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Social Networking and Public Participation As A Vital Entry Elements for Improving Municipal Governance and Service Satisfaction: Evidence from Ethiopia

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Abstract : The realization of effective public participation has faced several challenges across the globe. The objective of this study was to examine and present a comprehensive understanding on public participation and its key determinants and nexus with the municipal service satisfaction . The study considers one of Ethiopias' major city, Mekele as a case study. The major findings are that the existing citizens' participation practice is not inclusive. The female and old aged groups showed higher participation. Similarly, citizens' with higher social connectedness (social networking) participate more than the other groups. In terms of socially connected groups, respondents with older ages, female, high-income and citizens with longer residency time were found comparatively more connected than their other counterparts. The results of the study reveal that with increasing level of awareness, income and access to networking platforms; people's participation in service delivery has increased resulting a positive change in service satisfaction.

Keywords : Citizens' participation; Social connectedness; Municipal service delivery; Service satisfaction

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1.0 Introduction :

Nowadays scholars, development agencies, and international organizations recognize the twofold advantages of public participation viz. People get the timely service delivery demanded and facilitate the system to be more people friendly and accessible. It is, thus, a vehicle for achieving overall socioeconomic and environmental development endeavors across global, regional, and local governments. Participation is also an end objective by itself because it is among the basic human right which is included in the international covenants and national constitutions. Through effective public engagement programs, the process and outcomes of local planning, public policy and decision-making are expected to be more equitable, transparent, efficient, citizens oriented, and sustainable (Krishnaswamy, A. 2004). To be globally competitive and provide a good quality of life, cities need to deliver a wide range of services and infrastructure for their respective ordinary citizens. Thus, for urban areas to have demand-driven public projects and programs, it needs legitimate public participation and collaborative governance process. (Enid.S, and Andre. C, 2014). As such effective public participation is representative of successful public sector reform programs that promotes equity and sustainable local development (Mezgebe, 2007). With all these crucial and comprehensive advantages, the local public participation process and performance face several challenges both in developing and developed countries.

The urban public needs are rapidly changing as society's become more diverse, fragmented, and complex. They expect the municipal service to deliver more of these services accurately, better

quality, faster but cost-effective. The ability to deliver more choice services, more transparency, and more accountability is what is needed to re-establish public trust in the municipal governance and public service delivery process. The rationale for the decentralization and to have a participative government at the local level stems from a recognition that involving people in governance and service delivery processes makes local authorities accountable to their respective citizens for services and development in their area (Sirker and Cosic 2007).

Unfortunately, many research studies conducted on the implementation of participatory governance and municipal service delivery in developing countries are more problematic. Research made by World Bank (2007) In Ghana, citizens' participation in decision making and development planning in urban areas remains generally ad hoc, depending largely on the benevolence of a few assembly members. A study in Tanzania electric supply also shows that municipal institutions adhere to the principles of good governance practices, but it does not abide by its Customer Service Charter and it leads to poor service delivery and overall public mistrust on the municipal institution (Saada, 2017). Poor public participation is rated among the vanguard problems that hinder public service improvement initiatives all over the developing world (Gwayi 2010) cited by (Makanyeza, Kwandayi, and Lkobe, 2013).

In Ethiopia too, various initiatives and municipal service delivery reforms have been implemented to improve participatory municipal governance; .BPR (business process reengineering), (BSC) balanced score card and deliverology are among others. Nonetheless, the regional government evaluation report 2018 asserted that the problem is still pervasive and needs other interventions. For instance, according to a study in one of Ethiopia's cities, Adigrat, 62% of respondents confirmed that there is no collaborative governance practice and officials are not open to the public (Berhe, T. T. 2020). The above finding is also supported by an evaluation report of the Growth and Transformation Plan I (GTP I) which is the major national development plan of the Ethiopian government (Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia 2016).

Public Participation

In many works of literature in the field of study the terms “engagement”, “involvement” and “participation” have been used interchangeably similar approach has been used in this paper.

(FAO, 1998) Broadly defined participation as a ‘ ‘ *process of communication between local communities and development agencies, in which local people or ordinary citizens assume the lead role in analyzing their current situation to identify the need or problem requiring attention in order to plan, implement and evaluate development activities, and even implement and evaluate the quality of participation process itself*’ ’. Citizens' participation in the context of new public management is defined as ‘ ‘*an interaction of public administrators and citizens, concerned with public policy decision and public service delivery process*’ ’ (Callaha, 2007).

According to the European Institute for Public Participation (2009), public participation can be described as a deliberative process by which interested or affected citizens, civil society organizations, and government actors are involved in policy-making before a political decision is taken.

