted in mainly local government in South Africa struggling to maintain healthy interrelationships with local communities, resulting in the non-participation of key stakeholders in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.

Question C.3: Customer service and stakeholder involvement

With regard to customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the CoE, this question sought to elicit significant inputs, views and insights that would enable the researcher to better understand the perceptions and opinions of the elected and appointed officials in the CoE.

There is no proper information dissemination on customer related issues. (SO1.1)

The appointed officials and elected officials are doing their best in assisting the stakeholder the only problem liaises with the municipality. (SO3.3)

The perceptions are that things have changed for the worst and not for the best. Furthermore, the opinions of elected political principals in the CoE regarding customer service is that they feel they are being sabotaged by officials. (SO4.4)

The perception is that the public are not happy about the level and quality of service delivery they receive from the CoE. (SO5.5)

One of the critical perceptions is that the customer service delivery methods by elected and/or appointed officials are adequate and/or sufficient. However, the combined efforts of the legislature and the executive arm of the CoE must ensure pro-active, efficient, effective and/or conducive service delivery to the citizenry in terms of Chapter 7 of the Constitution, which specifically deals with the objectives of local government and must therefore coincide with the general public's wants and needs. In addition, the status of stakeholder involvement strategies by officials are uncanny and non-existent. As a result, more officials within the CoE must collectively get involved in contributing, developing and/or inventing creative innovative schemes of delivering outstanding customer service to the general public. (SO8.8)

The perception is that elected and appointed officials cannot overlook the fact that customer service is extremely very poor and sometimes non-existent, however, they are of the opinion that they are doing their best with limited available funds. (SO10.10)

The perceptions are that appointed officials are guided by legislation and official prescripts to advance the acceleration of customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement in the CoE, whilst on the other hand elected officials advance the political mandate of their respective political party to carryout same. As such, this turn to be cumbersome and strain working relationship between appointed officials and elected political representatives in as far as customer orientation is concerned. (SO14.14)

From my understanding from the political point of view is that politicians always want things to happen immediately. Where else from my perspective, if I receive a service delivery complaint it needs to be assessed first to determine which equipment is needed, what personnel is needed for the complaint to be attended. However, from the appointed officials' point of view,

the perceptions and opinions are that we are not considerate enough it when it comes to consulting residents on service delivery issues that affects them. (SO15.15)

The sentiments above are supported by one of the key informants (SO17.17) who was drawn from the non-governmental organisation as Participant 11 who commented:

Perceptions for me will be, as and when elected political principals are busy with their respective political manifestos, they reflect positivises. Somehow, there is congruence between their perceptions and the community's perceptions. They are doing good in their own perception but in the community's eye they are not. As such, they claim to be doing good in their own eyes because they have the knowledge and understanding of the challenges they come across, typical challenges pertaining to lack of inadequate resources, poor governance and lack of capacity amongst others. Furthermore, I can say the perceptions of elected political principals are positive. They see service delivery thriving and working. But unfortunately, it is contrary to the general view of the public. (SO17.17)

From these responses, it is evident that both the elected political principals and appointed officials in local government can no longer overlook the fact that customer service delivery in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE is extremely poor or non-existing. Furthermore, the empirical findings of the study revealed that ineffective stakeholder involvement practices in municipal affairs continue to affect and hamper the strengthening of customer service in South African municipalities.

Question C.4: Factors limiting obligations to strengthen customer service

The purpose of the aforementioned inquiry was to learn about and comprehend the underlying factors that caused the study's key informants to abdicate and neglect their obligations to strengthen the provision of customer service in the CoE.

Political affiliation in the CoE is also a challenge why stakeholders have abdicated their responsibility of strengthening customer service. If you don't belong to a ruling political party, you are side-lined and not taken seriously as things are politicised, structures like ward committees are typical examples, if a ward councillor belongs to a particular party, he or she prefers ward committee members to be elected from his/her political party. (SO1.1)

Lack of timeous response on the part of the municipality results in stakeholders abdicating their responsibility of strengthening customer service. Favouritism also plays a role in making other stakeholders from abdicating their responsibility of strengthening customer service. (SO2.2)

Our voices are not being heard by the government as stakeholders. As such we feel that our concerns and suggestion are not being taken seriously and thus, we decide to stay away from exercising our responsibility of strengthening customer service and participating in government programmes. (SO3.3; SO10.10)

Due to lack of trust, leadership deficit, service delivery, revitalisation and comprehensive feedback response by appointed officials in the CoE to the general public. (SO8.8)

Stakeholders have abdicated their responsibility of strengthening customer service in the CoE due to lack of management, lack of accountability inclusive of inadequate stakeholder involvement in accelerating customer service. (SO18.18)

From these responses, it can be inferred that the empirical study's findings indicated that there is a lack of trust between different stakeholders and the CoE in terms of improving customer service, including being a hotbed of corruption, bad administration, malevolence, inefficiency and ineffective stakeholder involvement practices. The survey also found that complaints were primarily about service delivery promises that were made but not kept, in addition to the trust deficit. These empirical results also support the argument made by King, Fetley and Susel (cited in Maseko, 2018:69), who claimed that policymakers frequently overlook the implementation of engagement initiatives because many front-line administrators don't think that citizens can offer them any useful assistance in their specialised field. Involvement mechanisms would not result in genuine engagement without trust and power sharing, and citizens' trust may even backfire by leading to more disillusionment and alienation since they feel tricked. To wit, stakeholder involvement or engagement can create better communication, build trust and enhance the overall service delivery outcomes (Department of Health & Human Services, 2011:3).

Question C.5: Principles, approaches and tools to strengthen customer orientation

Towards strengthening customer service delivery, this question sought to identify potential tools that metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, may adopt. In addition, this question sought to uncover principles and approaches that have a bearing on the effective and productive functioning of stakeholder involvement as a customer orientation instrument.

Improve communication to disseminate information sharing and appropriate customer service approaches of e-government can be used to improve customer service in general and the CoE in particular. (SO1.1)

Improve the engagement process and close the distance that exists between the government and the community. Protocol of good governance instruments such as accountability and transparency can be used to enhance customer service. (SO2.2)

The use of weekly and monthly meetings is one of the possible strategies that the municipality like the CoE can make use to strengthen customer service in general and the CoE in particular. Furthermore, the involvement of stakeholder organisation in the municipal decision-making process is one of the techniques that must be considered to improved customer service in the CoE. (SO3.3)

The first strategy is to effectively and productively structure how the municipality should function. A proper use of the Integrated Development Plan is one of the possible strategies that can be used by municipalities to strengthen customer service, as such the municipality for instance refrain from using tendering system as a strategy to buy toilet paper[s]. (SO4.4)

Introduce digital devices or portal which are not too complicated to use by public in order to strengthen customer service. (SO5.5)

A participant (Manager 3) agreed that one of the critical ways that the CoE can employ to strengthen customer service is by using all services available online, call centre, *Twitter*, *Facebook*, WiFi and other creative digital platforms.

Make use of civic education as a possible strategy to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. (SO6.6)

Getting the right people who are fit for purpose to do the job is one of the possible strategies that municipalities in general and the CoE in particular can employ to strengthen customer service. (SO7.7)

One of the possible strategies that municipalities can make use to strengthen customer service in general and the CoE in particular, is co-production, “nothing for me without me as a team player”. If you want to do something for me, allow me to decide, don’t put the idea for me without having to make a decision. Moreover, one other thing to quantify co-production is that the general public has a variety of skills that it can use to harness creativity and innovation of the fourth industrial technology innovation. (SO17.17)

In probing this question, the empirical findings of the study revealed that there are various international perspectives and best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument. The highly dominant view expressed by the study’s key informants was that a solid communication technique between the key stakeholder organisational groupings and the CoE is needed to strengthen effective and productive customer service in municipalities. A strong communication tool will also increase the participation of wider society through various stakeholders, including development organisations, organised labour, business, taxi associations, religious groupings and interest and pressure groups. This was revealed by the evidence analysis of the empirical findings of the study conducted to answer this question. According to the expressed responses, the mandatory integrated development plans (IDPs) of municipalities that uphold the significance of a customer service orientation and stakeholder involvement in municipal planning were one of the key instruments that key informants saw as being used to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics. Beyond that, Chapter 2 (this study’s literature review) found that local communities should be major players in socioeconomic development planning and in the activities required to ensure their well-being as postulated by municipalities like the CoE (Van der Walddt, 2014:14).

Question C.6: Suggestions to improve customer service

This question sought feedback from the study's key informants on how to improve the CoE's customer service.

The municipality should promote and forge productive working relationships with all stakeholders, in that way, it will succeed in its endeavour of strengthening customer service in government settings. (SO1.1)

Involve people and various stakeholders in particular from designated groups in the municipal decision-making process of the municipality to strengthen customer service. The municipality must take the people along with in everything it does even when it fails. (SO2.2; SO3.3; SO4.4)

I think by bringing forth community issues and/or complaints on how to address social ills including typical pervasive service delivery impediments in government settings, stakeholder organisations in that way will be assisting metropolitan municipalities in general and in particular the CoE to strengthen customer service. (SO6.6)

The sentiments above are supported by one of the key informants (Manager 3) expressed during the semi-structured interviews with the customer care area managers who commented as follows:

One other way of strengthening customer service in the CoE is that stakeholder groupings must demand their role to be seen in the city. (Manager 3)

Part of strengthening customer service in the CoE is that stakeholder organisations should start paying for municipal services they consume. It will be extremely difficult for metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular to continue to render services if it is not going to succeed in collecting revenue. (SO7.7)

By actively vindicating, participating and/or engaging CoE through electronic devices, feedback sessions, journalistic comments, radio comments, social media, suggestions boxes and physical visits to their relevant customer care area (top officials within the CoE). (SO8.8)

Key stakeholder organisations already put pressure on elected and appointed officials to focus on customer service. Unfortunately, through the

years, it could be seen that any attempt to do so, is being disregarded. In my opinion, stakeholders must not only identify issues and service delivery complaints but provide [the] CoE with solutions. (SO10.10)

I think the stakeholders should participate in the IDP processes inclusive of awareness outreach programmes is one way in which customer service can be strengthened in metropolitan municipalities in general and [the] CoE in particular. (SO11.1)

The results of this question revealed that to accelerate customer service in the CoE, stakeholders must be involved and permitted to actively participate in municipal activities. This conclusion was made in light of the responses expressed above. Document data from the study corroborated the aforementioned findings. For instance, in answer to this question from the study's key informants, one crucial issue that emerged was the need for the CoE to upgrade its digital process in order to reinforce its client interface procedures. The empirical results of this study also showed that such an interface strategy should allow for sufficient stakeholder participation in important municipal strategic decisions. Additionally, in terms of this question, the empirical results from the interviews were in line with those from the literature review. For instance, the study revealed that in order to strengthen customer service in the CoE, a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument to promote customer service is needed. Such an instrument will help to continuously engage with citizens, businesses and community groups as well as assist customer care centres in obtaining stakeholder input at an appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions for communicating the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders, promoting the joint ownership of municipal challenges and establishing a common developmental vision for the city (cf. Draai and Taylor, 2009:114).

Question C.7: Suggestions for strategic stakeholder involvement instrument

This question was posed to solicit suggestions and recommendations aimed at designing a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE. Moreover, the suggested instrument will not only be useful to the

CoE only, but also to other municipalities across the length and breadth of South Africa that can use it as a learning experience.

Include the principles of transparency and accountability as one of the dimensions that must be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as instrument for strengthening of customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. Through accountability as protocol of good governance, the municipalities will win the trust of the citizens in working with them. (SO1.1)

Incorporate various suitable strategies like public meetings and summit as dimensions and aspects that should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as a technique for strengthening of customer service in the metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. (SO2.2)

Incorporate the *Batho Pele* principles as one of the elements of stakeholder involvement strategy to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. (SO3.3; SO5.5; SO7.7; SO8.8; SO9.9; SO10.10; SO12.12; SO14.14; SO15.15)

A participant (Manager 2) agreed that the *Batho Pele* principles are one of the critical dimensions that can be incorporated in the proposed strategic stakeholder involvement instrument and commented:

The *Batho Pele* principles is (*sic*) geared towards the acceleration of service delivery as such it is one of the dimensions and aspects that can be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as instrument for strengthening of customer service in the metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. (Manager 2)

It should be borne in mind that countries, constitutions and national legislation typically make provision for the adoption of certain values, principles and practices in government institutions. The principles of the White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997, for instance, outlines key principles of service delivery, known as the *Batho Pele* (people first) principles. As such, Van der Waldt (2004:1) and Subban *et al.* (2007:34) confirm that these principles have a strong customer service focus. Moreover, the statutory and official prescripts to encourage stakeholder involvement and customer orientation are encapsulated in the vision statement of “We

belong, we care, we serve”, as espoused by Subban *et al.* (2007:34). Furthermore, the *Batho Pele* principles have a strong significance for stakeholder involvement and a customer orientation in service delivery. One participant (SO4.4) drawn from a faith-based organisation as Responded 1 was quoted as saying:

Look, I don't have any specific dimension or aspect that must be incorporated in the proposed strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE but what I know is that strategies must be informed by typical challenges we intend to respond too. Currently, in the CoE, one of the pervasive service delivery impediments are that the municipality is not performing optimally as it should. Therefore, my contribution to this question is that the proposed strategy should not be contradictory and archaic towards the country's constitution. As such, the strategy must be people driven and customer focused. (SO4.4)

The findings of the study expressed in the responses above are in line with the evidence from the literature review. As already outlined, core common dimensions, aspects and elements to be incorporated in the proposed stakeholder involvement instrument, together with the elements identified through a literature review, form the basis upon which the new proposed strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE will be based. As a result, such an instrument will, for instance, form a uniform and seamless customer interface. Such interface capacity is necessary to consolidate all customer-interfacing protocols in the CoE by making sure that it is compatible with the needs, wants and desires of both the customers and organisations. Moreover, it is envisaged that it will further make adequate provision for stakeholder involvement to obtain stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and promote a joint ownership of typical municipal challenges and establish a common developmental vision for the city, as espoused by cf. Draai and Taylor (2009:114). Additionally, such an instrument will help to continuously engage with citizens, businesses and community groups as well as assisting customer care centres in the CoE with providing a more dynamic and complete positive customer experience, underpinned by the concept of “bringing government closer to the people”.

Question C.8: Input regarding the draft stakeholder involvement instrument

The primary objective of this study was to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for strengthening customer service in the CoE. It should be reiterated that this instrument focuses on high-end, strategic matters (i.e., senior managers and councillors' engagement responsibilities) and does not make provision for more tactical and operational level matters. This draft instrument (Figure 5.1) is the culmination of the contents of all the chapters of this thesis, hence the triangulation of different datasets. As such, the design followed a gap-analysis approach in responding to the research problem as outlined in Chapter 1.

This question (C.8) aimed to obtain feedback from the participants regarding the proposed draft stakeholder involvement instrument by soliciting recommendations and suggestions to further refine and improve it as the main contribution of the study. The draft instrument (Figure 5.1) was presented and explained to the participants and their input was then recorded.

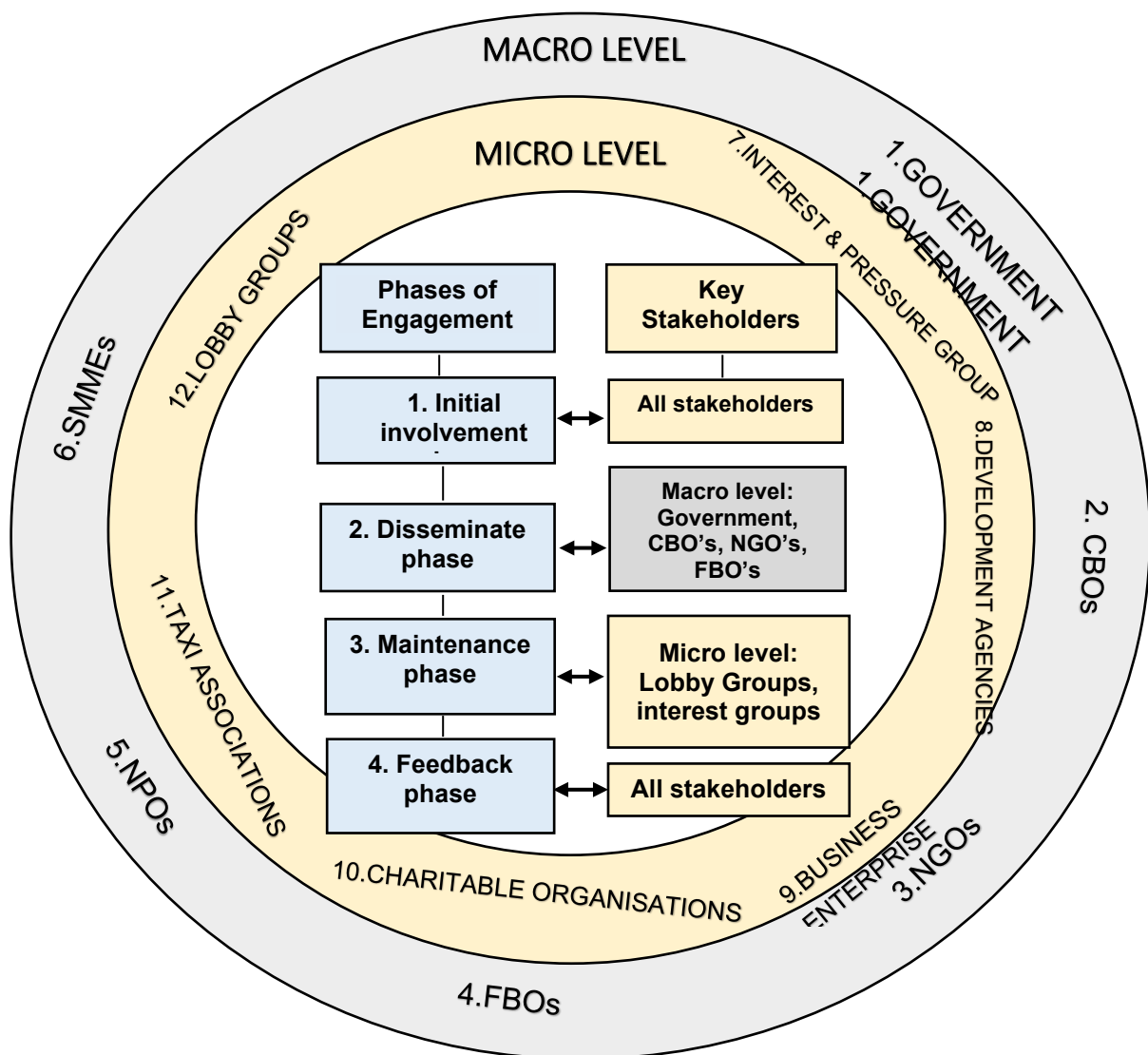


Figure 5.1 Draft stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE

Source: Researcher's compilation based on the four phases of stakeholder engagement by Griffiths, Maggs and George (2007).