Why public participation

People's participation in the public governance process not only enriches democracy by fostering citizens' liberty and equality, but it also increases public transparency, enhance accountability, builds social capital, reduces conflicts, ascertains priorities in public goods and services, promote government legitimacy, cultivate mutual understanding among the ruler and ruled, or advances fairness and justice in the governance process and building trust among and within the participants, especially between the government at all levels and the ordinary citizens. (Box 1998; Putnam 2000; King & Martinelli 2005; Callahan 2007). Thus, effective people's participation, especially at the municipal level enables citizens to set goals and priorities of their interest, supervise or monitor

the actions of politicians and members of the city administration and hold them responsible and accountable for their decisions made and actions are taken.

According to the concept of a New Public Service, (Mindiarti, 2007), put society as a citizen who has the right to be given the great quality of public services of the state. Citizens also have the right to protect their rights: their voices are heard, while values and preferences are cherished.

Sometimes helping government decision-makers and the public become more informed and an enlarged view of issues (Fung 2007). Public participation also supports having a more equitable distribution of limited public resources (Simonsen and Robbins 2000). Citizen involvement can also be a powerful source of ideas and motivations for social innovation and bureaucratic partnership; Citizens may be better positioned to assess the relevance and effectiveness of public services, so they can contribute much in the evaluation of public programs and service delivery processes and performance.

Public Participation and Municipal Service Delivery

One of the major reasons for establishing local government is to bring the government to the communities and it enables the local people can participate fully in the process of governance and it provides essential local services and thus speed up the pace of social, economic and political transformation (Amujiri, 2012). Citizens' participation in the process of public service delivery may lead to better public services, which comply with the needs of citizens, better decisions, higher quality, and more efficient collaboration in using public money for public services.

A developmental local government is a community-oriented approach and its all programs, initiatives, and reforms are broad and inclusive. (Koteze and Kellerman 1997) insist that as a result of these citizens oriented approach, the local government will encourage public engagement, and consequently support the programs and activities that seek to develop and benefit the mass residents.

Hence, effective and well-managed citizen participation will lead to a situation where the local sphere of government receives a valuable contribution from the communities and this will help in determining the quality and quantity of public services delivered Madumo, O. S. (2014).

Furthermore, citizens' has better ideas than the public officials about the service they need, so ordinary citizens can help local service providers to understand their needs, requirements and priorities which are vital solutions for their current and future problems. Similarly, citizens may become directly involved in the design and delivery of services, a process referred to as problem-solving collaboration, According to Helen E. Landemore,(2012) the '*Many Are Smarter than the Few*'

Arguments About the Need for Public Participation Concept

Different arguments have been stated by different authors or researchers to advocate or opponents to the citizen participation towards improved local governance and service delivery process and performance.

Those supporters of public participation are denoted by '*People-centered*' the other side is also called '*Authority Centered*'; agencies should not be concerned that seeking public input means having to do *what the public wants*.'

Based on the people-centered view, citizens become active participants in the creation and implementation of the policies, decisions, and/ or any process which affects them. Citizens are capable individuals who are willing and able to take responsibility for their own choices, priorities, decisions, and actions, although one may say this is not always the case, i.e. unrealistic (Box, 1998; Robert, 2004 and Gaventa, 2006) who supports the people-centered view claimed that

citizens are capable and efficient to participate in all aspects of local government matters of governance and public service delivery process and performance.

This is because people learned through participating and thus the educational element of participation (Robert, 2004) will make people more matured hence, participatory and people center governance is prominent for effective local governance and public service delivery process.

The proponents of citizens participation justify a lot of purposes for public participation; these may include: embodying the ideals of democratization participation and principles of inclusion; fulfilling legal requirements in the local governance process; improving social justice; enhancing social consensus; informing the local people about public decisions towards public problems and opportunities; analyzing and generating alternative solutions for local problems; and generating effective public policies, programs, plans and projects of having higher quality in terms of their content being they are demand-driven; in such policies, strategies, plans and projects the local citizens exert their all-round support in the implementation and evaluation process (Bryson et al. 2013). One of the important arguments for public participation is that it is an important end unto itself in a democratic society.

They have just noted the key role citizens' participation plays in reflecting and consulting local citizenship, the public, and the public values. Similarly, numerous other potential advantages of effective citizen participation are well documented; though public participation demands-resources such as skill, time and money of the participants, but can generate numerous advantages that significantly outweigh the expected cost of participation (Roberts, 2004; Feldman and Quick, 2009). Participants can contribute to the public decisions through providing new and generic information, different ways of seeing, public issue, and motivation to address identified problems (Renn et al., 1993), sometimes helping government decision-makers and the public to become more informed and develop an enlarged view of issues (Fung, 2007).