Key informants who participated in the study (i.e., 18 stakeholder organisational groupings that were randomly sampled, representing three stakeholder organisations per customer care centre and six of the 20 customer care area managers) were asked to consider the draft stakeholder involvement instrument and to make recommendations and suggestions to further refine and improve it. Themes were developed from the substantive inputs, views, opinions, perceptions and insights of

the participants. Some of the key recommendations and suggestions from participants are outlined below.

Win the trust and public confidence of the citizens. My suggestion is that to further refine and improve on the proposed stakeholder involvement instrument, it should include protocol of good governance initiatives such as openness, transparency and accountability. In other words, how the community will hold those in power accountable if things are not done correctly. (SO1.1)

The proposed stakeholder involvement strategy should be aligned to the vision of the CoE. (SO1.1; SO2.2)

My suggestion is that to further refine and improve the draft stakeholder involvement instrument, please consider incorporating the *Batho Pele* principles as a guideline to improve customer service in the proposed draft of the stakeholder involvement instrument. (SO2.2)

This sentiment was echoed by SO8.8 and SO9.9.

Have a uniform stakeholder involvement instrument that will enable the municipality, appointed officials and elected political representative to speak with 'one voice' in as far as strengthening of customer service in the CoE is concerned. That should also be cascaded down to the line departments as well. Additionally, improve the communication media and message when you engage with the community and other stakeholders. Use various platforms to communicate with citizen such as summits, meetings, workshops and so forth. (SO3.3)

My contribution to this question is that the instrument you intend to develop must firstly be informed by typical pervasive service delivery challenges it intends to address or respond to. Secondly, the instrument must not be contradictory and archaic towards the Constitution of the country; as such it must be people driven. (SO4.4)

To further improve and refine the draft stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service, I suggest that you incorporate the following dimensions namely feedback sessions, journalistic and radio comments, social media, suggestion boxes, electronic devices and physical visits to customer care centres. (SO8.8)

My suggestion is that you should consider including a suggestion box in the draft. Furthermore, it is my recommendation that the proposed instrument should have a solid communication strategy that allows the CoE to have right communicators to disseminate correct and accurate information to the consumers of service. (SO11.11)

This input corresponded with suggestions made by SO11.5 and SO13.2.

For me, the most critical suggestion will be to find a way to monitor, assess and evaluate whether all the listed phases are taking place and how successful they have been. If they are taking place, one should be able to measure whether they are effective and productive in harnessing participatory governance and customer interface protocols. (SO16.16)

To further refine and improve the draft stakeholder involvement instrument please consider including the followings elements:

- public private partnerships
 - participation
 - building stakeholder capacity to engage
 - strengthen the ability to respond to service delivery complaints.
- (SO18.18)

In support, one participant (SO7.7) drawn from the SMMEs responded as follows:

My suggestion and substantive input in the proposed draft of [a] stakeholder involvement instrument is that it should integrate notions of partnership building and make provision for capacity to interact with various stakeholders such as ward committees, to strengthen customer service interface protocols in the CoE. (SO7.7)

Two participants (Managers 4 and 6) drawn from the customer care area managers agreed that such a proposed stakeholder instrument would help to continuously engage with citizens, businesses and community groups as well as assisting customer care centres to make provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions. As such, it will strengthen customer service in the CoE. Furthermore, one of the key informants drawn from the community-based organisations (SO18.18), in support of the above sentiments, commented that to further refine the proposed draft, the proposed instrument should make provision for building municipal capacity for

engagement as well as the municipality's ability to timely respond to service delivery issues raised by stakeholders.

It is evident from the responses expressed above that for customer service to be strengthened in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, certain functional dimensions, elements or benefits to instil and maintain a uniform and seamless customer service culture in a government environment are needed. Similarly, such a customer service culture would be able to foster a positive interrelationship between government, consumers of services and civil society organisations, as was postulated by Ijeoma *et al.* (2013:26). Furthermore, documentary evidence analysed from this study in general, and esteemed scholars such as Jooste (2008), Makanyeza *et al.* (2013) and Du Toit *et al.* (2015) revealed that customer service can be regarded as an integral aspect of good governance. As such, these scholars argue that a customer service orientation is valued worldwide for its ability to preserve the livelihoods of the vulnerable, marginalised, poor and dispossessed communities of society. Thus, it is evident that the CoE needs to establish suitable organisational frameworks and capacity, staffed by adequately trained officials to engage stakeholders and to proactively respond to their needs.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the empirical investigation into the research design and methods of data collection were explored to operationalise the primary research objective and to address the main research problem. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with six (6) of the twenty (20) customer care area managers in the CoE. In addition, questionnaires were distributed to randomly sampled representatives of 18 key stakeholder organisations groupings, representing three organisations per customer care centre. The fundamental reasons behind the choice of a methodology used and its trustworthiness were outlined in this chapter. Additionally, data gathered from the sample were presented and analysed. Considerations of validity, reliability and ethical aspects were also reviewed. The next and final chapter will summarise the study and propose an adjusted customer engagement instrument for the CoE, based on the triangulation of the respective datasets. The input provided by participants and respondents will be absorbed in the final instrument.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: TOWARDS A STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT TO STRENGTHEN CUSTOMER SERVICE

6.1 INTRODUCTION

Following the empirical findings analysed in the previous chapter, the purpose of this chapter is two-fold; namely, to summarise and conclude the study as well as to present a strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE as the main scholarly contribution. In addition, recommendations based on the findings of the study as well as the operationalisation of the proposed instrument are presented. As was outlined in Chapters 2 and 3, the foundational tenet of local democracy is civil society participation (Edbon, 2002). Conversely, Carswell (2002), Coghill and Wright (2012), Kassa (2015) and Outhwaite (2014) maintain that the scholarly discourse on local democracy reflects the demand for citizens to take part in the affairs of local government. Grassroots democracy is about empowering communities and other stakeholders to participate actively in municipal decision-making processes. Thus, the primary objective of this study was to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for strengthening customer service in the CoE. The stakeholder involvement instrument to be presented below was informed by a robust literature review to develop a comprehensive conceptual and theoretical framework on stakeholder involvement. The principles of good developmental local governance, statutory obligations as well as international best practices further informed the composition and content of the instrument. Thus, democratic values that advocate openness, transparency and accountability in the local government environment are firmly embedded in the proposed instrument. The draft instrument presented in the previous chapter was further revised and verified, based on the substantive views and insight obtained from sampled participants who took part in the semi-structured interviews.

6.2 SUMMARY OF CHAPTERS AND ACCOMPLISHMENT OF STUDY OBJECTIVES

As indicated in Chapter 1 (Section 1.4), the primary objective of this study was to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer services in the CoE. To operationalise this primary objective, the following secondary objectives were formulated:

- **RO1:** To explore the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and to identify appropriate principles, models and approaches for scholarly inquiry into these constructs.
- **RO2:** To gain international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and to uncover best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument.
- **RO3:** To analyse the statutory and regulatory framework that governs stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa.
- **RO4:** To determine and analyse the challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular.
- **RO5:** To investigate the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE.
- **RO6:** To analyse the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city.
- **RO7:** To design a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.

As indicated in Chapter 1 (Section 1.3), the following listed questions below guided the scholarly inquiry into the stated problem of this study:

- **RQ1:** What is the nature of the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and what are the appropriate principles and models and approaches to guide scholarly inquiry into these constructs?
- **RQ2:** What could be learnt from international perspectives regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and what are the best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument?
- **RQ3:** What are the statutory and regulatory stipulations and official prescripts that govern stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa?
- **RQ4:** What are the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular?
- **RQ5:** What are the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE?
- **RQ6:** What are the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city?
- **RQ7:** Which dimensions and aspects should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular?

In Table 6.1, an alignment of both the objectives and research questions to the chapters of the study is presented and summarised.

Table 6.1: Alignment of both research objectives and questions to the chapters of the study

Research Objective (RO)	Research Question (RQ)	Chapter
RO1: To explore meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and to identify appropriate principles, models, and approaches for scholarly inquiry into these constructs.	RQ1: What is the nature of the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and customer service in urban settings and what are appropriate principles, models and approaches to guide scholarly inquiry into these constructs?	Chapter 2
RO2: To gain an international perspective regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and to uncover best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument.	RQ2: What could be learned from an international perspective regarding stakeholder involvement in local governance and what are best practices pertaining to suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument?	Chapter 3
RO3: To analyse the statutory and regulatory framework that governs stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa.	RQ3: What are the statutory and regulatory stipulations and official prescripts that govern stakeholder involvement and customer service in local government in South Africa?	Chapter 4

RO4: To determine and analyse the challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular.	RQ4: What are typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE in particular?	Chapter 5
RO5: To investigate the underlying and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE.	RQ5: What are the underlying and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE?	Chapter 6
RO6: To analyse the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city.	RQ6: What are the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city?	
RO7: To design a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for the strengthening of customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.	RQ7: Which dimensions and aspects should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument for the strengthening of customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular?	

6.3 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTERS

Chapter 1 introduced the topic of the study. This chapter contains the background and orientation of the study, the research problem and the research objectives. In addition, it discussed the research methodology and the research design that was applied to the study. Chapter 1, particularly Section 1.5, also analysed the central theoretical statements as a point of departure for the scientific arguments for the study. To operationalise the primary objective of the study, an outline of both research questions and secondary objectives of the study was provided in Sections 1.3 and 1.4, respectively. Finally, the chapter also included a section on ethical considerations and the significance of the study.

To crystallise the first research objective, **Chapter 2** of this study established a sound theoretical framework to investigate the nature and scope of stakeholder involvement in local government settings. As such, various theories, typologies, concepts and strategies that have a bearing on the more effective and productive utilisation of stakeholder involvement as a customer orientation instrument were uncovered. To this end, this chapter traced and assessed the chronicles of paradigmatic development of public administration which, among others, included the new public administration paradigm, public management paradigm, new public management paradigm, public governance paradigm and new public service paradigm. Further, this chapter located stakeholder involvement and a customer service orientation within public administration praxis. These trends intend to catalyse government productivity and effectiveness geared towards a far more responsive and effective public administration. Proposed new business-like approaches which were perceived to be more beneficial for public administrations by making them more outcomes-based, result-oriented and focused on clients' expectations were also outlined in this chapter. Similarly, to analyse the phenomenon of stakeholder involvement in the CoE, several theoretical foundations of stakeholder involvement that have a bearing on designing a theoretical framework were presented in this chapter. As such, these theories are placed within the ambit of general systems theory and (among others) included stakeholder theory, contingency theory, social exchange theory, knowledge theory and systems theory. This chapter concludes with the theoretical exposition of stakeholder involvement as a key construct by analysing the typologies of stakeholder

involvement, including strategies to strengthen the involvement of stakeholders in customer service settings and the benefits of stakeholder involvement for both civil society and public institutions.

Chapter 3 investigated international perspectives on fostering stakeholder involvement in local government. Best practices relevant to strategies for community engagement, stakeholder involvement and customer service approaches were uncovered and presented in this chapter. In addition, international best practices in South Africa and selected countries were analysed and presented in a brief synopsis. This served as a benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be gauged. The chapter also identified observable disparities in suitable strategies for stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics between South Africa and selected countries, which were empirically verified in Chapter 5 of the study and involved in the strategy to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, as the main contribution in the last chapter of this study.

Chapter 4 expounds on the statutory stipulations, official prescripts and regulatory obligations of local government pertaining to community engagement, customer service and stakeholder involvement. The statutory and regulatory requirements that promote the effective and productive functioning of stakeholder involvement in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, were analysed and summarised within applicable conceptual categories in this chapter. Furthermore, the chapter presented several pieces of legislative instruments and policy initiatives such as the White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery of 1997 to provide legislative balance and accountability to the chapter and building legitimacy. Finally, the developmental framework and strategies harnessing participatory governance and accelerating service delivery in the length and breadth of South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE were analysed.

Chapter 5 delved into the status of stakeholder involvement in strengthening customer service in the CoE through an empirical investigation. Typical pervasive impediments and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in general and the CoE, in particular, were determined and analysed in this

chapter. The chapter further investigated the underlying and constraining factors leading to the non-participation of key stakeholder groupings in the CoE. The perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the city were analysed. Moreover, possible dimensions and aspects that should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument to strengthen customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, were identified and presented in this chapter as a contribution to the development of a stakeholder involvement instrument which was presented in the last chapter of this study.

Chapter 6 forms the concluding chapter of this study. As such, its purpose was two-fold. Firstly, it provides a synopsis of the entire study through reflection on what has been explained in the previous chapters. Secondly, it presents the development of a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE as the study's main contribution to the body of new scientific knowledge. This was in response to addressing the primary research objective of the study as outlined in Chapter 1; namely, to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for strengthening customer service in the CoE.

6.4 A STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT TO STRENGTHEN CUSTOMER SERVICE

As stated, the primary objective of this study was to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for strengthening customer service in the CoE. As such, the study followed a knowledge-gap approach as was outlined in Chapter 1 and was further informed by a comparative analysis of best practices pertaining to stakeholder involvement, extracted from the selected cases. This made it possible to identify potential gaps between current practices in the CoE and these cases (refer to Chapter 3). Against this backdrop, the strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE was designed using the following steps:

Step 1: The first step involved establishing a sound conceptual and theoretical framework to investigate the nature and scope of stakeholder involvement in local government settings. The paradigmatic development of customer service was traced and an extensive conceptual exposition of customer service, including the significance of stakeholder involvement in the public service environment was provided. Additionally, the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings of stakeholder involvement and international experiences in fostering stakeholder involvement in local government to extract best practices and lessons learnt about stakeholder involvement strategies and customer service approaches in both developed and developing country contexts were examined. These best practices and lessons served as a benchmark praxis against which current stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE can be evaluated.

Step 2: The study followed the four-phase framework of stakeholder involvement (i.e., the initial involvement, dissemination, maintenance and feedback phases) proposed by Griffiths, Maggs and George (2007). As such, the instrument can assist customer care area managers in the CoE and, elected and appointed officials in the executive, legislative and administrative arm of the council, inclusive of those mandated to coordinate customer service in government settings to continuously engage with citizens, business and community groups as well as assisting stakeholder organisational groupings in the customer care centres to make substantive input to the key municipal decision-making process. Additionally, the study borrowed principles and approaches extracted from the New Public Management and New Public Service paradigms which gave rise to the emergence of a more outcomes-based, results-oriented, client-focused and citizen-centred approach to local government. This led to the design of a draft stakeholder engagement instrument.

Steps 3: To further refine, broaden and improve the instrument, the researcher analysed and incorporated the recommendations and suggestions made by the customer care area managers and randomly sampled representatives of 18 stakeholder organisational grouping types of the CoE, namely CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, FBOs and sports organisations. In this regard, the researcher pursued a stakeholder-mapping exercise.

Steps 4: The final step was drafting the final instrument and the presentation of operational guidelines and recommendations for its successful application by metropolitan municipalities. Aspects such as the establishment of engagement structures; the allocation of responsibilities and resources; the monitoring, evaluation, and oversight of the implementation of the instrument; the identification and involvement of stakeholder groupings as well as potential steps to further strengthen the instrument were outlined.

Figure 6.1 illustrates critical considerations on the structure, systems, processes and stakeholders in the proposed instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE.

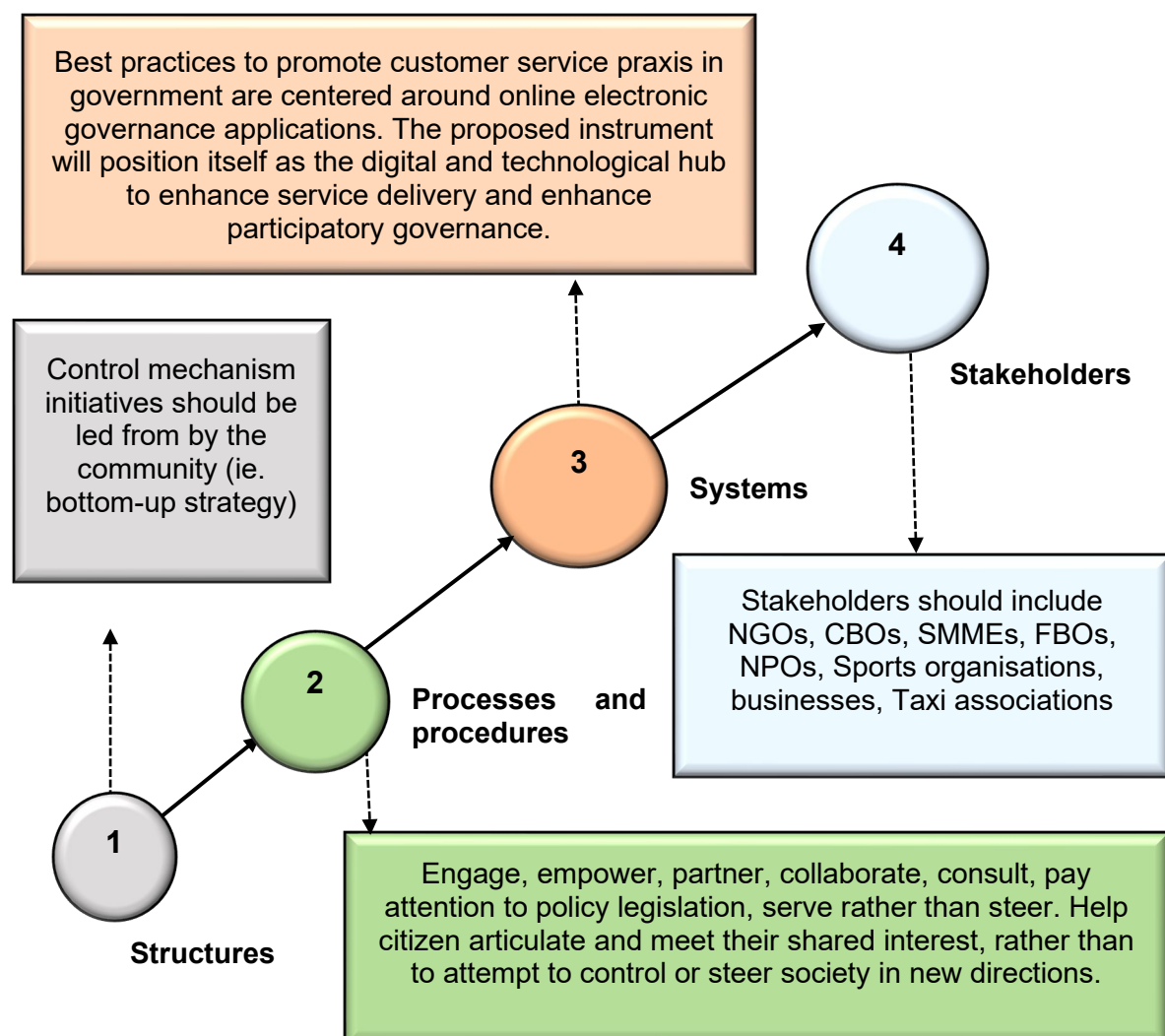


Figure 6.1: Critical considerations on the structure, system, processes and stakeholders in the strategic stakeholder involvement instrument

Source: Researcher's own design

As presented above, evidence from the empirical findings revealed that to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics in the government environment, local government should be outward-looking, people-oriented and citizen-centred. As such, local government must collaborate, partner and consult with stakeholders, including corporate and non-profit organisations, to find effective solutions to barriers that impair the effective and productive public service delivery in government settings. Hence, the role of government should be altered from one that primarily regulates society, to one that sets the national structural agenda reforms of involving all stakeholders and brokering solutions.

Considering these structures, systems, processes and stakeholders as outlined above, the final strategic instrument is presented in Figure 6.2 below. A detailed description of its content and recommendations for its implementation are then presented.

Online digital platforms: Electronic devices, social media, online contact centres, call centres, downloadable podcasts, radio, television, Facebook

ONLINE DIGITAL

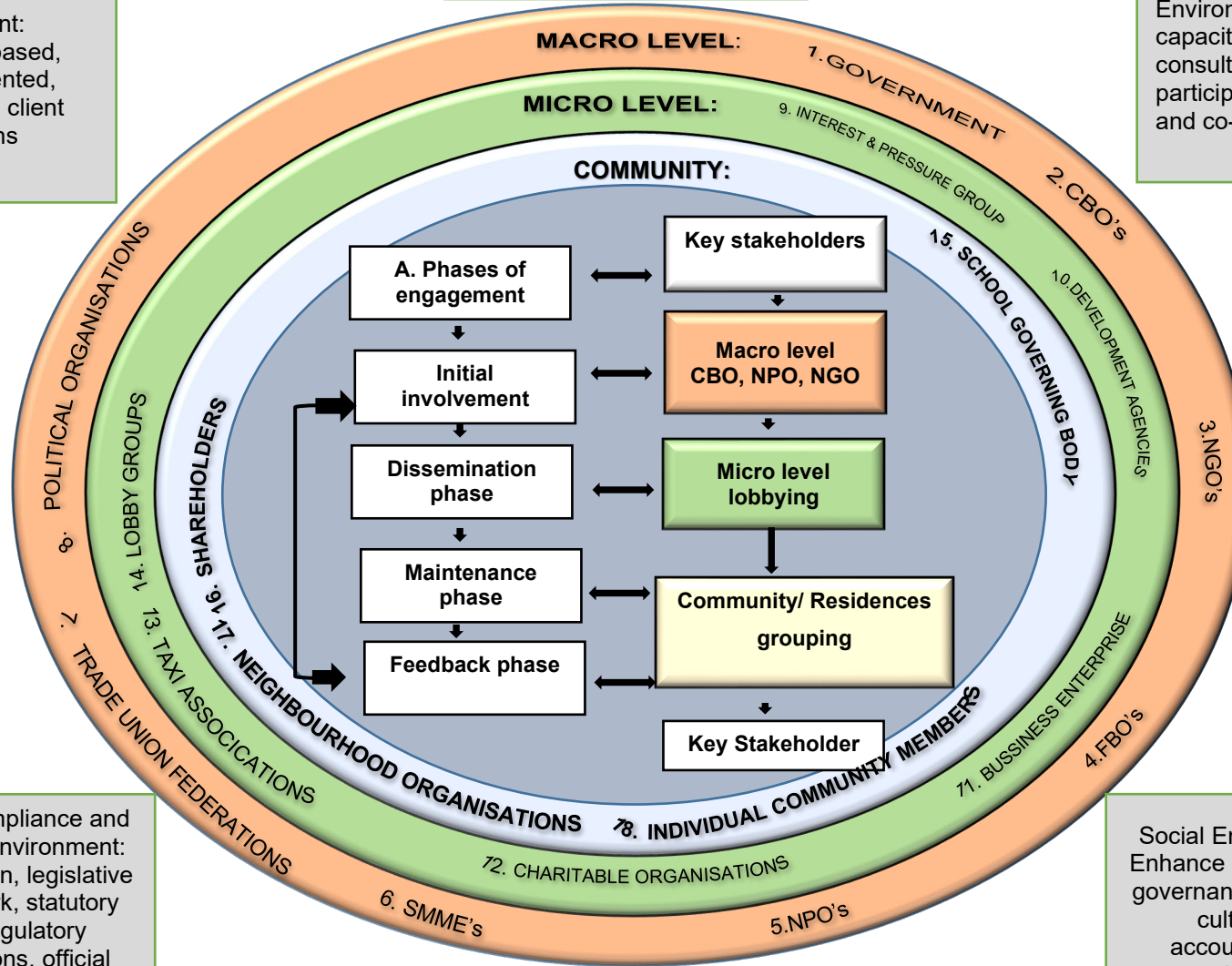
Technological Environment:
capacitate, engage,
consult, integrate,
participate, partner
and co-produce

Economic Environment:
Outcome-based,
results-oriented,
focused on client
expectations

CHRONICLES OF CUSTOMER SERVICE: PARADIGMATIC DEVELOPMENTS
OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION. META-THEORETICAL AND THEORETICAL
UNDERPINNINGS OF STATEMENT INVOLVEMENT AND A CUSTOMER
SERVICE ORIENTATION IN METROPOLITAN MUNICIPALITIES

BATHO PELE PRINCIPLES

Legal Compliance and
Political Environment:
Constitution, legislative
framework, statutory
and regulatory
stipulations, official
prescripts



ONE-STOP SHOPS

CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF INTERNATIONAL BES
PRACTICES UNCOVERED FROM SELECTED COUNTRIES

Social Environment:
Enhance participatory
governance, cultivate
culture of
accountability,
strengthen overall
customer service

STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

STAKEHOLDERS: Government, CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, Sports Organisations, FBOs, Development Agencies, Businesses, Taxi Associations, Interest and Pressure Groups, Lobby Groups, Taxpayers, Agricultural Grouping, Trade Unions, Charitable Organisations

Figure 6.2: Strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE

Source: Researcher's construction

It should be reiterated that this instrument focuses on high-end, strategic matters (i.e., senior managers and councillor engagement responsibilities) and does not make provision for more tactical and operational level matters. Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that the proposed instrument is the culmination of the content of all the chapters and thus, the triangulation of different datasets. As such, the design followed a gap-analysis approach to respond to the research problem as outlined in Chapter 1. This instrument has been developed to provide a framework for stakeholder engagement. As such it presents four phases during which different stakeholders should become involved. These four phases (numbered as 'A' shown in the inner circle of the model) form the core part of the instrument to strengthen customer service and entail the phases below.

A1. Initial involvement phase

This phase should be characterised by the involvement of municipal stakeholders to drive and champion the government's agenda of inclusive governance by strengthening a seamless and integrated customer service approach in metropolitan municipalities. Such involvement in local government affairs represents a relatively new paradigm for government engagement with citizens, as it focuses on continuous interaction and positive dialogue with civil society, pressure groups and other community stakeholders (refer to B, C and D in the model). It is largely dependent on a variety of seamless customer service praxis and best practices (refer to Chapters 2 and 3). The involvement phase should further be informed by international best practices (refer to Section 3.5). The involvement of broader civil society through different stakeholders such as development agencies, organised labour, business, taxi associations, religious groupings and interest and pressure groups will generally foster openness and transparency in municipal councils and promote sound democratic praxis. This notion was supported by participant SO4.4 to "involve people in what we

are doing; take them along in everything we do, even if we fail”. This sentiment was shared by SO5.5 who commented:

The CoE must not only involve stakeholders in its municipal affairs for purposes of compliance, but should also involve them in both the planning, implementing and decision-making stage in an attempt to strengthen customer service. (SO5.5)

The empirical findings revealed a number of stakeholders that should be included in the instrument model. These stakeholders can be categorised in three classifications: the macro level (outer ring of the model), micro level (intermediate ring) and the community (inclusive of residents’ associations) (inner ring of the model). As such, the CoE should engage, empower, partner, collaborate and consult with all stakeholders and comply with national legislation. These structures, processes and procedures will help stakeholders to articulate their needs and interest rather than attempt to control and force political representatives and senior officials into a new direction (refer to Section 2.2.9).

INITIAL INVOLVEMENT PHASE		
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:
This is where stakeholders are meaningfully engaged in developing plans and options for implementation.	Municipalities need the expertise and contact of stakeholder organisational groupings in order to productively and effectively implement municipal decision-making processes to harness participatory local governance.	Municipalities do not have adequate resources or enough time to meaningfully engaged stakeholder organisational groupings in implementing and evaluating the integrated development plans to strengthen customer service.
	Municipalities are committed to incorporating substantive	Municipalities do not have the political will to meaningfully implement

	inputs, insights and views received into their decision-making process and provide prompt feedback to various stakeholder organisational groupings	substantive inputs, views, ideas and insights from various stakeholder organisational groupings as essential partners to strengthen customer service.

Some of the tools, approaches and innovative methods that are appropriate in this phase include the following:

- ward committee structures
- integrated development planning forums
- deliberative polling
- workshops, seminars and webinars
- social media
- data and indigenous knowledge sharing
- internet portals and web-based platforms
- suggestion boxes
- letters to ratepayers
- open council meetings
- submissions to portfolio and/or standing committees of the council
- local media (i.e., local radio stations and newspapers)
- feedback kiosks
- pop-up consultations
- house-to-house surveys
- national and provincial consultation processes

A2. Dissemination phase

The dissemination phase should involve the roll-out of appropriate interventions to respond and address typical pervasive service delivery in the government

environment. In the macro environment, for instance, development agencies as critical stakeholders play a significant role in providing substantive input, views and insights on strengthening customer services. This was corroborated by the findings of the study, as articulated by participant SO1.1 who commented that “there is no proper information dissemination on customer related issues”.

The dissemination of information should be done within the confinements of statutory and regulatory obligations and prescripts guiding stakeholder involvement in local government. To wit, compliance with these stipulations was empirically verified in Chapter 5 and also incorporated in the design of a stakeholder involvement strategy as the main contribution of this study, as indicated in Section 4.1 of Chapter 4 of this study. The South African government has promulgated many legislative and regulatory guidelines to enhance and regulate stakeholder involvement in the local sphere of government. Particular guidance in this regard is obtainable from Chapter 2 from the Rural Development Framework (2013) titled *Building Local Democracy*. Hence, in the implementation of the instrument, municipalities should be outward-looking, people-oriented and citizen-centred as this will help to continuously engage businesses, community groups and other stakeholder groupings. It should also assist the CoEs customer care centres to make provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions and thereby, promote customer service. Concerning the application of stakeholder involvement and customer orientation in public administration, the constitution enshrines the principles of public administration in Section 195. In addition, the White Paper for Transforming Public Service Delivery, 1997 outlines key principles of service delivery, known as the *Batho Pele* (people first) principles. As such, these principles have a strong customer service focus, as reflected in Section 2.3 of Chapter 2. To this end, Section 3.4 provides a detailed and comprehensive discussion on the synopsis of international best practices and gap analysis pertaining to stakeholder involvement practices in the CoE, which was empirically verified in Chapter ?. Moreover, the comparative analysis of the best practices for stakeholder involvement and customer service praxis and metrics in both developed and developing countries is influenced by political, social, economic and technological realities in these selected countries. The gap or comparative analysis between South Africa and selected countries allowed the researcher to identify some

lessons that could be extracted from international experience. As such, these lessons were incorporated in the design of a stakeholders' involvement strategy for excellence in customer service in metropolitan municipalities, as depicted in the proposed instrument above.

DISSEMINATION PHASE		
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:
This is where municipalities roll out various appropriate initiatives to respond and address typical pervasive service delivery impediments experienced by various stakeholder organisational groupings	The dissemination of such interventions is done and implemented within the confinements of the rule of law and statutory obligations.	Municipalities violate and transgress the rights of those who are supposed to actively participate in the municipal decision-making processes of the council.

A3. Maintenance phase

This phase consists of the two-way exchange of municipality-related information between the municipality and stakeholder groups, to maintain and further enhance engagement processes (see Griffiths, Maggs and George, 2007:19). This should be a continuous process to promote mutual trust, a sense of partnership in municipal affairs and a collaborative network form of local governance. The participation of municipal stakeholders demands innovative approaches to engagement and two-way communication. This should foster stakeholder input to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and programmes. It should also facilitate the communication of decision outcomes to stakeholders. Furthermore, it should help to cultivate a culture of accountability, political legitimacy and transparency in municipalities. Graph 5.5 in the previous chapter outlined the necessity of maintaining sound relationships with stakeholders. Additionally, the empirical findings of this study (i.e., semi-structured

interviews conducted with customer care area managers, stakeholders' organisational groupings and evidence from the documents analysis) revealed that stakeholder involvement can be achieved through the maintenance and application of effective and productive communication techniques. Such a communication strategy will, for instance, enable the CoE to reach out to all sectors of the community including marginalised, disposed and designated groups, as illustrated in Figure 6.4 below.

The creation of one-stop-shop centres to facilitate stakeholder engagement was also identified as a major success element in the selected case studies with adequate stakeholder involvement and customer service techniques as reflected in Section 3.6.4. To this end, the proposed instrument considered this dimension as one of the critical dimensions that must be incorporated in the proposed instrument to strengthen customer service. Furthermore, an integrated information technology system that will support a new customer orientation and electronic interfacing channels was seen as one of the fundamental reasons to strengthen customer service, as reflected in Section 1.2 of Chapter 1.

MAINTENANCE PHASE		
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:
This is where both the municipality and stakeholders maintain a two-way exchange of information to strengthen customer services.	When metropolitan municipalities maintain stronger interrelation ties in the hope of fostering and championing a stronger civil society and promoting customer service.	When municipalities fail to facilitate greater interaction between the public and government. As such, this will affect the political legitimacy of municipalities to strengthen customer service and deepen local democracy.

Griffiths, Maggs and George (2007) posit that the maintenance phase is often reinforced and rejuvenated by the fourth and final phase, the feedback phase.

A4. Feedback phase

The findings of this study (i.e., evidence from the literature review and semi-structured interviews) indicated that metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, have an obligation to advance timeous feedback responses on typical pervasive service delivery complaints raised by the public. According to Griffiths, Maggs and George (2007), the feedback phase monitors progress and also identifies challenges and failures that are associated with the strengthening of customer service in government settings. As such, the author postulates that the learning arising from feedback means that the feedback phase will occasionally loop back into both the roll-out and initial involvement phases. Section 2.2.7 on the doctrinal components of the New Public Management revealed that these doctrines aim to transform both the public organisation's organisational structure and the process by which public services are delivered. The relevance and significance of this component are firstly, that it strengthens public service delivery. As such, the study revealed that the emphasis of the component is on management practices or market-type mechanism styles of the private sector. Additionally, using the market-type mechanism will allow public institutions to develop policies that promote timely feedback responsiveness and accountability to citizens' (i.e., stakeholders') needs and desires, using optimal resources to strengthen local governance. However, for such feedback to be effective and productive, comprehensive communication strategies—which include the utilisation of various mechanisms and structures to facilitate the flow of information between stakeholders and local government structures—are required, as emphasised by Fletcher (1999:125) and Savigny (2006:6).

FEEDBACK PHASE		
Level of stakeholder engagement	May be appropriate when:	May not be appropriate when:
This is when municipalities fulfil their constitutional mandate and statutory obligations to advance prompt and	Municipalities monitor the progress as well as identify typical challenges and failures that are associated with	Municipalities fail to allocate adequate resources both (human and capital) to develop policies that promote

timeous feedback on typical pervasive service delivery impediments raised by stakeholder organisational groupings.	strengthening customer service.	timely feedback and accountability to citizens.

6.4.1 Considerations and recommendations for the application of the stakeholder involvement instrument

Considering the information presented above, the next section in that regard will delve into some of the considerations, suggestions and recommendations for the application of the proposed development of a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE. The empirical findings of the study (i.e., findings from participants, analysed documents and evidence from the literature review) presented in the section above are based on the substantive inputs, views, insight, opinions and perceptions expressed by key informants who responded to the semi-structured interviews. As such, stakeholder organisational groupings and customer care area managers indicated the following as the major challenges and barriers faced by stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs:

Table 6.2: Typical pervasive impediments and concerns in strategic stakeholder engagement

CoE: Typical challenges and barriers to stakeholder engagement	Generic concerns
Lack of adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making processes.	Partnership, collaboration and trust
Lack of capacity building	Empowerment and capacity-building programmes
Access to reliable resources	Promote customer service
Lack of timeous responses	Outcomes-based, results-oriented and clients' expectations
Lack of trust and poor service delivery	People-oriented and customer-focused

Poor communication	Improved municipal decision-making processes in the municipal council
A hotbed of corruption, graft and malfeasance, inefficiency and ineffective stakeholder involvement practices	Fraud
Passivity and incompetence among Council officials	Deepening local democracy
Different departments or management teams pursuing different customer interfacing protocols	Participatory governance and democratic praxis

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.4.2 Control and oversight mechanisms

According to Fourie (2001:224), numerous traditional control mechanisms are aimed at improving stakeholder involvement in municipal affairs and their administration. Starling (1992:160–161), Ball (1995:15–20) and Barnes *et al.* (1996:9–17) posit that these traditional control mechanisms include—but are not limited to—the introduction of user groups, liaison panels, public question-and-answer sessions, forums to strengthen integrated planning, the municipal decision-making processes in municipal councils and policy implementation process. To strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and in the CoE, in particular, and to advance timeous and rapid responses and overcome usual ubiquitous obstacles and impediments experienced by stakeholder organisational groupings participating in municipal activities, councils must perform an effective oversight function. In executing this function, the following control mechanisms emanating from the study should be established

6.4.2.1 Online digital devices and portals

One of the fundamental reasons to improve customer service in government settings is to have an integrated information technology system that will support a new

customer orientation and electronic interfacing channels. As such, one of the control mechanisms to strengthen customer service is to modernise a government's seamless customer service praxis and metrics. The empirical findings of the study, in particular, the theoretical exposition in Chapters 1, 2, 3 and 5 revealed that e-government is an enabler of suitable strategies to promote stakeholder involvement as a customer service instrument. Additionally, the study revealed that e-government has the potential to allow the integration of various databases and information systems to support customer service orientation and electronic interfacing. As control mechanisms, digital devices and portals can improve municipal responsiveness and accountability in domains such as basic service delivery, financial administration and integrated planning processes. These sentiments are supported by one participant SO8.8 who commented:

By actively vindicating, participating and/or engaging CoE through electronic devices, feedback sessions, journalistic comments, radio comments, social media, suggestion boxes and physical visits to their relevant customer care centre. (SO8.8)

Participant SO6.1 reiterated:

The introduction of digital devices and internet portals are not too complicated to use by the general public and [as] such, it will make a big difference to strengthen customer service. (SO6.1)

Manager 4 also stated:

By using all available service[s] on digital platforms i.e., *Facebook*, *Twitter*, call centre[s], online services and *Siyakhoka Siyathuthuka* initiatives. Through the use of these digital platforms the customers will assist the CoE to strengthen customer service. (Manager 4)

6.4.2.2 Improve communication to disseminate information

The empirical findings of this study (i.e., by conducting semi-structured interviews with customer care area managers, stakeholder organisational groupings and evidence from documents analysis) reveal that the absence of an effective communication

strategy is one of the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisational groupings participating in municipal affairs. The participation of municipal stakeholders demands innovative approaches to engagement and two-way communication. This implies that municipalities like the CoE should establish effective systems, structures and methods to foster effective and productive civil society dialogue. Communication is one of the control mechanisms that have a bearing on the effective and productive functioning of stakeholder involvement as a customer orientation instrument. The above sentiments are echoed by one of the key informants, SO2.2 during the semi-structured interviews:

Improve communication to disseminate information sharing and appropriate customer service approaches of e-government can be used to improve customer service in general and the CoE in particular. (SO2.2)

From the above assertions it is evident that to strengthen customer service delivery, municipalities should refrain from communicating in intervals with both the users and consumers of service and instead, design a comprehensive communication strategy to engage stakeholders. Refer to Figure 6.4 for further details in this regard.