Public participation can also support a more equitable distribution of limited public resources (Abers 2000; Simonsen and Robbins 2000). And it can create resources for future problem-solving and implementation to address new public issues by enhancing trust and legitimacy among the participants, building better relationships, and generating generic knowledge and interest about public policy issues and processes (Feldman and Quick, 2009; Ansell, 2011). Whether participation actually does produce these benefits depends on a number of factors which may from the local government side and/or from the participants side affect its contribution towards governance and service delivery process and performance.

Finally, the International Association for Public Participation IAP2 states that the benefits of public participation are better released through implementing effective and the best approach to engage for the purpose of audience and subject matter. The consequences of failure in policies, governance, and service delivery outcomes are costly than any investment costs of public participation embodied.

In contrast, based on the opponents or the viewers of Authority center, which are often supported by members of local government and elected or appointed officials, those who believe direct citizen participation is politically 'naïve', and governance mostly rests on informed and knowledgeable elite and it is more of nominal. Only a small group needs to be actively and directly involves in the public decision-making process. Some scholars such as (Crosby et al and Irvin and Stansbury, 2004; Yang, 2006), and Bowman and Kearney, 2007), argued that the local authorities focus on a limited scope or role for people's participation in the decision-making process and the formulation of policies. According to Bowman and Kearney (2007) from the perspective of local government officials, people participation can be a nuisance because it may disrupt established routines.

Similarly, another researcher in the area of study has stated some arguments that prevent direct citizens' participation in the local governance and service delivery process; (Stivers, 1990 and Fishkin, 1991) expressed how the modern societies are too complex, and it is very difficult for governments to support through face to face relationships. But in the normal experience, all participants do not require face-to-face communication among the participants.

(Clevel, 1986) believed participation is undesirable because it would be too expensive, too slow for public decisions and a waste of time for all the participants. Others also argue that most actively involved citizens might represent private interests that are very different than the broader mass interest. Moreover, the majority of local governments do not have the capabilities to manage the dynamic issues facing in the current modern society's interest through direct participation. In addition, people are too busy with their private lives, including supporting their families, thus most ordinary citizens have no interest to engage and spent their precious time on public agendas. All these issues prevent direct participation to take place and make sense in local governance and service delivery process and performance.

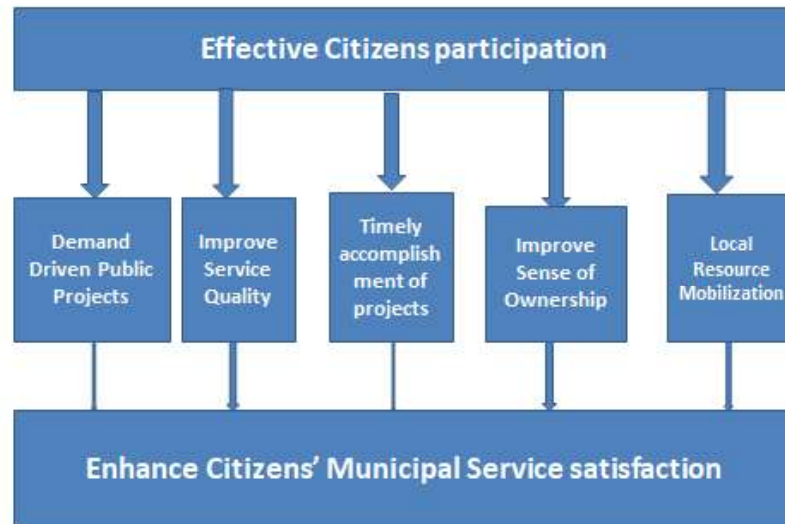
According to Barber (1984), excessive citizens' participation by the government increases political conflict among the participants; it also jeopardizes stability and social order. High expectations for direct participation are difficult to meet with the government, thus it creates alienation, low self-esteem, and distrust and this discourage participation of the people. Grisez Kweit, M., & Kweit, R. W. (2007) Revealed that citizen participation had no impact or a slight negative impact on satisfaction and legitimacy

Critics of participation argue that it is too complicated, costly, and time-consuming, and for them that there is no evidence that participation improves the process and outcomes in public governance and service delivery efforts; hence, the costs associated with citizens' participation in the light of what it does deliver are not justifiable.

However, there are compelling examples and best experiences from around the world of what goes wrong in circumstances where citizens are not consulted, and similarly, positive cases abound of the gains derived from citizen engagement (Cornwall, A. 2008). Lastly, based on the literature in the field of study, it can be concluded that the most important element that different People-Centered or proponents of citizen participation in the public governance process from Authority Centered or proponents of participation views is the level of people participating in the decision-making process. This, of course, is about power. So members of the local government advocate for Authority Centered in an attempt to keep power for themselves, and to avoid sharing their power with citizens and other governance actors. On this view, power is under local government control, and they are not willing to confer power to the people.