6.4.2.3 Openness, accountability and transparency

One of the critical control mechanisms may be adopted to strengthen customer service is the protocol of good governance that contains instruments such as accountability and transparency, which can also be used to enhance customer service. These sentiments were also reiterated by one of the key informants SO1.1 who was drawn from the key stakeholder organisational groupings and commented as follows:

Include the principles of transparency and accountability as one of the dimensions that must be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as instrument for strengthening of customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. Through accountability as protocol of good governance, the municipalities will win the trust of the citizens in working with them. (SO1.1)

In support of the above-mentioned sentiments, Managers 5 and 6 responded as follows:

Stakeholders must ensure that the CoE is accountable to (*sic*) what it does. Likewise, they must petition council and request accountability from the city on the conduct of business with its customers. They must not stay away but rather they must interact, engage and liaise with the city so that customer service praxis and metrics in the length and breadth of the CoE can be strengthened. (Managers 5, 6)

6.4.2.4 Open council meetings

Meetings are one of the control mechanisms that can be used as a yardstick to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities. As such, municipal council meetings are generally open to the public and they serve as an appropriate strategy to inform stakeholders regarding council decisions. It also allows stakeholders to gain insight into the political dynamics and complexities associated with municipal decision-making by the council. As confirmed by the literature review in Chapter 3, open council meetings are an effective mechanism to involve stakeholders and keep municipal councils responsive and accountable.

These sentiments were, conversely, supported by Participant SO3.3 who commented as follows:

Have a uniform stakeholder involvement instrument that will enable the municipality, appointed officials and elected political representative to speak with 'one voice' in as far as strengthening of customer service in the CoE is concerned. That should also be cascade down to the line departments as well. Additionally, improve the communication media and message when you engage with the community with citizens such as summits, open council meetings, public meetings, workshop[s] and so forth. (SO3.3)

6.4.2.5 Online petition system

Online petitions as a control mechanism facilitate stakeholder participation in municipal policy-making processes by recording stakeholder complaints, grievances and suggestions via a single portal. The content of service associated with this best

practice is that consumers of service can submit their substantive inputs, insights and ideas on unfair administrative handling, infringements of their rights and interests, improvement of institutions and various policies through integrated online windows. Additionally, this control mechanism allows consumers of service to check the outcome of their submissions online (Chung, 2015:119).

6.4.2.6 Co-production

Another control mechanism that came out strongly from the empirical findings of this study is the so-called 'co-production strategy'. Co-production refers to the establishment of a partnership relationship between municipalities and stakeholders. Policy design and decision outcomes are co-produced by the respective partners. This statement was corroborated by participant SO17.17:

One of the possible strategies that municipalities can use to strengthen customer service is co-production. If you want to do something for me, allow me to decide. Co-production implies that the general public has a variety of skills and knowledge that should be harnessed by the municipality, in line with the Fourth Industrial technology requirements. (SO17.17)

6.4.2.7 Use of civic education

Educational programmes aimed at promoting involved citizenship, civil rights and voter education are valuable control mechanisms for informing and empowering stakeholders about their civic rights and civil obligations. Municipalities may use this control mechanism to partner with development agencies, educational institutions and civil society organisations to make more politically neutral and balanced information available to communities. In this regard, participant SO6.6 commented:

Make use of education as [a] strategy to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities so that stakeholders know how to keep decision-makers on their toes. (SO6.6)

6.5 Proposed classification of stakeholders in the instruments to strengthen customer service

The empirical study included a sample from three stakeholder organisations randomly sampled from six main stakeholder grouping types of the City of Ekurhuleni, namely CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, FBOs and sport organisations. Additionally, the literature reviewed in Chapters 3, 4 and 5 indicated several stakeholder organisational groupings that can be included in a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service. The classification of such stakeholders is presented in Figure 6.3 below:

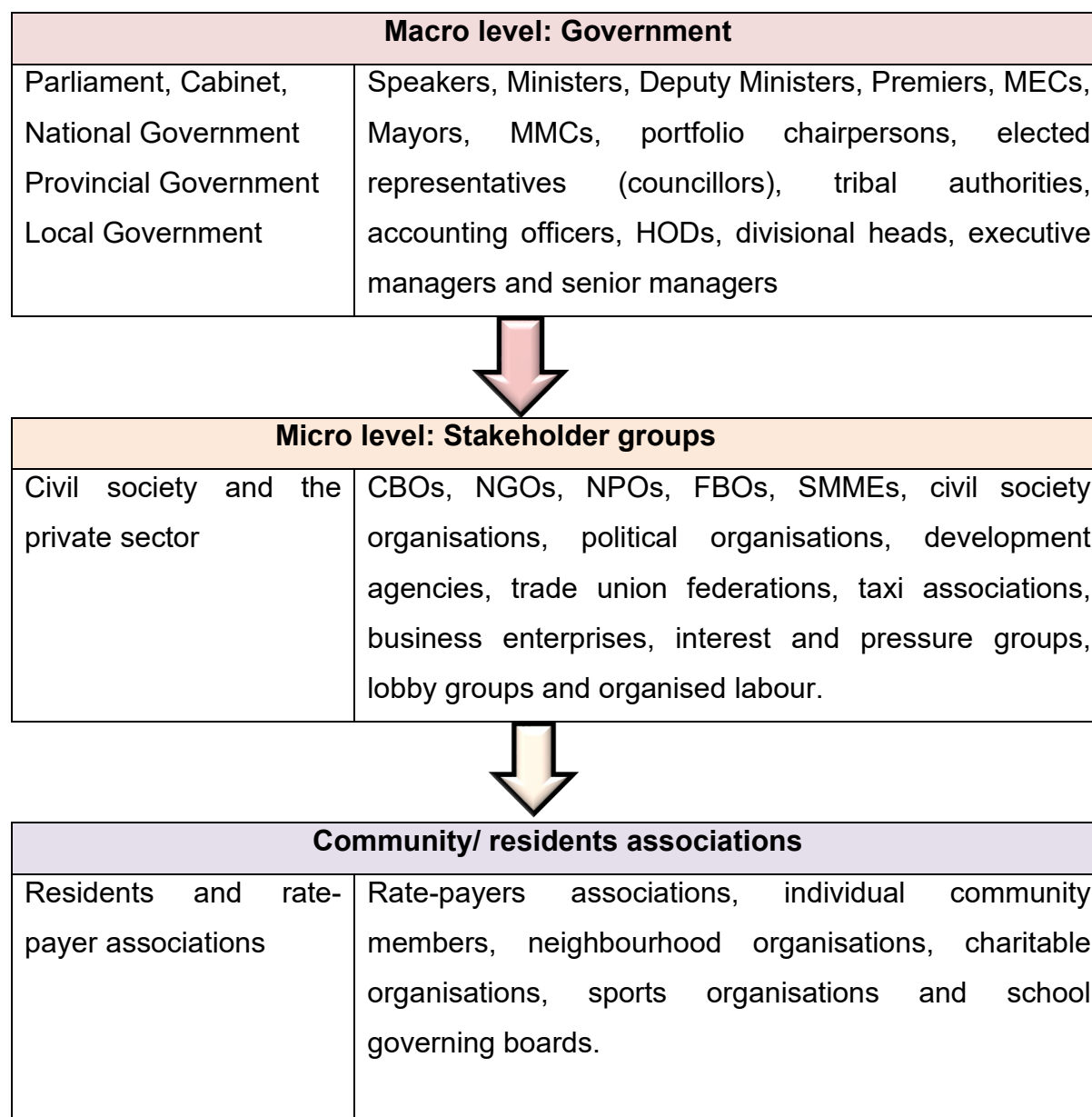


Figure 6.3: Three classifications of stakeholders

Source: Researcher's compilation

Considering the above, it is argued that high levels of public satisfaction concerning the strengthening of customer service are likely to be achieved if provisions for adequate stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decisions are going to be made. The empirical findings of this study further indicated that such involvement would help to engage with all stakeholder organisational groupings continuously. Additionally, the proposed instrument will further assist with obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions, communicate outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and promote joint ownership of municipal challenges pertaining to poor service delivery. For the purposes of this study, these stakeholders can be categorised in three classifications as depicted in Figure 6.4 above. To this end, the empirical findings of this study (i.e., the findings from the conducted semi-structured interviews and the literature review in the theoretical exposition of Chapter 5) provided evidence that the proposed development of a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and in the CoE, in particular, should allow a bottom-up strategy. Through this approach, stakeholders participating in municipal affairs will be empowered to contribute to a stronger civil society that strengthens a more people-oriented focus in local government, which is more responsive, outcomes-based, results-oriented and focused on client's expectations and customer orientation; this view is also emphasised in the proposed instrument.

6.6 KEY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE APPLICATION OF THE STRATEGIC STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT INSTRUMENT

The successful operationalisation of the instrument model (Figure 6.2) requires certain processes, systems, structures and procedures as outlined in Figure 6.1. The subsection below highlights some of the most significant actions metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, pursue in order to benefit from its application.

6.6.1 Strengthen communication with both users and consumers of a service

As alluded to in Section 6.4.2.2, the empirical findings of this study revealed that the absence of an effective communication strategy is one of the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisational groupings participating in municipal affairs. Furthermore, the study revealed that stakeholder involvement can be achieved through the application of effective and productive communication techniques (see Sebola, 2017:26). Accordingly, promoting and maintaining such an interrelationship on a local government level requires comprehensive communication strategies, which include the utilisation of various mechanisms and structures to facilitate the flow of information between citizens and local government structures (Fletcher 1999:125; Savigny, 2006:6). This will enable the CoE to reach out to all sectors of the community inclusive of marginalised, dispossessed and designated groups. Moreover, the presence of an effective and productive communication strategy will advocate for more client and customer-oriented approaches. As such, if incorporated in the proposed instrument to strengthen customer service, it will catalyse the government's productivity and effectiveness geared towards promoting timely responsiveness and accountability to citizens as far as strengthening customer service in government environments is concerned. The effective participation of municipal stakeholders demands innovative approaches to engagement and two-way communication. The absence of an effective and efficient communication tool will impair the acceleration of good customer service. These sentiments were supported by participants who reiterated that the CoE should design appropriate mechanisms to engage stakeholders, considering their unique circumstances and information needs. An effective communication technique to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities is in general and the CoE is illustrated in Figure 6.4 below:

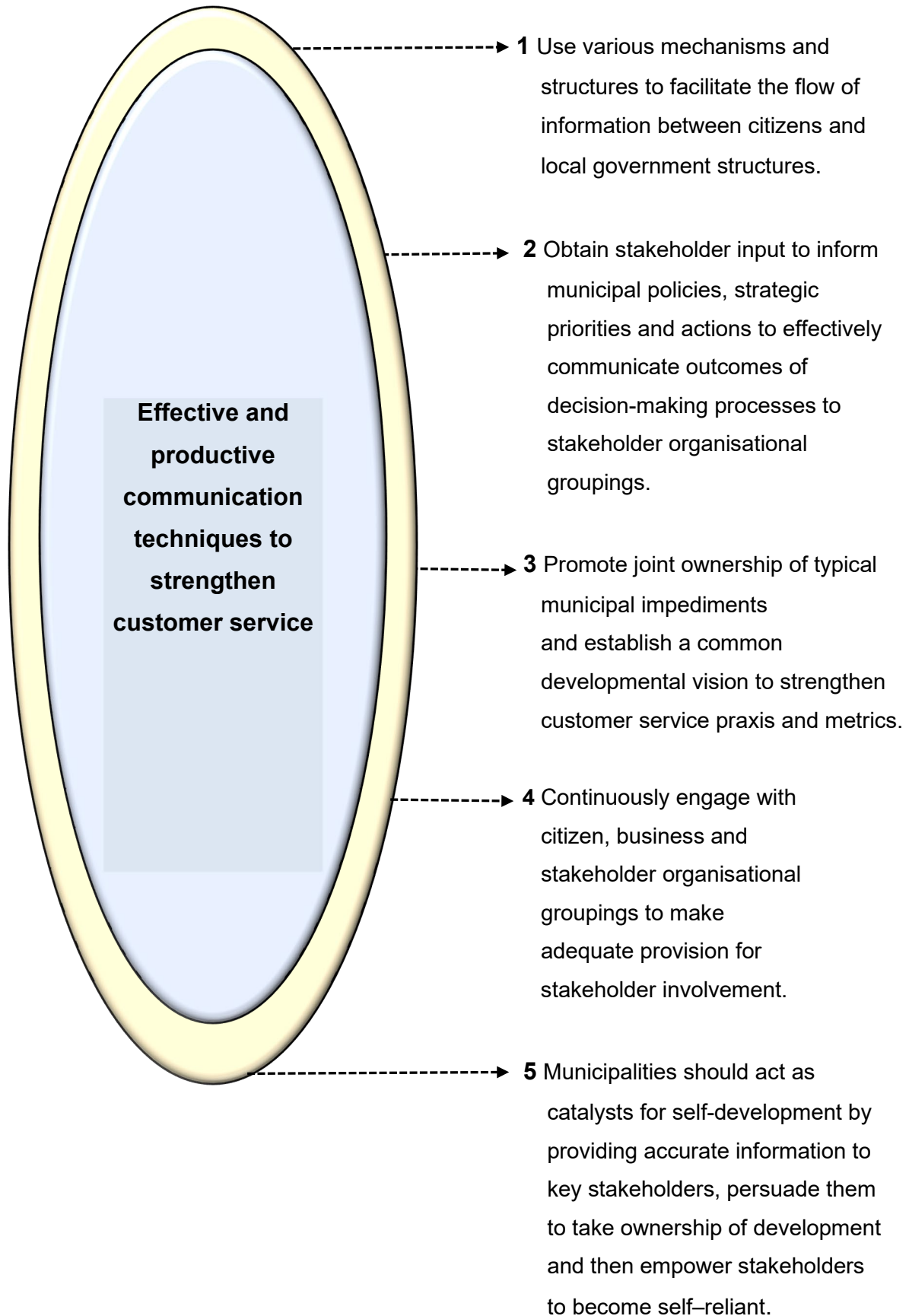


Figure 6.4: Effective and productive communication technique to strengthen customer service praxis and metrics

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.6.2 Conduct stakeholder profiling or mapping exercises

Most participants in this study had a consensus that stakeholder involvement had instrumental value in strengthening customer service praxis and metrics in a government environment and that non-participation is likely to impact customer service negatively. To facilitate this process, the CoE should conduct stakeholder profiling or mapping exercise to:

- clarify the roles and responsibilities of each group (see Fig. 6.5);
- record the contact details of key representatives of each stakeholder grouping to regularly engage with;
- determine the unique information needs of each grouping;
- establish the most suitable means of communication, information dissemination and engagement with each stakeholder grouping; and
- ascertain the frequency of communication and engagement.

The outcome of such a profiling or mapping exercise should be that stakeholders facilitate the cultivation of a culture of open, accountable, responsive and transparent local governance. It should also strengthen trust in and the overall legitimacy of the municipal council. In this regard, Shabangu and Oksiutycz (2018) argued that when communities as stakeholders of municipalities become more involved in local affairs, it generally leads to improved acceptance of municipal decisions, more effective planning, and better-informed policies. As participant SO6.6 confirmed:

Below, Figure 6.5 presents a schematic summary of the roles and functions of key stakeholder organisation groupings in strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.



Figure 6.5 Summary of the roles and functions of stakeholders in strengthening customer service

Source: Researcher's own compilation

6.6.3 Allocate adequate resources for the implementation of the instrument

Technical, human and financial resources will be required for the successful implementation of this instrument. However, it must be borne in mind that the allocation of such resources will depend on the political will of the council, the responsiveness of line managers and the profile of the stakeholder involved. The budget allocation to support stakeholder engagement may be especially substantial. Based on the literature review conducted in Chapters 2 and 3, the stakeholder involvement instrument should be supported by a dedicated budget. Table 6.5 outlines the typical content of such budget allocation and may serve as a template for the allocation of financial resources.

Table 6.5: Proposed stakeholder involvement instrument budget template for allocation of resources

BUDGET LINE	ESTIMATED COST
Staff	
Subtotal	
MEETING COSTS, COORDINATION COMMITTEES, MULTI-STAKEHOLDER PARTNERSHIPS, WORKING GROUPS, ADVISORY COMMITTEES, TASK FORCES	
Meetings room hire	
Stakeholder travel	
Stakeholder accommodation	
Subtotal	
TRANSLATION FOR INCLUSIVITY	
Translation documents	
Interpretation at key meetings	
Subtotal	
CONSULTATION	
Online consultation (website, <i>Google Hangouts</i> , survey, crowdsourcing)	
Offline consultations (feedback kiosk, pop-up consultations)	
House-to-house surveys, national consultation	
Subtotal	
OTHER	
General consumables	
Printing and stationery	
Rental equipment (PA system, marquee tent, tables, chairs)	
Catering/refreshments	
Subtotal	

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.6.4 Monitor and evaluate the stakeholder involvement strategy

For the proposed stakeholder involvement strategy to be effective and productive in strengthening customer service, it should be monitored and evaluated. Such a monitoring and evaluation process will, for instance, allow for the review of tools, approaches and innovative methods of the proposed stakeholder involvement strategy. This will further include, for instance, the identification of gaps and typical impediments that might impair the successful implementation of the proposed instrument. Moreover, the monitoring and evaluation of the proposed instrument will allow metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular to improve the decision-making processes of municipal councils which will contribute to a stronger civil society and foster a more community-oriented service that is focused on client expectations and local development. Additionally, the monitoring exercise will help significantly in mobilising and allocating both human and capital resources to strengthen customer service in municipalities. Effective stakeholder mapping during the development of this proposed strategic instrument will assist municipalities in identifying or detecting typical pervasive service delivery impediments early. The monitoring and evaluation exercise will further contribute to managing interrelationships between various stakeholder organisational groupings. This statement is underscored by the NPFPP (2007:9) which postulates that forums should be established by municipalities to allow stakeholder groupings to initiate municipal policies and/or policy formulation. As a result, such forums should also strengthen their involvement in the monitoring and evaluation of municipal programmes and projects.

6.6.5 Clarify the roles and responsibilities of support departments in the execution of the strategy

As revealed during the empirical findings of the study, one of the critical processes relating to the responsibilities and duties of support departments and portfolio chairpersons of standing committees concerning the strengthening of customer service praxis and metrics in metropolitan municipalities is that the support departments should first embrace the spirit of active citizenry. As such, support departments inclusive of policymakers and front-line administrators must desist from

the idea that stakeholders are not capable of providing them with any worthwhile assistance in their specialised professions. Additionally, part of their roles and responsibility in the execution of the proposed instrument to strengthen customer service by metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, is that they must collaborate, partner and consult with stakeholder organisational groupings including corporate and non-profit organisation to find fitting solutions to barriers that might impair effective and productive public service delivery. In addition, support from the departments must help to consolidate all customer interfacing protocols by monitoring progress as well as identifying typical challenges and failures that are associated with the strengthening of customer service in government settings. They must also develop policies that promote timely feedback and accountability to citizens by using optimal resources to strengthen local governance. A summary of the roles and responsibilities of support departments and portfolio chairs of standing committees in the execution of the proposed strategy is presented in Table 6.6 below:

Table 6.6 Summary of roles and responsibilities of support departments in the execution of the proposed strategy

Role of support departments	Portfolio chairs of standing committees
• Develop policies that promote timely responsiveness and accountability to citizens • Legislate • Consult • Partner • Co-produce • Communicate • Empower • Monitor and evaluate • Develop strategies to engage citizens • Stimulate public dialogue with citizens to strengthen customer service	• Initiate municipal policies and/or influence policy formulation • Participate in council committees • Co-produce • Legislate • Play an oversight role to strengthen good governance • Uphold the rule of law • Hold the executive accountable • Advocate for people-centred development to strengthen customer service.

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.6.6 Sharing best practices and lessons learnt from other metropolitan municipalities

The CoE can benefit significantly by sharing best practices and the successes and failures experienced by other metropolitan municipalities, both nationally and internationally. In designing the instrument for strengthening customer service in the CoE, the researcher probed the experiences of other municipalities in the design of appropriate stakeholder engagement and customer service strategies, as outlined in Chapter 3. The purpose of such an exercise was to uncover best practices for encouraging stakeholder involvement as a new customer service approach and to draw lessons from critical success factors. Of particular significance for the purposes of this study are the respective domains in which e-governance is divided. These include e-Citizens, e-Services, e-Administration and e-Society (Kumar and Bhatnagar, 2001). Furthermore, these dimensions are maintained by government to citizen (G2C), government to business (G2B) and government to government (G2G) engagements. To this end, the proposed instrument positions itself as the digital and technological hub to enhance service delivery and enhance participatory governance as illustrated in Section 3.3.2.3 of Chapter 3.

One case study that was analysed to extract best practices was the City of Joburg (CoJ). This metropolitan municipality has a model called the Citizen Relationship Management Strategy. The strategic thrust of this model is to strengthen protocols of good governance, customer care and *Batho Pele* principles with the communities and citizens of the city. Through this approach, the CoJ wants to become a 'caring government' that places the community and citizens at the epicentre of public service delivery. However, one of the fundamental challenges that confront this model is probably the absence of an effective, coherent and productive citizen relationship management communication technique with stakeholder organisational groupings. The absence of such an effective and productive instrument is a clear demonstration on the part of the municipality that participatory governance is a dream that will not be

enhanced and realised. To this end, the absence of such a communication strategy will hamper the implementation process of participation initiatives concerning the strengthening of customer service in the CoJ. Similarly, this will result in the CoJ not being able to champion the city's agenda of inclusive governance in strengthening a seamless customer-integrated approach. A strong communicating tool is one of the dominant views that came out of the empirical investigation of this study. It is against this backdrop that the researcher argues that such a communication tool will also increase the participation of a wider society through various stakeholders including development organisations, organised labour, business, taxi associations, religious groupings and interest and pressure groups.

The eThekweni Metropolitan Municipality has a customer relations management strategy to ensure that the municipality delivers integrated, coherent and improved services to residents, visitors and the business community. The only pervasive typical service delivery challenge is that the customer relation management instrument in eThekweni does not make adequate provision for stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decision-making processes. Through its customer service integration project, the eThekweni metropolitan municipality identifies and defines opportunities to better meet customer needs, wants and desires in order to redesign its business processes. The redesign will assist in achieving a fully integrated approach to customer service across the municipality. This is, therefore, one of the learning exercises that the proposed instrument will improve on. Furthermore, this implies that the proposed instrument must be evaluated continually and remodelled to provide a uniform customer service that will assist in obtaining stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and to promote joint ownership of municipal challenges and establish a common developmental vision for the city (see Draai and Taylor, 2009:114). One of the lessons for the CoE is that in its concerted effort to strengthen customer service, the eThekweni metropolitan municipality is using the *Sizakala* mobile van which is dispatched to various areas around eThekweni, inclusive of rural areas and traditional courts. Various services are offered by these mobile vans including traffic fines, account balance checking, electricity and faults reporting, stormwater queries, information on hall

bookings, etc. Considering the above examples, it is evident that the CoE should draw successful lessons from the experiences of both developed and developing countries for strengthening customer service praxis and metrics. In that regard, Figure 6.11 below presents a schematic presentation of what the CoE should learn, based on empirical findings from the interviews and reviewed literature and improve what is already available and in place for the proposed strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE.

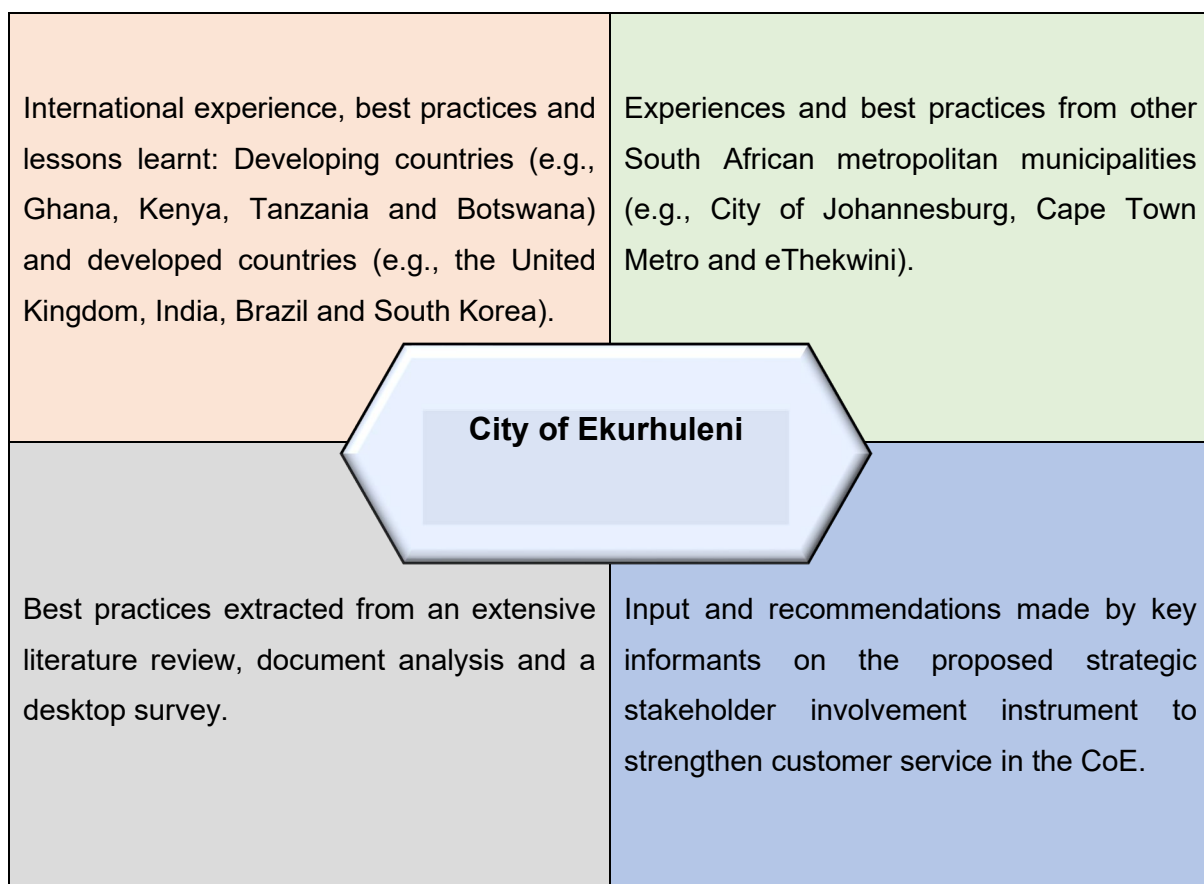


Figure 6.6: Framework to build on experiences, best practices and theory

Source: Researcher's compilation

6.6.7 Establish protocols for good local governance and stakeholder engagement

The literature revealed that the provision of public services is typically enhanced by official protocols of good governance. Such protocols should outline the steps that should be taken by all internal municipal actors and the behaviours required to support

stakeholder engagement. The extent to which municipalities comply with written protocols will significantly strengthen their legitimacy, performance and ability to conform to client expectations. Expounding these sentiments, participant SO1.1 reiterated:

Win the trust and public confidence of the citizens. My suggestion is that to further refine and improve on the proposed stakeholder involvement strategy, it should include protocol of good governance initiatives such as openness, transparency, and accountability. Where the community will hold those in power accountable if things are not done correctly. (SO1.1)

Such protocols should incorporate the people first (*Batho Pele*) principles. These principles have a strong significance for stakeholder involvement and customer orientation in service delivery. It reflects the foundations of a new public service ethos, geared towards improving the standard of public service delivery and fostering stakeholder involvement in government. These sentiments were echoed by participants SO3.3, SO5.5, SO7.7, SO8.8, SO9.9, SO10.10, SO12.12 and SO14.14. A participant (Manager 2) agreed that the *Batho Pele* principles are one of the critical dimensions that can be incorporated in the proposed strategic stakeholder involvement instrument:

The *Batho Pele* principles is geared towards the acceleration of service delivery as such it is one of the dimensions and aspects that will be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as instrument for strengthening of customer service in the metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. (Manager 2)

To wit, these principles have a strong customer service focus and includes a strong significance for stakeholder and customer orientation.

6.6.8 Establish online digital platforms for engagement

Most developed countries have positioned themselves as digital and technological hubs. Best practices for stakeholder involvement mainly centre around e-(electronic) governance applications. E-Governance essentially entails the application of

information and communication technology to government operational functions to achieve SMART governance (i.e., Simple, Moral, Accountability, Responsive and Transparent) (SARC, 2008:16). One of the best practices for suitable strategies is the one-stop-shop centres. As such, these centres provide integrated services and information from government institutions to citizens. Multiple services are conveniently located in one office at public amenities to improve access to typical services such as applications for identification and passport documents, the payment of utility bills and the submission of taxes. For instance (SO8.8) reiterated that:

To further improve and refine the draft stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service, I suggest that you incorporate the following dimensions namely (i.e., feedback sessions, journalistic and radio comments, social media, suggestion boxes, electronic devices including physical visits to customer care centres). (SO8.8)

To this end, the proposed strategic instrument to strengthen customer service has the potential to allow the integration of information technology systems to support customer service orientation and electronic customer interfacing channels both in public and government entities. It is, therefore, the researcher's argument that the incorporation of this dimension or aspect into the proposed instrument will assist to obtain stakeholder input at the appropriate level to inform municipal policies, strategic priorities and actions to communicate the outcomes of decision-making processes to stakeholders and promote joint ownership of pervasive municipal service delivery impediments and establish a common developmental vision for the CoE.

6.6.9 Create one-stop-shop centres to facilitate stakeholder engagement

The theoretical chapters and literature on the international perspective on stakeholder involvement in local government revealed the notion of one-stop-shop centres as a major success element in the selected case studies. To this end, the application of the proposed instrument considered this dimension as one of the critical dimensions that must be incorporated in the proposed instrument should incorporate this system to strengthen customer service. These centres provide integrated services and information from government institutions to citizens. Multiple services are conveniently

located in one office at public amenities to improve access to typical services such as applications for identification and passport documents, the payment of utility bills and the submission of taxes.

6.7 CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE STUDY

Given the knowledge gap reflected in the theoretical exposition in Chapter 1 of this study and the comparative analysis of best practices for stakeholder involvement extracted from the selected cases explored in previous sections, it is possible to identify potential gaps between current practices in the CoE and these cases. To this end, the study contributes to the body of knowledge on the effective involvement of stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular. The study further highlights typical barriers and impediments faced by stakeholder organisations in trying to strengthen customer service and provide recommendations aimed at improving stakeholder involvement in key municipal strategic decision-making processes. The key contribution will be the development of a new strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in the CoE. Although the locus of this study was the CoE, information from this study will not only be useful to the CoE but also to other municipalities across South Africa that can use it as a learning experience. The significance of the study's main key contribution towards the advancement of a new scientific body of knowledge on effective involvement of stakeholder organisations in strengthening customer service in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, is structured in three main domains:

- Contributions to the corpus of knowledge informing the discipline of Public Administration/Management and Governance;
- Contributions to the scholarly discourse regarding local democracy, participation structures and strategies and stakeholder engagement; and
- Practical application value by proposing the contours and content of a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for implementation by metropolitan municipalities in South Africa with specific reference to the CoE.
- Creating a more responsive administration and customer orientation; and

- Enhancing transparency and accountability in local government by developing a culture of openness through the participation of stakeholders.

One of the key contributions of this study is to uncover gaps in knowledge and pinpoint areas which should be further probed through the empirical findings which was also reinforced by evidence from the document analysis. Additionally, the study managed to incorporate aspects of barriers and hindrances faced by stakeholder organisations in an attempt to strengthen customer service. Such inconsistencies and gaps as well as the literature review allowed the researcher to indicate where the proposed enquiry fits in. Through a robust literature review, the study also succeeded in developing a comprehensive conceptual and theoretical framework on stakeholder involvement as central constructs of this enquiry. The study also located stakeholder involvement as a potential strategic instrument to strengthen customer service in local government settings as a contribution to the corpus knowledge on public administration and governance. For this purpose, the study traced the paradigmatic development of public administration to explore the nature and dimensions of customer service in government. Moreover, the study traced the meta-theoretical and theoretical underpinnings thereof to determine its main principles and approaches. The notions and conceptions of customer orientation and stakeholder engagement in public service (inclusive of local government) and how they have evolved from the early ages of the paradigmatic development of public administration were analysed. The three constructs of stakeholder involvement, public participation and local democracy are interrelated and as such, were also analysed. The study also revealed that the involvement of stakeholders in government can be regarded as an integral element for deepening local democracy and harnessing participatory governance. Lastly, as its main contribution to the corpus of knowledge on public administration and governance. This study successfully managed to locate the significance of stakeholder involvement within the customer service domain.

6.8 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Limitations may negatively affect the empirical findings of any study. This study utilised a case study design and unfortunately, such findings cannot be generalised to all

South African metropolitan municipalities. However, the strategic instrument to strengthen customer service—that will be designed as the main contribution of the study—is generic in nature and as such, applicable to comparable municipalities. The empirical investigation is furthermore confined to the expressed responses of a particular unit of analysis, namely the customer area managers (CCA) and stakeholder organisations in the identified customer care centres (CCC) of the CoE. Due to limited resources such as time, finance and logistical constraints, the focus of enquiry was limited only to six of the twenty customer care centres of the CoE. On the other hand, the empirical findings of the study supported by evidence from the document analysis raised detailed and comprehensive state of dysfunctional affairs in local government settings that relate to concerns about claims of threatening trends that are intended to catalyse government productivity and effectiveness geared towards a more responsive and effective public administration. This also relates to issues and concerns about claims of impairing protocol of good governance when strengthening customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and particularly, where the CoE is concerned. Considering the above literature review and information gathered from the empirical findings of the study, the researcher makes the following recommendations for future research below.

- For the purposes of this study, the empirical findings and recommendations were based on two target populations; namely, managers of customer care centers and a representative sample of stakeholder organisations who interact with these centres including CBOs, NGOs, SMMEs, FBOs and sports organisations (stakeholder organisational groupings) at the CoE. Therefore, this study recommends that further empirical research should be conducted on stakeholder involvement and the promotion of participatory governance in strengthening customer service orientation in other metropolitan municipalities. This recommendation is grounded in the assumption that different stakeholder organisations participating in municipal affairs in different South African metropolitan municipalities are faced with unique and typically pervasive service delivery impediments and barriers to strengthening customer service. As such, successful lessons and suitable strategies from such case studies can be replicated in other metropolitan municipalities like the CoE of which the

stakeholder organisational groupings experienced typical, pervasive challenges and barriers to strengthening customer service.

- Empirical research should be conducted on how to empower and capacitate stakeholder organisational groupings on how to enable them to actively be involved in the decision-making processes of metropolitan municipalities. The findings of the study, which were reinforced by evidence from document analysis revealed that the lack of stakeholder involvement in decision-making processes, policy agenda setting and policy implementation has therefore, been seen as one of the main typical impediments towards the acceleration of customer service delivery in government settings. In addition, the study revealed that inadequate stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making process and policy implementation continues to affect the delivery of services in South African metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular.

6.9 CONCLUSION

In this final chapter, a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument to strengthen customer service in metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE, in particular, is presented as the key contribution of the study. Prior to that, a synopsis of the study was provided. The chapter also contains a summary of the theoretical framework for scientific inquiry into stakeholder involvement which was informed by a range of meta-theoretical and theoretical approaches. Furthermore, the achievement of the study's primary and secondary objectives was accounted for. The proposed instrument makes provision for effective stakeholder involvement in municipal decision-making processes and guides customer care centres to strengthen customer service. The instrument model presented followed a four-phase framework of stakeholder involvement (i.e., Initial involvement, Dissemination, Maintenance and Feedback phases) to promote customer service. These phases were supported by the theoretical and conceptual frameworks as well as the empirical findings of the research. The content of the instrument was then outlined, followed by recommendations for its successful application. It should be borne in mind that the study was inspired by the

CoE's idea to provide a more dynamic, uniform and seamless positive customer interface underpinned by the concept of 'bringing government closer to the people'. To this end, proposing a stakeholder involvement strategy as an instrument to promote customer service was intended to catalyse the government 's productivity and effectiveness, geared towards a far more responsive, effective and productive public administration. As such, proposed new business-like approaches were perceived to be more beneficial for the latest trends in public administration by making, it more outcomes-based, results-oriented and focused on clients' expectations. Additionally, the proposed instrument was significant in adding to the growing literature on public participation. In this regard, the study traced the chronicles of the paradigmatic development of public administration towards a customer service orientation. It also analysed the new public service paradigm which gave rise to the emergence of a more citizen-centred approach to government and the notions and conceptions of customer orientation and stakeholder engagement in public service delivery.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abraham, K.K.A. 2019. The role and activities of policy institutes for participatory governance in Ghana. In: Grimm, H.M. (Ed.). *Public Policy Research in the Global South*. Cham: Springer. pp. 151-170.

Adede, P.B. 2017. An Analysis of the Concept of Public Participation in Kenya. *International Journal of Law and Policy*, 1(2):46-57.

Adedeji, A., Bugembe, P. and Teriba, O. 2014. The challenge of African economic recovery and development. New York, NY: Routledge.