On the other hand, with the people center, citizens seek to be involved in the decision-making process that directly affects their lives and pursue the redistribution of power. Indeed, public participation is difficult to bring into the argument because many researchers, development agencies, and international organizations put citizen participation as not something which is given as a donation from the local authorities rather it is an ultimate human right. Citizen participation in decision-making processes at the local government level is a fundamental human right, not a discretionary policy option that policymakers can implement at their whim. (Sepúlveda Carmona, 2003). Thus, regarding its contribution towards effective local governance and service delivery, this research paper has come up with findings from empirical evidence and literature experiences.

Figure 1 Conceptual framework



Developed by the researchers from different literature (2021)

2.0 Methodology

Participants for the study were selected using a systematic random sampling approach. Mekelle city has seven sub-city administrations and each sub-city also has 3-4 Kebele /ward administrations. The city, the sub-cities, and Kebelles/ ward administrations have their independent governance structure of having legislative, executive, and judicial organs. Two Kebelles/ ward administrations were taken randomly from each sub-city.

According to the city bureau of finance and economic development (2018), the city has a total population of 423,172. Based on (Morgan. K, 1970) sample size determination table, 382 residents with ages of more than 18 were considered for the study through systematic random sampling technique. A semi structured questionnaire was used to collect the quantitative data. An informative interview was also conducted with the mayor of the city, the head of the municipal council, and three sub-city administrators. Similarly, FGD was also employed with CBOs and CSOs leaders in the city. The mixed concurrent triangulation approach has been used to mix the quantitative data and results collected from the survey with the qualitative data and results obtained from interviews and FGD.

3.0 Results and Discussions

3.1 Respondents' Profile

From the sample respondents, 194 or 50.8% are male and the remaining 188 or 49.2% are female; similarly, 189 or 49.5% are younger age /18-35 and 193 or 50.5% are older age group /36-68; economically, 113 or 29.6% are people within absolute poverty their daily income is less than 1.9 USD, 232 or 60.7% are poor and low-income group their daily income is between 1.9 USD to 13.00 USD and the remaining 37 or 9.7% are high and middle-income group and their daily income is greater than 13 USD this economic classification is based on the World Bank 2019 revised poverty illustration for East Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa, a new threshold.

3.2 Respondents' level of participation

The researcher was asked of the respondents whether they were participating in any of the municipal governance and service delivery process in the last year and how often they were participating if not participating whether or not have the interest to participate; Hence, the survey result indicated that about 163 or 42.70% were participating in municipal governance and service delivery process in the last 12 months.

And this finding is consistent with the study result (Kimutai, Gilbert Kiplimo, Aluvi Patrick 2018) which was conducted in the Kisumu county of Kenya. And this is also somewhat less than the research finding of (Papa, R. O. 2016) that illustrates that 52.3% of the respondents asserted that they were participating in project development activities in the Busia County of Kenya; similarly, it is also much less than the (Safari, K.H, et al 2013) finding of Salamas city of Iran, where about 70% of respondents were replied that they were consistently participating in municipal affairs.

3.3 Inclusiveness as a measure of effective public participation

Literature works in the field of study and International Association of Public Participation (IAPP, 2007) asserts that inclusiveness is among the prominent legitimate measure of effective public participation); however, the survey result revealed that the public participation process of the city has a critical challenge concerning inclusiveness. Of the total 163 respondents who were participating in the municipal governance and service delivery process, 114 or 70% were female, 119 or 74% were older-aged and 113 or 69% were the poor and low-income groups were participating. This indicates that the male, the younger age and the two extreme economic groups have less level of participation. Regarding the economic status it is also consistent with (Friedman's 2006) clarification, he asserts that the poor cannot gain a voice through structured participation forums because they are usually disorganized and they cannot participate and they are fully engaged in their day-to-day personal life; unlike the poor of the poor people the high and middle income has less level of participation is because they do not have the time and they are busy in their daily business, but they have the interest to participate if they get convenient participation platforms like e-participation.

Though different factors are influencing the citizens' level of participation based on the key informant discussion and triangulated with the survey result citizens' level of social networking or social connectedness and citizens' level of public service satisfaction have a higher positive effect on the citizens' level of participation; Besides the FGD finding revealed that the other major factor that creates problem to have inclusive citizen participation in the city is failure to implement diverse channels of participation which is accessible to the diverse needs of the community.

3.4 Participation and social networking

As (Putnam. 1993) cited in Siisiainen, M. (2003) the social networking or degree of citizens' connectedness refers to what extent that the ordinary citizens are involved in the formal and local traditional associations in their localities. Accordingly, from 382 respondents of the survey respondents 218 or 57% are not involved in any of the association or not a member of any social networking, but 164 or 43% are members of any social networking there may also duplication, anyone who is a member of any political party can also be a member in any civic or local traditional associations. On the other hand, of 382 respondents of the survey study 163 or 42.7% were participating in municipal governance and service delivery process of the city the last 12 months similarly, from 163 respondents who were participating 147 or 90% were a member of any social networking or socially connected citizens.

Table 1. : Cross tabs of citizens' extent of participation and their level of social networking or social connectedness

			The extent of participation in municipal governance		Total
			Not participate	Participate	
Citizens' level of Social networking/ connectedness	Not member	Count	202	16	218
		% within social networking	92.7%	7.3%	100.0%
	Member	Count	17	147	164
		% within social networking	10.4%	89.6%	100.0%
Total		Count	219	163	382
		% within social networking	57.3%	42.7%	100.0%

(Source; Own: Survey 2021)

Thus, the researcher has been tested the relationship between social networking or social connectedness and citizens' level of engagement in the municipal governance process; hence the investigated result using Spearman's rho correlation coefficient as shown in Table 2- below. The result indicates that there was a strong positive correlation between the two variables, $\rho = 0.74$, $n = 382$, $p = 0.00$ with a high-level citizens' social networking there will high-level citizens involvement in municipal governance and service delivery process. This is also consistent with (Ganesh Prasad Pandeya, 2015) that asserts the establishment of vibrant social networks has a positive impact on the citizens' level of participation in the local governance affairs. This reveals that the establishment of vibrant social networking has the power to have effective citizens' participation in the local governance process.

Table 2. : Spearman's correlation result between citizens' extent of participation and their level of social connectedness

Correlations				
			Social networking	The extent of participation in municipal governance
Spearman's rho	Social networking	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.743**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	382	382
	The extent of participation in municipal governance the last 12 months	Correlation Coefficient	.743**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	382	382

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Source; Own: Survey 2021)

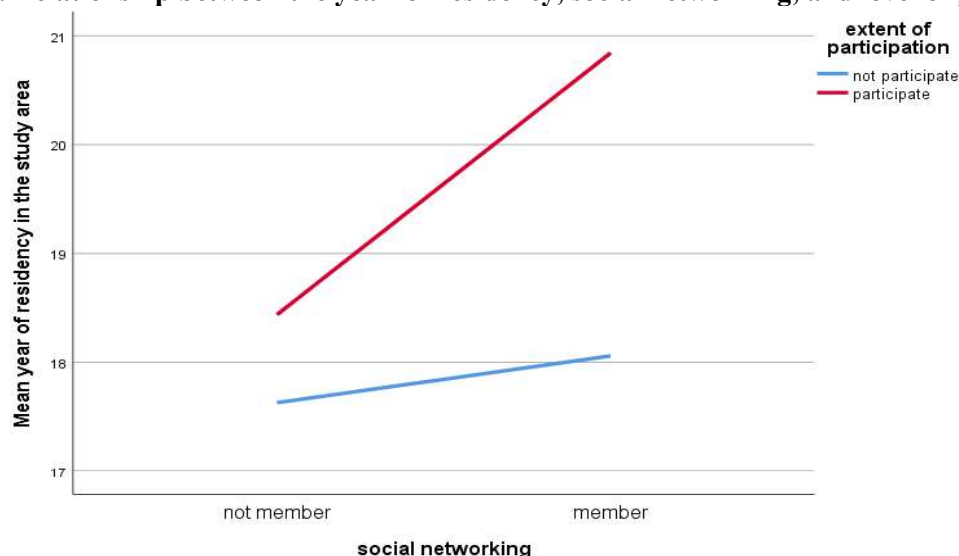
The survey result also shows that of the total 194 male respondents 50 or 30.5% are members in any social networking group; but, of the 188 female participants in the survey study, 114 or 69.5% are members in any of the social networking groups. Hence, the survey result indicates women in the study area were more socially networked than that of the male gender group.

Similarly, the study result indicates that the level of social networking increases with age level. The higher socially connected age group is the oldest age groups 36-68, which is about 62% of the old aged respondents are members of any formal or informal social, economic, and political organizations, whereas the level of social connectedness in the young age /18-36 is limited to 23% only. Thus, regarding the demographic features females and older-aged groups have a better social connectedness than the other counterparts; correspondingly their level of participation in the municipal governance and service delivery process is also higher than the other else.