Aiko, R. 2015. Tanzanians Perceive Ineffective Fight against Corruption; Say Citizens Have a Role to Play. *AFRO Barometer Dispatch* (48). Online: https://afrobarometer.org/sites/default/files/publications/Dispatches/ab_r6_dispatch_n048_corruption_in_tanzania.pdf. Date of access: 23 Aug. 2021.

Ambert, C. 2000. Participatory process for municipal planning in post-apartheid South Africa. Online: <http://www.wits.ac.za/urbanfutures/papers/amber.htm>. Date of access: 19 July 2020.

Angen, M.J. 2000. Evaluating interpretive enquiry: reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*, 10(3):378-395.

Appiah-Agyekum, N.N., Boachie Danquah, N.Y., and Sakyi, E.K., 2013. Local government finance in Ghana: Disbursement and utilisation of the MPs share of the District Assemblies Common Fund. *Commonwealth Journal of Local Governance*, (12):90-109.

Arenilla, M. 2010. Concepts in democratic theory. Dordrecht: Springer.

Auriacombe, C. 1999. Reflection on the new public management. *Journal of Public Administration*, 34(2):124-136.

Avritzer, L. 2012. The different designs of public participation in Brazil: deliberation, power sharing and public ratification. *Critical Policy Studies*, 6(2):113-127.

Babbie, E. and Mouton, J. 2001. The Practice of Social Research: South African edition. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Baiocchi, G. 2005. Militants and citizens: The politics of participatory democracy. Porto Alegre: Stanford University Press.

Baiocchi, G. 2015. But who will speak for the people? The travel and translation of participatory budgeting. *Deliberation and Development: Rethinking the Role of Voice and Collective Action in Unequal Societies*, 107. Online: https://elibrary.worldbank.org/doi/10.1596/978-1-4648-0501-1_ch6. Date of access: 17 July 2022.

Baker, W.H., Addams, H.L. and Davis, B. 2005. Critical factors for enhancing municipal public hearings. *Public Administration Review*, 65(4):490-499.

Ball, J. 1995. Community governance: The Arun Experience. *Local Government Policy Making*, 22(3):13-21.

Barker, R.L. 2003. The social work dictionary. 5th ed. Washington, DC: NASW Press.

Barnes, M., Harrison, S., Mort, M.M., Shardlow, P. and Wistow, G. 1996. Users, officials and citizens in health and social care. *Local Government Policy Making*, 22(4):9-17.

Basheka, B.C. 2012. The paradigms of public administration re-examined: A reflection. *Journal of Public Administration*, 47(1):25-67.

Bassey, M. 1999. Case study research in the educational settings. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Basu, S. 2004. E-government and developing countries: an overview. *International Review of Law, Computers & Technology*, 18(1):109-132.

Bell, E. and Bryman, A. 2011. Business research methods. 3rd ed. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Bell, J. 2005. Doing your research project. New York, NY: Open University Press.

Bertram, C. and Christiansen, I. 2014. Understanding research: An introduction to reading research. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Bertram, C. and Christiansen, I. 2020. Understanding research: An introduction to reading research. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Besançon, M. 2003. Good governance rankings. The art of Measurement. World Peace Foundation. WPF Reports, 36. Cambridge, MA: WPF.

Bevir, M. 2006. Democratic: governance system and radical perspectives. *Public Administration Review*, 66(3):426-436.

Bevir, M. 2007. Encyclopaedia of governance (Vol. 1). New York, NY: Sage.

Bevir, M. 2008. Key concepts in governance. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.

Bhatnagar, S. 2001. Central Vigilance Commission website: A bold anticorruption experiment. World Bank. Online: http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/egov/cvc_cs.htm. Date of access: 19 July 2022.

Bhatnagar, S. and Vyas, N. 2001. Gyandoot: Community-owned rural Internet kiosks. World Bank. Online: <http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/egov/gyandootcs.htm>. Date of access: 23 Jan. 2022.

Blanche, M.T, Durrheim, K and Painter, D. 2006. Research in Practice: Applied Methods for Social Science. 2nd ed. Cape Town: UCT Press.

Bless, C. and Higson-Smith, C. 2000. Fundamentals of social research methods: An African perspective. 3rd ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Bless, C. and Higson-Smith, C. 2006. Fundamentals of social research methods: An African Perspective. 4th ed. Cape Town: Juta.

Boas, M.H.S.V. 2020. Implementing Public Participation in Brazil: Sociology of secondary actors 1. Caderno CRH, 33.

Botes, P.S., Brynard, P.A., Fourie, D.J. and Roux, N.L. 1996. Public administration and management: A guide to regional and municipal administration management. Cape Town: Kagiso.

Botha, K. 2011. The relationship between dispositional employability and career success of human resources management practitioners. Pretoria: University of Pretoria.

Bourgon, J. 2007. Responsive, Responsible and Respected Government: Towards a New Public Administration Theory. *International review of administrative science*, 69(3):313-328.

Bovaird, T. and Loffler, E. 2003. Evaluating the quality of public governance: indicators, models, and methodologies. *International review of administration sciences*, 69(3):313-326.

Brannan, T., John, P. and Stoker, G. 2006. Active citizenship and effective public services and programmes: How can we know what really works? *Urban studies*, 43(5-6):993-1008.

Brynard, P.A. and Hanekom, S.X. 2006. Introduction to research in public administration and related academic disciplines. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Burby, R.J. 2003. Making plans that matter: Citizen involvement and government action. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 69(1):33-49.

Cameron, R. 2001. The Upliftment of South African local government? *Local government studies*, 27(3):97-118.

Carswell, D. 2002. Direct Democracy: Empowering people to make their lives better. London: C-change.

Catalyst, H. 2002. Tanzania NGO Policy Forum: Towards a protocol for engagement in the policy process. Online: <http://www.hakikazi.org/ngopf/summary.htm>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

Centre for the Study of Social Policy. 2013. Stakeholder engagement tools for action. Los Angeles, CA: Department of Children and Family Services.

Cerne, M.M. 1989. Non-governmental organisation and local government. *Regional development dialogue*, 1(10):117-142.

Chadwick, A. 2011. Explaining the failure of an online citizen engagement initiative: The role of internal institutional variables. *Journal of Information Technology & Politics*, 8(1):21-40.

Chaligha, A.E. 2014. Citizen Participation and Local Governance in Tanzania. REPOA Brief, No 41 July 2014. Dar es Salaam: REPOA.

Charles, A.M. and Andlyne, K. 2019. Citizen involvement in decision-making process in Ilala Municipality, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. *Journal of Political Science and Public Affairs*, 7(3):2-6.

Chung, C.S. 2015. The introduction of e-Government in Korea: development journey, outcomes, and future. *Gestion et management public*, 3(2):107-122.

Chung, S.Y. 2011. Fostering citizen participation through [i.e., through] innovative mechanisms in governance, policy, and decision-making process: comparing Washington, DC: Arizona State University Press.

Cloete, F. 2012. E-government lessons from South Africa 2001-2011: institutions, state of progress and measurement: Section II: Country perspectives on e-government emergence. *The African Journal of information and communication*, 2012(12):128-142.

Cloete, J.J.N. 1991. Public Administration and Management. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Cloete, J.J.N. 1998. Public Administration and Management. 9th Rev. Ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Coghill, K. and Wright, P. 2012. Hear our Voice: The democracy Australians want. *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 72(1):74-76.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. 2001. Research methods in education. 6th ed. London: Routledge.

Craythorne, D.L. 1997. Municipal Administration: A handbook. Cape Town: Juta.

Creswell, J.W. 1994. Research design: Qualitative and quantitative approaches. London: SAGE.

Creswell, J.W. and Plano Clark, V.L. 2007. Designing and conducting mixed methods research. Thousand Oaks. CA: Sage.

Creswell, J.W. 2014. Research Design Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed-Method Approaches. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Curtis, S., Gesler, W., Smith, G. and Washburn, S. 2000. Approaches to sampling and case selection in qualitative research: examples in the geography of health. *Social Science and Medicine*, 50: 1001-1014.

Dahl, R. 1998. On democracy. New Heaven, CT: Yale University Press.

Darcy, N., Elias, M., Swai, A., Danford, H., Rulagirwa, H. and Perera, S. 2014. eHealth strategy development: a case study in Tanzania. *Journal of Health Informatics in Africa*, 2(2):1-8.

Davids, I. 2005. Development theories: Past to present. Davids, I., Theron, F. and Maphunye, K.J. Participatory development in South Africa: A development management perspective. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Dawkins, C.E. 2014. The principle of good faith: Toward substantive stakeholder engagement. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 121(2):283-295.

De Vaus, D.A. 1994. Surveys in Social research. 3rd ed. Melbourne: UCL Press.

De Vos, A.S. 2002. Research at grassroots: for the social sciences and human service professions. 2nd ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

De Vos, A.S., Strydom, H., Fouche, C.B. and Delport, C.S.L. 2008. Research at grassroots for the social sciences and human service professionals. 4th ed. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

DEAT. 2002. Stakeholder engagement integrated environment management information series 3. Pretoria: Department of Environmental Affairs and Tourism.

Denhardt, R.B. and Denhardt, J.V. 2000. The new public service: serving rather than steering. *Public administration review*, 60(6):549-559.

Denhardt, R.B. and Denhardt, J.V. 2003. The new public service: An approach to reform. *International Review of Public Administration*, 8(1):3-10.

Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. Handbook of quantitative research. London: Sage.

Department of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs. 2009. State of Local Government in South Africa Overview Report. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Department of Health & Human Services. 2011. Principles of Community engagement: 2nd ed. Washington, DC: US Government Publishers.

Diamond, L. 1994. Rethinking civil society: Toward democratic consolidation. *Journal of democracy*, 5(3):4-17.

Dooley, K.J. 1997. A Complex adaptive systems model of organizational change. *Nonlinear Dynamics, Psychology and Life Science*, 1(1):69-97.

Draai, E. and Taylor, D. 2009. Public participation for effective service delivery: A local government perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, 44(1):112-122.

Du Toit, D., Knipe, A., Van Niekerk, D., Van der Walddt, G. and Doyle, M. 2002. Service Excellence in governance. Johannesburg: Heinemann.

Dunleavy, P., Margetts, H., Bastow, S. and Tinkler, J. 2008. Australian e-government in comparative perspective. *Australian Political Studies Association*, 43(1):13-26.

Edbon, C. 2002. Beyond the public hearing: citizen participation in the local government budget process. *Journal of Public Budgeting, Accounting and Financial Management*, 14(2):273-294.

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. 2000. Public Participation Policy: (ITEM CL 21402-[MC]: (MC 03-10-2000).

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. 2010. Council Minutes. Item 117-2010. Germiston: EMM.

Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. 2011. Council Minutes. Item 145-2011. Germiston: EMM.

Engel, H. 2010. Seizing and Stretching Participatory Space: Civil Society Participation in Tanzania's Policy Processes. Online: <http://www.bibalex.org/search4dev/files/343946/177725.pdf>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

ESCAP (Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). 2021. Stakeholder engagement in voluntary in national reviews: feedback and follow up.: Bangkok: United Nations-ESCAP. Online: <https://www.unescap.org/kp/2021/stakeholder-engagement-voluntary-national-reviews-feedback-and-follow>. Date of access: 22 July 2022.

Estlund, D. 2002. Democracy. Malden, MA: Wiley- Blackwell Publishers.

Eveland, W.P. and Scheufele, D.A. 2000. Connecting news media use with gaps in knowledge and participation. *Political Communication*, 17(1):215-237.

Fayemi, A.K. 2009. Towards an African Theory of Democracy. Theory and Practice: *Journal of the Philosophical Association of Kenya*, 1(1):101-126.

Fink, A. 2014. Conducting Research Literature Reviews: From the Internet to Paper. 4th ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Fletcher, M. 1999. Managing communication in local government. London: Kogan Page.

Flick, U. 2018. Doing Qualitative Data Collection. In: Flick, U. (Ed.) The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Data Collection. London: Sage.

Foley, P. and Martin, S. 2000. A new deal for the community? Public participation in regeneration and local service delivery. *Policy & Politics*, 28(4):479-492.

Fourie, D.J. 2001. Mechanisms to improve citizen participation in government and its administration. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 4(1):216-233.

Fox, W., Schwella, E. and Wissink, H. 1991. Public Management. Kenwyn: Juta.

Freeman, R.E., Wicks, A.C. and Parmer, B. 2004. Stakeholder theory and the corporate objective revisited. *Organisation Science*, 15(3):364-369.

Fukuda-Parr, S., Yamin, A.E. and Greenstein, J. 2014. The power of numbers: a critical review of millennium development goal targets for human development and human rights. *Journal of Human Development and Capabilities*, 15(2-3):105-117.

Gaziano, C. 1983. The knowledge gap: An analytical review of media effects. *Communication Research*, 10(2):447-486.

Gildenhuys, J.S.H. 1991. The role and purpose of local government. Online: <https://repository.up.ac.za/bitstream/handle/2263/25724/03chapter.pdf?sequence=4&isAllowed=y>. Date of access: 10 July 2020.

Gildenhuys, J.S.H. and Knipe, A. 2006. The organisation of government: An introduction. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Goddard, W. and Melville, S. 2001. Research methodology: An introduction. 2nd ed. Cape Town: Juta.

GOK. 2010. Kenyan Constitution. Nairobi: Government Printers.

Govender, J.P. and Reddy, P.S. 2011. The imperative of participation in South African local government. *Africanus*, 41(2):60-77.

Government of Kenya (GOK) 2007. Kenya Vision 2030. Nairobi: Government Printers.

Greenwood, M. 2007. Stakeholder engagement: Beyond the myth of corporate responsibility. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 74(4):15-327.

Griffiths, J., Maggs, H and George, E., 2007. Stakeholder involvement. World Health Organisation (WHO): Geneva. Online: <https://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.590.89>. Date of access: 23 Jan. 2022.

Grinnell, R.M. and Unrau, Y.A. 2008. Social work research and evaluation: foundations of evidence-based practice. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

Guba, E.G. 1981. Criteria for assessing the trustworthiness of naturalistic inquiries. *Educational Communication and Technology Journal*, 29:75-91.

Guba, E.G. (Ed.) 1990. The Paradigm Dialog. London: Sage.

Guba, E.G. and Lincoln, Y.S. 1994. Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In: Denzin, N.K. and Lincoln, Y.S. (Eds.). Handbook of qualitative research. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp.105-117.

Gupta, M.P. and Jana, D. 2003. E-government evaluation: A framework and case study. *Government information quarterly*, 20(4):365-387.

Gwayi, M.S. 2010. Service delivery challenges: King Sabata Dalindjebo Local Municipality Mthatha. Masters in Public Administration (dissertation). Port Elizabeth: Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University.

Hamad, W.B. 2018. E-government for Tanzania: current projects and challenges. *International Journal of Engineering Science*, 8(1):15911-15918.

Hanson, W.E. Cresswell, J.W., Plano Clark V.L., Petska, K.S. and Cresswell, J.D. 2005. Mixed methods research designs in counselling psychology. *Journal of Counselling Psychology*, 52(2):224-235.

Heath, R.L. (Ed.) 2013. Encyclopaedia of public relations. London: Sage.

Heeks, R. 2002. e-Government in Africa: Promise and practice. *Information polity*, 7(2-3):97-114.

Heeks, R. 2006. E-government for development: Basic definitions Information Services. Ottawa: Public Works and Government Services.

Heleba, S. 2008. Implications of the lack of community participation in service delivery. *Economic and Social Rights in South Africa*, 9(3):3-7.

Henry, N. 1975. Paradigms of Public Administration. *Public administrative review*, 35(4):378-386.

Hesse-Biber, S.N. and Leavy, P. 2011. The practice of qualitative research. 2nd ed. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Heyden, G. and Court, J. 2002. Assessing governance mythological challenges. World Governance Survey Discussion Paper. Tokyo: United Nations University (UNU).

Heydenrych, P.W. 2008. Deepening democracy and enhancing multi-level governance: deficiencies of and prospects for local government ward committees in South Africa. *Koers*, 73(4):701-728.

Hicks, J. 2011. Bringing women into local governance: a review of enabling mechanisms in South Africa. *Community Development Journal*, 46(3):351-364.

Homans, G.C. 1958. Social Behaviour as Exchange. *American Journal of Sociology*, 63(6):597-606.

Hood, C. 1991. A public management for all seasons? *Public administration*, 69(1):3-19.

Hughes, O.E. 2003. Public management and administration: An introduction. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Palgrave-Macmillan.

Hussey, J. and Hussey, R. 1997. Business research: a practical guide for undergraduate and postgraduate students. London: Macmillan.

ICT Authority. 2014. The Kenya national ICT masterplan: towards A digital Kenya. Online: <https://www.ict.go.ke/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/The-National-ICT-Masterplan.pdf>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

Ijeoma, E., Nzewi, O. and Sibanda, M. 2013. South Africa's public administration for community service. Johannesburg: Verity.

Imbamba, E.N. and Kimile, N. 2017. A review of the status of e-government implementation in Kenya. *Regional Journal of Information and Knowledge Management*, 2:14-28.

International Association for Public Participation. 2007. Online: <http://www.iap2.org>. Date of access: 2 Dec. 2020.

Ismail, D., Theron, F. and Kealeboga, J. 2009. Participatory development in South Africa: A development management perspective. Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

ISRDS Secretariat. 2000. Development of the Integrated Sustainable Rural Development Strategy. Unpublished.

Johnson, R.B and Onwuegbuzie, A.J. 2004. Mixed methods research: a research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher*, 33(7):14-26.

Joon Song, H. 2002. Prospects and limitations of the e-government initiative in Korea. *International Review of Public Administration*, 7(2):45-53.

Jordaan, J. 2013. Public financial performance management in South Africa: A conceptual approach (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).

Kaboyakgosi, G. and Marata, K.P. 2015. An analysis of Botswana's implementation challenges. *PULA: Botswana Journal of African Studies*, 27(2):310-324.

Karlsson, A., Heilemann, A. and Alexander, E. 1993. Shifting the balance? Towards sustainable local government, decentralization, and district development in Botswana. An evaluation of the Swedish-Botswana Cooperation Programme on District Development Support, Phase IV. Swedish International Development Authority.

Katsamunska, P. 2012. Classical and modern approaches to public administration. *Economic alternatives*, 1(1):74-81.

Kaufmann, D., Kraay, A. and Mastruzzi, M. 2010. The worldwide governance indicators: methodology and analytical issues. World Bank policy research working paper, (5430). New York, NY: World Bank.

Kelliher, F. 2005. Interpretivism and the pursuit of research legitimisation: an integrated approach to single case design. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methodology*, 3(2):123-132.

Kgaffe, M.M. 2001. Barriers to parent involvement in rural communities in Northwest Province. Pretoria: Unisa.

Khan, F., Khan, S. and Govender, J. 2013. The Rhetoric of participation: a study of the planning and development of low-income human settlements in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. *Africanus*, 43(1):126-143.

King, C.S., Feltey, K.M. and O'Neill, B.S. 1998. The question of participation: Towards authentic public participation in public administration. *Public Administration Review*, 58(4):317-326.

King, D.S. and Stoker, G. (Eds.) 1996. Rethinking local democracy. London: Macmillan.

Klaer, A. 2004. Governance. Oxford, MA: Polity Press.

Kole, N.M. 2005. An evaluation of the integrated sustainable rural development programme highlighting stakeholder mobilisation and engagement. Masters dissertation (Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences) University of Pretoria.

Komba, M.M., 2013. Factors influencing access to electronic government information and e-government adoption in selected districts of Tanzania (Doctoral dissertation).

Korschun, D. 2015. Boundary-spanning employees and relationships with external stakeholders: A social identity approach. *Academy of Management Review*, 40(4):611-629.

Kumar, A. (Ed.). 2002. International encyclopaedia of public administration and public policy. 2nd ed. St Petersburg: Routledge.

Kumar, A. and Bhatnagar, S. 2001. VOICE: Online Delivery of Municipal Services in Vijaywada. India, World Bank. Online: http://www1.worldbank.org/publicsector/egov/voice_c.htm. Date of access: 23 May 2022.

Kumar, S.U.J.E.E.T. 2016. Public participation and the role of NGOs in two slums of Delhi. Public Participation in Planning in India. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing.

Kutz, G. and Linder, W. 2004. Democracy and participation: Solutions to improve governance at the local level? Paper prepared for the World Bank workshop on 'intergovernmental fiscal relations in East Asia. 10-11 January 2002. Bali (Indonesia).

Kvale, S. 1996. Interviews, an introduction to qualitative research interviewing. London: Sage.

Laegreid, P. 2011. New Public Management. In: Badie, B., Berg-Schlosser, D. and Morlino, L. (Eds). International Encyclopaedia of Political Science. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp.1700-1780.

Lane, J.E. 2000. New Public Management. London: Routledge.

Lasun, Y.S. 2016. The Legislature and Sustainable Development: Options from Sustainable Development Goals and African Agenda 2063. Lagos: Centre for Sustainable Development, University of Ibadan Press.

Lincoln, Y.S. and Guba, E.G. 1985. Naturalistic inquiry. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Ludwiczak, A. 2014. The role of customer orientation in improving services in public administration. *Management*, 18(1):356-369.

Luz, G. and Linder, W. 2004. Democracy and participation: solutions to improve governance at the local level? Paper prepared for World Bank workshop on intergovernmental fiscal relations in East Asia. 10-11 January 2002. Bali (Indonesia).

Madala, N.C. and Phirinyane, M.B. 2016. Strengthening Local Government Service Delivery Systems Through the Open Government Initiative: The Case of Botswana. Gaborone: Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA).

Mafunisa, M.J. 2003. Separation from the South African Public Service: Rhetoric or Reality? *Journal of Public Administration*, 38(2):85-101.

Mafunisa, M.J. and Xaba, B. 2008. Public participation and the Integrated Development Planning: The Case of Limpopo Province. *Journal of Public Administration*, 43(3):452-460.

Magakwe, J. 2013. The activities of the Southern African Development Community in relation to its purpose statement (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa).

Maiti, S. and De Faria, J.V. 2017. Participatory planning processes in Indian cities: its challenges and opportunities. *Advances in Sustainable Urbanization*, 2(1):18-33.

Makanyeza, C., Kwandayi, H.P. and Nyaboke Ikobe, B. 2013. Strategies to improve service delivery in local authorities. *International Journal of information technology and business management*, 15(1):1-11.

Manin, B. 1997. The principle of representative government. Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.

Mannya, C. 2012. Stakeholder involvement in strategic planning and management at the Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Council. Master of Philosophy (Information and Knowledge Management). Stellenbosch: University of Stellenbosch.

Marais, H. 1997. The state of the voluntary sector. *Development Update*, 1(3):92-129.

Maree, K. 2019. First steps in Research. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Martin, S. 2004. Engagement with citizens and other stakeholders. In: Bovaird, T. and Loffler, E. (Eds). Public management and governance. London: Routledge. pp.177-194.

Masango, R., Mfene, P. and Henna, T. 2013. An analysis of Factors that Negatively Affect the Performance of Ward Committees in the Buffalo City Municipality. *Africa Insight*, 43(1):91-104.

Maseko, S.E. 2018. The role of ward committee members in facilitating community participation in the City of Ekurhuleni. Master's dissertation. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.

Maserumule, M.H. 2009. Good Governance in the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD): A Public Administration Perspective (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa).

Masuku, M.M. and Jili, N.N. 2019. Public service delivery in South Africa: The political influence at local government level. *Journal of Public Affairs*, 19(4): e1935.

Mautner, T. 2000. The Penguin Dictionary of Philosophy. London: Penguin Books.

Mboto, S. 2005. Training for ward committees 21 July 2005. Online: http://www.sacities.net/2005_msunduzi.stm. Date of access: 19 Nov. 2020.

McMillian, J.H. and Schumacher, S. 2001. Research in Education: A conceptual introduction. 4th ed. New York, NY: Longman.

McNair, B. 2003. An introduction to political communication. 3rd ed. New York, NY: Routledge.

Mdee, A. and Thorley, L. 2016. Good Governance, Local Government, Accountability and Service Delivery in Tanzania. Working paper 2. Economic and Social Research Council, 1-21. Morogoro: Mzumbe University Press.

Meer, S. 1999. The demobilization of civil society: struggling with new questions. *Development Update*, 3(1):109-124.

Mello, D.M. 2002. Investigation into the administration of primary healthcare services in South Africa with specific reference to Emfuleni Local Authority. Unpublished Dissertation. University of South Africa.

Menon, S. and Hartz-Karp, J. 2019. Institutional innovations in public participation for improved local governance and urban sustainability in India. *Sustainable Earth*, 2(1):1-19.

Mensah, I.K. 2016. Overview of E-government Adoption and Implementation in Ghana. *International Journal of Social, Behavioural, Educational, Economic, Business and Industrial Engineering*, 10(1):61-72.

Merrington, G.J. 1992. What role for non-governmental organizations in development, some aspects for strategy, planning, organization, and management. Paper read at the Development Society of Southern Africa Biennial Conference, September.

Meyer, I.H. and Cloete, F. 2000. Policy agenda-setting. In: Cloete, F. and Wissink, H. (Eds.) *Improving public policy*. Pretoria: Van Schaik. pp 87-97.

Meyer, I.H., Cupido, M.J. and Theron, F. 2002. Citizen Participation in Government: Myth or reality? In search of a pragmatic approach to improve local governance. In: Van der Molen, K., Van Rooyen, A. and Van Wyk, B. (Eds). *Outcomes-based governance: assessing the results*. Sandown: Heinemann. pp.56-72.

Michael, S. 2004. *Undermining development*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.

Michener, H.A. 2004. *Social psychology*. Toronto: Wadsworth.

Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. 1994. Qualitative data analysis: a sourcebook of new methods. In: Creswell, J.W. *Research design: and qualitative and quantitative approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. pp.122-143.

Mintzberg, H. 1979. *The Structuring of Organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Moatshe, R.M. 2014. E-government implementation and adoption: the case study of Botswana Government. Botswana: University of Derby Press.

Modise, L.J. 2017. The notion of participatory democracy in relation to local committees: The distribution of power. *Skriflig*, 51(1): a2248.

Molepo, J.N. 2013. Assessing the impact of public participation in enhancing service delivery in the City of Tshwane. Masters' dissertation. Pretoria: Tshwane University of Technology.

Molepo, J.N., Maleka, C.M. and Khalo, T. 2015. Public participation and service delivery. The case of the City of Tshwane. *Journal of Public Administration*, 50(2):345-369.

Monette, D.R., Sullivan, T.J. and De Jong, C.R. 2002. Applied social research: a tool for the human services. 5th ed. Orlando: Harcourt College.

Morgan, G. 2007. Images of organization. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mouton, J. 1996. Understanding Social Research. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mouton, J. 2001. How to succeed in your masters and doctoral studies. A South Africa guide and resource book. Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Mubangizi, B.C. and Tshishonga, N. 2013. Political and community oversight for good governance in South Africa. *Journal of Public Administration*, 48(2):299-320.

Muronda, B. 2017. A conceptual public participation framework for ward committees to promote local government democracy (Masters dissertation, North-West University (South Africa, Potchefstroom Campus).

Mushi, A.A. 2011. Civil society in the era of good governance dispensation: Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and the politics of engaging Government in Tanzania (Doctoral dissertation, University of Birmingham).

Mutahaba. G. 2010. Integrating and re-aligning public sector reforms to respond to current and future crises facing Africa more effectively. Background Paper 7th Commonwealth Africa Heads of Public Service Forum. Yaoundé, Cameroon 27-29 July London: Commonwealth Secretariat.

Myer, M.T. and Myers, G.E. 1982. Managing by communications: An organizational approach. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Mzimakwe, T. 2010. Public participation and engagement in local governance: A South African perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, 45(4):501-519.

Nabatchi, T. and Leighninger, M. 2015. Public participation for 21st century democracy. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.

Napier, C.J. 2008. Public participation and ward committees: The case of Tshwane Municipality. *Journal for contemporary history*, 33(2):163-181.

Napier, C.J. 2018. Political oversight and the separation of powers in the local sphere of government. *Journal of Public Administration*, 53(2):169-185.

Narayan-Parker, D. (Ed.) 2002. Empowerment and poverty reduction: A sourcebook. Washington, DC: World Bank Publications.

Ndevu, Z.J. 2011. Making Community based participation work: Alternative route to civil engagement in the City of Cape Town. *Journal of Public Administration*, 46(4):1247-1256.

Ndou, V. 2004. E-Government for developing countries: opportunities and challenges. *The electronic journal of information systems in developing countries*, 18(1):1-24.

Netshituni, T. 2018. The African Peer Review Mechanism as an Agent of change: towards Advancing Democratic Governance in Africa (Doctoral dissertation, University of Pretoria).

Ng'aru, S.W. and Wafula, M.K. 2015. Factors Influencing the Choice of Huduma Centers' Services: A Case Study of Mombasa Huduma Centre. *International Journal of Scientific and Research Publications*, 5(6):1-9.

Nickson, A., Devas, N., Brillantes, A.B., Cabo, W.L. and Celestino, A. 2008. Asia-Pacific. World Bank and United Cities and Local Governments, Decentralization and Local Democracy in the World: First Global Report by United Cities and Local Governments.

Nkuna, N.W. and Sebola, M.P. 2012. Public Administration Theoretical Discourse in South Africa and the Development of Local Government: A need to go beyond Modern Thinking. *Journal of Public Administration*, 47(1):68-87.

Nunnally, J.C. and Bernstein, I.H. 1994. Psychometric theory. 3rd ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Nwebo, O.E. 2018. The African Union agenda 2063 and the imperative of democratic governance. *Law and Development Review*, 11(2):259-276.

Nzimakwe, T. 2010. Public participation and engagement in Local Governance: A South African Perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, 45(4):501-519.

Nzimakwe, T.I. and Reddy, P.S. 2008. Community Participation in eThekweni municipality with particular reference toward committees. *Journal of Public Administration*, 43(4):667-679.

Oakley, P. (Ed.).1991. Projects with people – the practice of participation in rural development Geneva: ILO.

Obasi, I.N. and Lekorwe, M.H. 2014. Citizen engagement in public policy making process in Africa: The case of Botswana. *Leadership*, 3(4):1-11.

Olaleye, Y.L. and Ayobade, A. 2015 Awareness and Utilization of Citizens Participation on Good Governance in Nigeria. Nigeria: University of Ibadan.

Osborne, D. and Gaebler, T. 1992. Reinventing Government: How the entrepreneurial spirit transforms the public sector. Reading, CA: Addison-Wesley.

Osborne, J.W. 2008. Best practices in quantitative methods. London: Sage.

Outhwaite, W. 2014. The future of European democracy. *European Journal of Social Theory*, 17(3):326-342.

Overton-de Klerk, N. and Oelofse, E. 2010. Poor communities as corporate stakeholders: A bottom-up research approach. *Communicatio: South African Journal for Communication Theory and Research*, 36(3):388-408.

Paile, M. 2018. Linguistic turns in Public Administration Knowledge and Social Science. *Journal of Public Administration*, 53(1):5-23.

Parma, B., Freeman, R.E., Harrison, J.S., Wicks, A., Purnell, L. and De Colle, S. 2010. Stakeholder theory: The state of the art. *The academy of Management Annals*, 4(11):403-445.

Pateman, C.1970. Participation and democratic theory. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Petlane, T. and Gruzd, S. 2011. African solutions: best practices from the African Peer Review Mechanism. Auckland Park: Fanele.

Phago, K.G. 2008. Community participation during the 21st century South Africa: Modes, attitudes, and trends. *Journal of Public Administration*, 43(2.1):238-252.

Phirinyane, M. 2016. Technology and the Nature of Active Citizenship: The Case of Botswana. Gabarone: Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis (BIDPA).

Pollit, C. 2007a. The essential public manager. Berkshire: Open University Press.

Pollitt, C. 2007b. Towards a New Public Administration theory: some comments on Jocelyne Bourgon's 5th Braibant Lecture. *International Review of Administrative Sciences*, 73(1):37-41.

Pollitt, C. and Bouckaert, G. 2003. Evaluating public management reforms: an international perspective. In: Wollmann, K.L. and Elgar, E. Evaluation in Public-Sector Reform: Concepts and Practice in International Perspective. London: Northampton Cheltenham. pp. 12-35.

Potter, D. 2008. Public Participation in the UK: Lessons from the UK Experience. Online: <https://www.sigmaweb.org/publicationsdocuments/41838063.pdf>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

Pratchett, I. and Wilson, D. 1996. Local democracy and local government. London: Macmillan.

Pretty, J.N., Guijit, I., Scoones, I. and Thompson, J. 1995. A Trainer's guide for participatory learning and action. IIED participatory methodology series. London: IIED.

Public Information and Communications Service. 2013. A state of sharing relevant trends for government communication. The Hague: Government Publications.

Public Service Commission, 2008. Report on the Assessment of public participation practices in the public service. Pretoria: PSC.

Raga, K. and Taylor, D. 2005. Overview of Required Skills and Expertise of Councillors at the Nelson Mandela Metropolitan Municipality in terms of the New Developmental Mandate. Journal of Public Administration. Conference Proceedings, October 2005.

Reddy, P.S. 1996. Readings in local government management and development: A southern African perspective. Cape Town: Juta.

Republic of Botswana. 1997. Long Term Vision for Botswana: Vision 2016, Towards Prosperity for All. Gaborone: Government Printers.

Republic of South Africa 1996. Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa.1997. White Paper on Transforming Public Service Delivery. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 1998. Local Government: Municipal Structures Act 117 of 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer

Republic of South Africa. 1998. White Paper on Local Government of 1998. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2000. Local Government: Municipal Systems Act 32 of 2000. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2000. Promotion of Access to Information Act 2 of 2000. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2001. Local Government: Municipal Planning and Performance Management Regulations: Pretoria Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2003. White Paper on Traditional Leadership and Governance Act 41 of 2003. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2004. Local Government: Municipal Property Rates Act 6 of 2004. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2007. National Policy Framework on Public Participation. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Republic of South Africa. 2008. Guide on Public Participation in Public Service: Pretoria Government Printer

Republic of South Africa. 2013. A guide of public participation in service delivery. Pretoria: Government Printer.

Robson, C. 1993. Real World Research: A resource for social scientist and practitioner's researchers. 1st ed. London: Sage.

Rosenbloom, D.H. and Kravchuk, R.S. 2002. Public Administration: Understanding management, politics, and law. In: Rwangoga, N.T. and Baryayetunga, A.P. 2007. E-government for Uganda: Challenges and opportunities. Online: <http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.622.5707&rep=rep1&type=pdf>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

Sæbø, Ø. 2012. September. E-government in Tanzania: current status and future challenges. International Conference on Electronic Government. Berlin: Springer. pp. 198-209.

Said, J., Alam, M.M. and Khalid, M.A. 2016. Relationship between good governance and integrity system: Empirical study on the public sector of Malaysia. *Humanomics*, 32(2):151-171.

Salome, N., 2016. Has Kenya's ICT revolution triggered more citizen participation? Online: https://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/20.500.12413/11673/MAVC_ResBrief_Kenya_Online.pdf. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

Samboma, T.A. 2019. E-government, A tool for service delivery in Botswana's local authorities. *Global Journal of Human Social Science*, 19(1):1-4.

Sanabria, P., Pliscoff, C. and Gomes, R. 2014. E-government practices in South American countries: Echoing a global trend or really improving governance? The experiences of Colombia, Chile, and Brazil. New York, NY: Springer.

Sanjari, M., Bahramnezhad, F., Fomani, F., Shoghi, M. and Cheraghi, M. 2014. Ethical challenges of researchers in qualitative studies: the necessity to develop a specific guideline. *Journal of Medical Ethics and History of Medicine*, 7(14):65-79.

SARC. 2008. Promoting e-governance-the SMART way forward. Second Administrative Reform Commission (SARC), The Committee Report on Administrative reforms in India New Delhi: Government of India.

Saunders, M., Lewis, Ph. and Thornhill, A. 2003. Research methods for business studies. 3rd ed. London: Pearson Education.

Savigny, H. 2002. Public opinion, political communication, and the internet. *Politics*, 22(1):1-8.

Sayer, A. 2010. Method in social science: a realistic approach. 2nd ed. London: Routledge.

Schuler, D. and Namioka, A. (Eds.) 1993. Participatory design: Principles and practices. Hillsdale, NJ: LEA.

Schwella, E. 2000. The state of public and development management in South Africa. The Mount Grace II Papers, School of Public Management and Planning Stellenbosch, University of Stellenbosch.

Sebola, M.P. 2017. Communication in the South African public participation process. The effectiveness of communication tools. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(6):25-35.

Second Administrative Reforms Commission. 2008. Promoting e-Governance–The SMART Way Forward. *Paragraph*, 1(83):2002-2007.

Sein, M.K. and Harindranath, G. 2004. Conceptualizing the ICT artifact: Toward understanding the role of ICT in national development. *The information society*, 20(1):15-24.

Shabangu, P.E. and Oksiutcz, A. 2018. Stakeholder perception of the local government stakeholder engagement practices in the Bekkersdal Township. *Journal of Public Administration*, 53(2):199-214.

Shkarlet, S., Oliychenko, I., Dubyna, M., Ditkovska, M. and Zhovtok, V. 2020. Comparative analysis of best practices in e-Government implementation and use of this experience by developing countries. *Administratie si Management Public*, (34):118-136.

Sikhakhane, B.H. and Reddy, P.S. 2009. Local government restructuring and transformation in South Africa with specific reference to challenges faced by the Buffalo City Municipality. *Administratio Publica*, 17(4):232-251.

Smit, H.M and Oosthuizen, I.J. 2011. Improving school governance through participative democracy and the law. *South African Journal of Education*, 31:55-73.

Smith, E.J.A., Harre, R. and Van Langenhoven, L. 1995. Rethinking methods in psychology. London: Sage.

Smith. and Ansett, S. 2011. What's at stake? Stakeholder engagement strategy as the key to sustainable growth. Faculty and Research Working Paper. The Business School of the World. Online:

<https://sites.insead.edu/facultyresearch/research/doc.cfm?did=47212>. Date of access: 21 April 2022.