Social networking and participants' year of residency in the city

The other variable which affects the extent of participation and social networking is the year of residency of participants; already it is statistically concluded that social networking or citizens degree of connectedness has a strong positive effect on the citizens' level of participation, on the other hand, citizens' year of residency also affects social networking and the level of participation in the other way round; i.e. as citizens' residency time in the city increases, they get a chance to strengthen their social relations and connectedness and this also increases their extent and frequency of participation in municipal governance and service delivery process.

Figure 2. Relationship between the year of residency, social networking, and level of pp



(Source Own Survey: 2021)

3.5 Participation and effective municipal service delivery variables

Based on table 3- below the correlation between citizens' participation and the effective municipal service delivery performance independent variables (demand-driven public projects and programs, improve service quality, timely accomplishment, improve a sense of ownership, and local resource mobilization). After full filling, the necessary assumptions of Pearson's product-moment correlation coefficient have been employed. The result indicates that there is a positive, strong, and moderate correlation between the citizens' level of participation in the municipal-governance process and the independent variables of effective municipal service delivery performance (demand-driven public projects and programs, improve service quality, timely accomplishment, improve a sense of ownership, and local resource mobilization). $r=.709$, $r=.467$, $r=.496$, $r=.653$, and $r=.666$ respectively; $n=382$, $p<.01$, with high levels of citizens' participation in the municipal governance process, there will a high level of the municipal service delivery performance independent variables.

Table 3. Pearson's Correlation between effective citizens pp and effective service delivery variables

		Correlations					
		1	2	3	4	5	6
Effective Citizens' pp	Pearson Correlation	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
	N	381					
Demand-driven projects	Pearson Correlation	.709**	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000					
	N	381	382				
Improve service quality	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.528**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000				
	N	381	382	382			
Timely accomplishment of public projects & programs	Pearson Correlation	.496**	.802**	.482**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000			
	N	381	382	382	382		
Improve sense of ownership	Pearson Correlation	.653**	.743**	.495**	.540**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000		
	N	381	382	382	382	382	
Local Resource mobilization	Pearson Correlation	.666**	.748**	.481**	.479**	.850**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	
	N	381	382	382	382	382	382
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

4.6 Citizens' perception of involvement and service satisfaction.

From the total 182 respondents who were responding a negative response that they are totally dissatisfied and unsatisfied by the service they get from the municipal government 168 or 92% were replying a negative response that the municipal government is totally un-involved and un-involved in the governance process; whereas from the 32 respondents who were replying that they are fully satisfied and satisfied with the service, they obtained only 1 or around 3% responded the government is uninvolved /negative response; this clearly shows how the citizens' perception of involvement is associates with the citizens' perception of service satisfaction. This is also parallel with research finding of (Abraham. 2013), the study result revealed that the citizens' level of satisfaction with service delivery is low shows not more than 40% of ordinary citizens are happy with the current type of projects undertaken, the cost they incurred, the completion rate and overall project management. This also corresponds with a low perception of citizens' involvement in the project management cycle.

Thus, local officials like municipal leaders and city planners' should be considered citizens as a vital resource that can contribute to improving the quality of life through involvement in the overall design, implementation and delivery of public services.

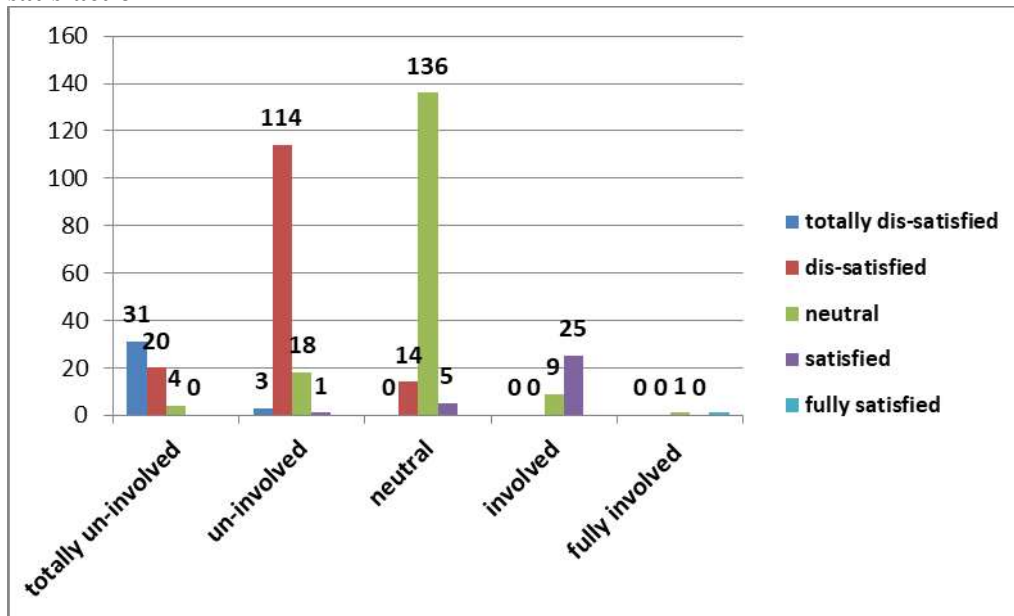
Table.4- Cross-tabulation between citizens perceived level of participation and service satisfaction