Song, H.J. and Jo, T. 2007. Electronic Government of Korea-Achievements and Challenges. *Journal of Informatisation Policy Journal*, 14(4):20-37.

Starling, G. 1993. Managing the public sector. 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing.

State Government Victoria, 2011. Department of education and early childhood development. Stakeholder engagement framework. Victoria: Government Publication.

Stewart, C. and Cash, W. 2006. Interviewing principles and practices. 11th ed. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Street, J. 2001. Mass media, politics, and democracy. London: Palgrave.

Subban, K. 2007. Towards effective service delivery via customer relationship management. *Alternation*, 14(1):34-58.

Subuddhi, K. 2009. What Can ICTSs Do for the Rural Poor? *Information Technology, Education and Society*, 10(2):5-27.

Taabazuing, J. 2010. Towards Effective Participation of Chiefs in Ghana's Decentralization Process: The Case of Wenchi District (Doctoral dissertation, University of South Africa, Pretoria).

Tau, S.F. 2013. Citizen participation as an aspect of local government in municipalities: A South African perspective. *Journal of Public Administration*, 48(1): 152-160.

Teddlie, C. and Tashakkori, A. 2009. Foundations of mixed methods research: integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches in the social and behavioral sciences. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Theron, F. 2005. Guidelines for writing scientific documents and using basic social research methodology. In: Davids, I, Theron, F. and Maphunye, K.J. (Eds.) Public participation in South Africa: A Development Management perspective. Cape Town: Van Schaik.

Theron, F., Cesar, N. and Davids, I. 2007. Participation according to IAP2 principles: opportunity or challenge for integrated Development Planning in South Africa? *International Journal of Public Participation*, 1(1): a5442.

Thomas, M. 2003. Blending qualitative and quantitative research methods in thesis and dissertation. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Thornhill., C. and Hanekom, S.X. 1995. The public sector manager. Durban, Butterworths.

Torgby, W.K. and Asabere, N.Y. 2014. Challenges of Implementing and Developing E-Government: A Case Study of the Local Government System in Ghana. *International Journal of Computer Science and Telecommunications*, 5(8):39-48.

Torres, L., Pina, V. and Acerete, B. 2005. E-government developments on delivering public services among EU cities. *Government information quarterly*, 22(2):217-238.

Turner, M. and Hulme, D. 1997. Governance, administration, and development: Making the state work. London: Macmillan International Higher Education.

Ubaldi, B. 2013. Open government data: Towards empirical analysis of open government data initiatives. Paris: OECD

UN (United Nations). 2010. United Nations E-Government Survey 2010. Online: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2010>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

UN (United Nations). 2012. E-government survey 2012: e-government for the people. Online: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/Portals/egovkb/Documents/un/2012-Survey/unpan048065.pdf>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

UN (United Nations). 2014. UN e-Government Survey 2014. Online: <https://publicadministration.un.org/egovkb/en-us/reports/un-e-government-survey-2014>. Date of access: 21 Apr. 2022.

UNESCAP (United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific). 2007. What is governance? Online: <http://www.unescap.org>. Date of access: 15 July 2020.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). 1997. Reconceptualising Governance Discussion Paper 2. New York, NY: UNDP.

United Nations. Economic Commission for Africa, 2003. Land Tenure Systems and Sustainable Development in Southern Africa. Nairobi: United Nations Economic Commission for Africa.

Unrau, Y.A., Gabor, P.A. and Grinnell, R.M. 2007. Evaluation in social work: the art and science of practice. London: Oxford University Press.

Unwin, P.T.H. and Unwin, T. (Eds.) 2009. ICT4D: Information and communication technology for development. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Valderrama, C. and Hamilton, K. 1999. Strengthening participation in local governance. Report of the workshop held at the institute of Development Studies (IDS). 21-24 June 1999.

Van der Waldd, G. 2004. Citizen Participation in Developmental Local Government: Statutory Obligations. *Administration Publica*, 12(2):1-18.

Van der Waldd, G. (Ed.) 2007. Municipal management: Serving the people. Cape Town: Juta.

Van der Waldd, G. 2010. Core theories for the teaching of local democracy. *Administratio Publica*, 18(1):12-29.

Van der Waldd, G. 2013. Towards a typology of models in Public Administration and Management as field of scientific enquiry. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 6(2):39-55.

Van der Waldd, G. (Ed.) 2014. Municipal Management: Serving the people. Cape Town: Juta

Van der Waldd, G. 2017. Theories for research in Public Administration. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 9(9):183-202.

Van der Waldd, G. 2019. Community profiling as instrument to enhance project planning in local government. *African Journal of Public Affairs*, 11(3):1-21.

Van der Waldd, G. and Du Toit, D.F.P. 1999. Managing for excellence in the public sector. Cape Town: Juta.

Waldo, D. 1955. The study of public administration. New York, NY: Random House.

Waldron, J. 2002. The Constitutional Conception of Democracy. In: Estlund, D. (Ed.) Democracy. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers. pp. 51-83.

Wamoto, F.O. 2015. E-government Implementation in Kenya, an evaluation of Factors hindering or promoting e-government successful implementation. *International Journal of Computer Applications Technology and Research*, 4(12):906-915.

Wang, X. and Wan Wart, M. 2007. When public participation in administration leads to trust: An empirical assessment of managers' perceptions. *Public Administration Review*, 67(2):265-278.

Weiss, T.G. 2000. Governance, good governance, and global governance: conceptual and actual challenges. *Third world quarterly*, 21(5):795-814.

Welman, C. and Kruger, J. 1999. Research methodology for the business and administrative science. 1st ed. London: International Thompson.

World Bank 2006. World Bank Global Monitoring Report, 2006. Millennium Development Goals: strengthening Mutual Accountability, Aid and Governance. Geneva: World Bank.

Yeboah-Assiamah, E., Asamoah, K. and Kreyemeh, T.A. 2015. Therefore, is bureaucracy dead? Making a case of complementarity of paradigms in public administrative thinking and discourse. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 39(5):382-394.

Yong, G. and Wenhao, C. 2012. Developing a city governance index: based on surveys in five major Chinese cities. *Social indicators research*, 109(2):305-316.

Young, S.C. 2000. Promoting participation and community-based partnership in the context of Local Agenda 21: A report for practitioners. Manchester: University of Manchester.

Yvonne, M. 2010. Public participation for sustainable development in local cities. Paper presented at the 46th ISOCARP Congress, Nairobi, Kenya.

APPENDIX A: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018)111/2222
Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Focus Area: Social Transformation and Government Studies
Tel: (018) 299 1751
Fax (018) 299 1776

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is **Ewert Maseko**, a PhD student at the North-West University (Student number: **32285310**). As part of my research I have to obtain information regarding Stakeholder involvement as an instrument to strengthen customer service in the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality. The aim of this research is to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer services in the CoE.

I would like to invite you to participate in an interview, where you will be able to share your views and insight regarding stakeholder involvement and customer services in the City of Ekurhuleni. The information provided in the interview process will help in proposing a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. With your permission, I would like to audio record the interview using my mobile devise.

Please note the following:

- you will not receive any incentive from participating in the study and there no disadvantages or penalties for not participating;
- you are allowed to withdraw at any time or choose not to answer any question if you do not want to; and

- the results of the study may be made available to all stakeholders in this research project and may be published in an academic journal or presented at an academic conference.

In the event you may need clarification involving this research, please feel free to contact me on the details listed below. If you wish to receive a summary of this report, I will be willing to assist upon request. If for any reasons you have questions, concerns or complaints with regard to this research project, please feel free to contact the study leader, Prof Gerrit van der Walddt on telephone: +27 (018) 2991633, email: Gerrit.vanderwalddt@nwu.ac.za.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- you have read and understand the information provided above;
- you are participating anonymously in this interview on a voluntary basis;
- if you experience any form of distress or discomfort, we will stop the interview process or resume at another time; and
- you agree that the interview will be audio recorded.

I, the undersigned..... (full names), agree to participate in this interview. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Signature.....

Email/Phone.....

Date:

Thank you for participating in this study.

Yours sincerely,

PhD student: Mr E Maseko

Email address: ewert.maseko@ekurhuleni.gov.za or ewert.maseko11@gmail.com

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

- A1.** Please state your current job title.
- A2.** How many years of experience do you have in this position?
- A3.** How many years of experience do you have in local government in general?
- A4.** How long have you been involved in customer service-related issues?

SECTION B: STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN THE CoE

B1: What are the typical challenges and barriers that are faced by stakeholder organisation participating in municipal affairs in general and CoE in particular?

B2: What are the underlying driving and constraining factors leading to non-participation of key stakeholders in the CoE?

B3: What are the perceptions and opinions of elected and appointed officials in the CoE regarding customer service and the status of stakeholder involvement strategies in the CoE?

B4: Why have stakeholders abdicated their responsibility of strengthening customer service in the CoE?

B5: What possible strategies do you think municipalities can use to strengthen customer service in general and in the CoE in particular?

B6: In your opinion, in what ways can stakeholders strengthen customer service in the CoE?

B7: Which dimensions and aspects should be incorporated in a stakeholder involvement strategy as instrument for strengthening of customer service in the metropolitan municipalities in general and the CoE in particular?

B8: Please consider the draft stakeholder involvement strategy below and make recommendations and suggestions to further refine and improve it.

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX B: QUESTIONNAIRE



Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom
South Africa 2520

Tel: (018)111/2222

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Focus Area: Social Transformation and Government Studies

Tel: (018) 299 1751

Fax (018) 299 1776

INFORMED CONSENT

Dear Sir/Madam

My name is **Ewert Maseko**, a PhD student at the North-West University (Student number: **32285310**). As part of my research, I have to conduct a survey and I am investigating, **"Stakeholder involvement as a strategic instrument to strengthen customer service. The Case of City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality."** The aim of this research is to determine and analyse the factors that influence effective stakeholder involvement and to develop a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument in strengthening customer service in the CoE.

In relation to this research study, I would like to invite you to participate in a questionnaire, where you will be able to share your opinion as it relates to the municipal functioning of the City of Ekurhuleni. The information provided will help in proposing a strategic stakeholder involvement instrument for the Municipality. The questionnaire will take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

Please note the following:

- you will not receive any incentive from participating in the study and there no disadvantages or penalties for not participating;

- you are allowed to withdraw at any time or choose not to answer any question if you do not want to;
- the results of the study may be made available to all stakeholders in this research project and may be published in an academic journal or presented at an academic conference; and
- your participation in this study is vital to the North-West University.

In the event you may need clarification involving this research. Please feel free to contact me on the details listed below. If you wish to receive a summary of this report, I will be willing to assist upon request. If for any reasons you have questions, concerns or complaints with regard to this research project, please feel free to contact the study leader, Prof Gerrit van der Walddt on telephone: +27 (018) 2991633, email: Gerrit.vanderwalddt@nwu.ac.za.

Please sign the form to indicate that:

- you have read and understand the information provided above; and
- you are anonymously participating in this research project on a voluntary basis.

I, the undersigned..... (full names), agree to participate in this research. The research has been explained to me and I understand what my participation will involve.

Signature.....

Email/Phone.....

Date.....

Thank you for participating in this study.

Yours sincerely,

PhD student: Mr Ewert Maseko

Email address: ewert.maseko@ekurhuleni.gov.za or ewert.maseko11@gmail.com

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHICAL PROFILE

Kindly complete and mark the appropriate option.

- A1. Please indicate your current position
- A2. Years of experience in current position (scale e.g. <5, 5-10, 10-15, >15)
- A3. Total number of years of experience in local government (scale)

SECTION B: THE ROLE AND FUNCTION OF STAKEHOLDERS IN STRENGTHENING CUSTOMER SERVICE

Kindly mark only one option with an X to the following statements in terms of the Likert scale of four responses, viz: 4 Strongly agree 3. Agree, 2. Disagree and 4. Strongly disagree.

1. Involving stakeholders can effectively strengthen customer service

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

2. Non-participation of stakeholders impact on customer service

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

3. Involving stakeholders in the development of their community is the responsibility of local government.

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

4. The City of Ekurhuleni make constant contact with stakeholders using a wide variety of formal and informal methods

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

5. Officials and political principals in this municipality work hard to maintain good working relations with stakeholders

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

6. This municipality enlighten stakeholders about meetings and other participation outreach programmes well in advance

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

7. The municipality views stakeholders as essential partners in strengthening customer service

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

8. The City of Ekurhuleni does not have time to involve stakeholders in its affairs

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

9. Stakeholder involvement is ineffective in strengthening customer service in the City of Ekurhuleni.

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

10. Stakeholders are involved in the decision-making processes of the municipality.

Strongly agree	4
Agree	3
Disagree	2
Strongly disagree	1

Thank you for your participation!

APPENDIX C: GATEKEEPER APPROVAL

OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

To: Mr Ewert Maseko

Enq: Thabo Nzoyi
Thabo.nzoyi@ekurhuleni.gov.za
(011) 999 – 0796



Cnr Cross and Roses Streets
Germiston

Private Bag X1069
Germiston 1400
South Africa

Tel: (011) 999-0796
Fax: (011) 999-1811
city.manager@ekurhuleni.gov.za
www.ekurhuleni.gov.za

APPROVAL FOR THE REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH ASSESSING STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT IN STRENGTHENING CUSTOMER SERVICE: THE CASE OF THE CITY OF EKURHULENI.

The City of Ekurhuleni acknowledges receipt of your request to conduct research assessing stakeholder involvement to strengthen customer service: The case of the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality.

Permission to conduct research in the Customer Relations Management Department is granted, subject to strict compliance with COVID regulations and that it does not interfere with assigned responsibilities. The Intergovernmental Relations Unit will in conjunction with the Strategy Department provide the necessary administrative and logistical support you may require.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ms. Paledi Marota".

Ms. Paledi Marota
HOD: STRATEGIC SUPPORT

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dr Imogen Mashazi".

Dr Imogen Mashazi
CITY MANAGER

22/11/2021
DATE

22/11/2021
DATE

Memorandum

SERVICE DELIVERY COORDINATION
DEPARTMENT



City of
Ekurhuleni

To: Customer Walk in Centre Managers

Springs
Tsakani
Germiston
Kwa-Thema
Kempton Park
Tembisa 2

HEAD OFFICE
OR TAMBO GOVT BUILDING
Cnr Cross & Rose Streets
Germiston
Private Bag X1069
Germiston
1400
Tel: (011) 999- 1095
www.ekurhuleni.gov.za

From: Ms. Lesego Sentsho
Divisional Head CRM Operations

Enq: Ms. Nompumelelo Mokoena

Date: 19th April 2022

Approval to collect data on stakeholder involvement and customer service within the City of Ekurhuleni Municipality Customer walk in center

Dear Managers,

The office of the city manager has granted permission to Mr. Ewert Maseko to conduct the Research study and gather data as per subject. You are therefore, requested to participate in an interview where you will be able to share your views and insight regarding stakeholder involvement and customer service in the city of Ekurhuleni. Furthermore, you are requested to assist the student to forward a questionnaire to 3 stakeholder organization (FBO, NGO, CBO, SMMEs, Sports Organizations/ youth) in your respective Customer care centers where they will be able to share their opinions and views as it relates to the municipal functioning of the City of Ekurhuleni.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Lesego Sentsho'.

Ms. Lesego Sentsho
Divisional Head CRM Operations

19 / 04 / 2022

Date

APPENDIX D: ETHICS APPROVAL

19 May 2022

ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY

Based on approval by the **Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee (BaSSREC)** on 30/03/2022, the Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee hereby **approves** your study as indicated below. This implies that the North-West University Senate Committee for Research Ethics (NWU-SERC) grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the study may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Study title: Stakeholder involvement to strengthen customer service: The case of the City of Ekurhuleni Metropolitan Municipality																											
Study Leader/Supervisor (Principal Investigator)/Researcher: Prof Gerrit van der Waldd																											
Student/Research Team: S.E. Maseko (32285310)																											
Ethics number:	<table border="1" style="width: 100%; text-align: center; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>9</td><td>6</td><td>5</td><td>-</td><td>2</td><td>2</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>7</td> </tr> <tr> <td colspan="2">Institution</td> <td colspan="4">Study Number</td> <td colspan="2">Year</td> <td colspan="3">Status</td> </tr> </table> Status: S - Submitted; N - Re-Submission; P - Partial Approval; A - Approved	N	W	U	-	0	0	9	6	5	-	2	2	-	A	7	Institution		Study Number				Year		Status		
N	W	U	-	0	0	9	6	5	-	2	2	-	A	7													
Institution		Study Number				Year		Status																			
Application Type: Single-study																											
Commencement date: 11/05/2022	Risk: Low																										
Expiry date: 11/05/2023																											
Approval of the study is initially provided for a year, after which continuation of the study is dependent on receipt and review of the annual (or as otherwise stipulated) monitoring report and the concomitant issuing of a letter of continuation.																											

Special in process conditions of the research for approval (if applicable):

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, the following general terms and conditions will apply:

- The study leader/supervisor (principle investigator)/researcher must report in the prescribed format to the BaSSREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the monitoring of the study, whereby a letter of continuation will be provided, and upon completion of the study; and
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event or incident (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the study.
- The approval applies strictly to the proposal as stipulated in the application form. Should any amendments to the proposal be deemed necessary during the course of the study, the study leader/researcher must apply for approval of these amendments at the BaSSREC, prior to implementation. Should there be any deviations from the study proposal without the necessary approval of such amendments, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- Annually a number of studies may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the study may be started.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility, the NWU-SCRE and BaSSREC reserves the right to:

- request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the study;
- to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process;
- withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the study are revealed or suspected;
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the BaSSREC or that information has been false or misrepresented;
 - submission of the annual (or otherwise stipulated) monitoring report, the required amendments, or reporting of adverse events or incidents was not done in a timely manner and accurately; and / or
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- BaSSREC can be contacted for further information or any report templates via BaSSREC-Admin@nwu.ac.za.

The BaSSREC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your study. Please do not hesitate to contact the BaSSREC or the NWU-SCRE for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely



Prof E. Idemudia

Chairperson NWU Basic and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee

Original details: (22351930) C:\Users\22351930\Desktop\ETHICS APPROVAL LETTER OF STUDY.docm

8 November 2018

File reference: 9.1.5.4.2

APPENDIX E: TURNITIN PLAGIARISM SUMMARY REPORT

12330841:Maseko_ES_FINAL_THESIS_20_Oct22.docx

ORIGINALITY REPORT

8%	8%	2%	2%
SIMILARITY INDEX	INTERNET SOURCES	PUBLICATIONS	STUDENT PAPERS

PRIMARY SOURCES

1	repository.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	2%
2	dspace.nwu.ac.za Internet Source	1%
3	uir.unisa.ac.za Internet Source	1%
4	citeseerx.ist.psu.edu Internet Source	1%
5	hdl.handle.net Internet Source	1%
6	Submitted to University of Johannesburg Student Paper	<1%
7	www.cairn.info Internet Source	<1%
8	Submitted to North West University Student Paper	<1%
9	ujcontent.uj.ac.za Internet Source	<1%