Count							
		How do you rate your level of service satisfaction with the city?					Total
		TDIS	DIS	NET	SAT	FSAT	
How do you rate the current participation performance of the city?	Totally un-involved	31	20	4	0	0	55
	un-involved	3	114	18	1	0	136
	Neutral	0	14	136	5	0	155
	Involved	0	0	9	25	0	34
	Fully involved	0	0	1	0	1	2
Total		34	148	168	31	1	382

TDIS (Totally dissatisfied), DIS(Dissatisfied), NET(Neutral),SAT(Satisfied),FSAT(Fully satisfied).

(Source; Own: Survey 2021)

Figure 3 . Relationships between participation and citizens' perception of service satisfaction



(Source Own Survey : 2021)

Similarly, the researcher has been tested the relationship between perceived levels of citizens' service satisfaction and extent of participation in the governance process; hence the investigated result using person moment correlation coefficient as shown in Table 5- below. Preliminary analysis was performed to ensure no violation of assumptions which fulfill for this analysis and it includes linearity, normality, and homoscedasticity. The result indicates that there was a strong positive correlation between the two variables, $r = 0.77$, $n = 382$, $p = 0.00$ with a high level of service satisfaction there will a higher level of perceived citizen participation in the governance process and vice-versa; this finding also supports (Heywood, 2007) which asserts that the effective cooperation of the municipal officials and the ordinary citizens could drive synergy where the optimal provision of public service better quality is achieved.

Table.5- : Pearson's correlation test result of citizens' perception of service satisfaction and levels of involvement

Correlations			
		Total_pp	Total_ssar
Total perceived level of participation	Pearson Correlation	1	.778**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	382	382
The total level of Perceived service satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.778**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	382	382
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

(Source; Own Survey: 2021)

Citizens' degree of participation and municipal service satisfaction

As indicated in the table below; of the total 163 respondents who replied that they were participating in the municipal governance process 47 or 28.8% are level one or they are informed what government decisions are / one-way communication; 83 or 50.9% were replying that they are at level two or consultation /two-way communication and 33 or 20% of the respondents are replying that they are at level three or collaboration / deciding together.

Table.6-Cross tabs between citizens' degree of participation and perceived level of service satisfaction

Citizen participation in the municipal governance process * degree of pp Cross tabulation						
			Degree of pp			Total
			Inform = level 1	Consult =level 2	Collaborate =level3	
Citizens pp in the municipal governance process	PP	Count	47	83	33	163
		%	28.8%	50.9%	20.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	47	83	33	163
		%	28.8%	50.9%	20.2%	100.0%

(Source; Own Survey: 2021)

Similarly, Table 7- below indicates the correlation between the citizens' level of participation in the municipal-governance and its corresponding service satisfaction. The correlation was investigated using Spearman's correlation coefficient. The result reveals that there is a strong positive correlation between the levels of citizens' pp and citizens' perceived service satisfaction $r=.637$ $N=163$, $p<.01$, with a high degree of citizen participation there will a higher level of citizens' perceived municipal service satisfaction. This research result also supports the study finding of (Bostance, B., and Erdem, N. 2000) In Nyagna township Cap Town in South Africa. The finding revealed that as citizens' level of participation in water governance increases from no participation to citizens' power of Arnstein's theory of participation; citizens' level of water service satisfaction also significantly improves.

Table.7 : Spearman's correlation between citizens' degree of participation and perceived municipal service satisfaction

Correlations				
			Degree of pp	Service satisfaction
Spearman's rho	Degree of pp	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.637**
		Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
		N	163	163
	Service satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.637**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
		N	163	382

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

(Source; Own: Survey 2021)

The researcher has been tested the level of citizens' perceived municipal service satisfaction across the three degrees of citizens participation; Kruskal Walis H test has been used thus, as indicated in the table below the mean rank for the three degrees of pp were 51.19, 79.43, and 131.29 for levels of 1, 2 and 3 respectively; Hence, with (N=163; statistical result=70.44; df2, p=0.00 it is justifiable to reject the null hypothesis and to conclude that the extent of perceived citizens' municipal service satisfaction is significantly different across the three degrees / hierarchies of citizens' participation process. The highest level of trust towards municipal government and corresponding service satisfaction was registered at the highest level of hierarchies. Based on Arnstein's theory of the ladder of participation, citizens have to be promoted to get engaged and participate in ways that further up the ladder.

Table.8 : Kruskal Walis H test of citizens' degree of participation and perceived level service satisfaction

Ranks			
Degree/ Hierarchies of citizens pp		N	Mean Rank
Perceived levels of citizen service satisfaction	Inform= level 1	47	51.94
	Consult =level 2	83	79.43
	Collaborate=level3	33	131.29
	Total	163	

Test Statistics ^b	
	Service satisfaction
Kruskal-Wallis H	70.444
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000
a. Kruskal Wallis Test	
b. Grouping Variable: the degree of pp	

Source; Own: Survey (2021)

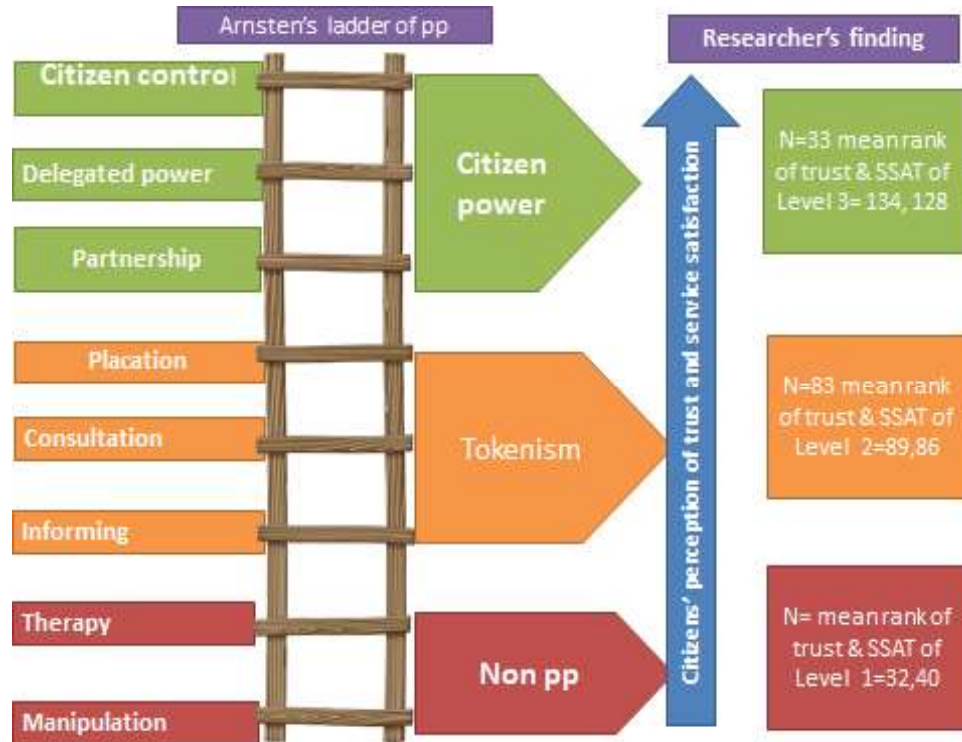
Table 9 : The Kruskal Walis H test result of degree of citizen participation and their perception of trust and municipal service satisfaction

Ranks			
	degree of pp	N	Mean Rank
level of trust towards municipal governance	inform= level 1	47	32.14
	consult =level 2	83	89.51
	collaborate=level3	33	134.12
	Total	163	

level of municipal service satisfaction	inform= level 1	47	40.62
	consult =level 2	83	86.96
	collaborate=level3	33	128.45
	Total	163	

Source; Own: Survey (2021)

Figure 4 Arnstein's ladder of participation nexus to respondents' level of service satisfaction



(Researcher's development 2021)

5.0 Conclusions

Citizens' level of participation in the study area is not inclusive the male, the younger age and the poorest groups have less level of participation than the other counterparts; the main reason to have a less participation level is because of their poor level of social connectedness, deprived municipal service satisfaction and lack of diverse channel of participation by the municipal government.

Relatively female, older aged and higher income groups are more socially connected than the other else; citizens' year of residency also has a positive effect on citizens' social networking.

The study critically investigates the roles and implementing challenges of public participation in terms of municipal service delivery process and performance. Though, the debate about the need for public participation in improving municipal service delivery process and performance took a long time; this study confirms the positive role of citizens' participation in municipal service delivery for the Mekelle city of Ethiopia. Those citizens with a higher level of involvement in the municipal governance process also greater perceived service satisfaction and vise-versa

The findings of this study have a significant implication to urban managers and city planners to have an effective participation towards collaborative governance and effective municipal service delivery process and performance.

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