

Effectiveness of Government Support, Citizen and Civil Society Organization involvement on Budgetary Participation at Local Governments in Tanzania: A Case Study of Mtwara Mikindani Municipal

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Abstract: *The paper examines effectiveness of government support, citizen and civil society organizations involvement on budgetary participation at Local Government in Tanzania: A Case Study of Mtwara Mikindani Municipal. The study adopted a descriptive case study design, with a sample of 113 citizens including local 100 citizens randomly chose. The findings established that government support is ineffective, citizens are not participating due to unfulfilled promises and civil society involvement is lacking behind not fulfilling their role in participatory budgeting process. The study recommends to the government to deliberately adhere to stipulated laws governing participatory budgeting, LGAs financial collections should remain in their regions to be used for development funding, priority should be set for provision of civic education for citizens for productive involvement. Citizens should be empowered through information on budgeting issues to help them understand the process and they should be trained on how to plan through Opportunity and Obstacles for Development. Civil society should embrace the budgeting process and play their part on information sharing, training and empowerment and be involved in different meetings so as to advocate for policies and projects which favour citizens.*

Keywords: Participatory Budgeting, Local Government Authorities, Citizens, Civil Society Organizations

1. Introduction

In recent decades Participatory Budgeting (PB) has become a new model in governing decentralized government as it has proved to improve government performance, increase accountability and transparency in providing public service [1]. PB is viewed as an emerging innovative management practice with potential to promote principles of good governance which is very important for sustainable social economic development [2].

PB is a process whereby citizens identify, present their priorities and influence through discussion and negotiations the budget of their community so as to improve their local services [1]. It allows citizen to identify, discuss, and prioritize public spending projects, and gives them the power to make real decisions about how resources are spent *Ibid*. This way the government deals with issues and problems of each community according to their locality, it also gives the community a chance to participate and contribute in their development.

World Bank observed that, since its introduction in Brazil, PB proves to facilitate equitable public spending, greater government transparency and accountability, which led to the improved service delivered by the government. PB initiatives have since been taken up by a growing number of cities across the whole of Brazil initially, before spreading across South America and, finally, all over the world [3].

Tanzania has been undergoing a number of reforms in decades to find an efficient and effective way to address the three enemies of development identified since independence

which are poverty, illiteracy and diseases. Despite the failing of several reforms due to poor governance, lack of efficiency, accountability, lack or no citizens participation and high level of corruption in the local authorities, Tanzania government initiated Local Government Reform Programme (LGRP) in 1998, aiming to build capacity of the LGAs, increase their financial autonomy and decision-making authority and generally, foster good governance (URT, 1998).

Taking into account that LGAs are very important in providing public social services, the government came up with an approach which involves citizens by taking into account their needs hence PB. PB through decentralization was thought as mechanism to involve the community to prioritize their needs and make decisions on part of the budget ([4] and [5]).

Article 146(1)(2) of the Tanzanian Constitution establishes that the purpose of having local government authorities is to transfer authority to the people, and has the right and power to involve people, in planning and implementation of development programs within their respective areas and generally throughout the country facilitating democracy and development through involving the local community URT (1977).

The Public Finance Act 2001 talks about issues of transparency and accountability of LGAs to the local people. Moreover Local Government (Urban Authorities) Act of 1982 and its amendment Local Government (Miscellaneous) Act of 1998 and Regional Administration Acts of 1997 (URT 1997, 1998) provides for the establishment of

localities, a structure of local governance that is intended to facilitate community participation in local planning and governance [1]

The Local Government Finance Act, 1982 (as amended in 2000) along with the Local Authority Financial Memorandum, 1997, require each council to advertise in the media and/or post information on the council notice boards key information including: receipts of funds from the government, expenditure statements, budgets and signed audited accounts, tender advertised, as well as allowing the public to attend the full council meetings. [5] According to Local government Act No 7 of 1982 (R.E 2002) Sec 146, Village assembly is the supreme authority on all matters of general decision and policy making in relation to affairs of people in the responsible Village [9]. It goes further stipulating how the village assemblies will be conducted and who are the members as well as what should be discussed.

A vast number of literature advocates for the importance of participatory budgeting. The benefits include improved transparency [7]; empowering citizens through information sharing which creates sense of ownership [1]; bridging an operational gap between local governmental officials and citizens [2]. Generally PB is important because it has the capacity to contribute towards deepening local democracy and further expanding the opportunities for good governance [1].

In view of the above, this study conducts an in depth assessment bringing insights on the effectiveness of government support, citizen and CSOs involvement on PB in Local Government Authorities in Tanzania, a case study of Mtwara Mikindani Municipal. Council.

2. Theoretical Framework and Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

Citizen participation in decision making is explained by the Democratic Theory ([14]). It was argued that by involving citizens in planning it is likely to create better decisions as it allows new knowledgeable inputs from citizens to the government which allow the government to make informed decisions that will capture citizen needs and most likely better accommodated. Allowing citizens to participate in decision making enhances implementation of the selected projects as citizens' various interest are adequately addressed.

[1] explains that participatory budgeting improves communication and information sharing through meetings where councillors take information from communities to the council and feedback are given to the citizens on decisions made on budget reviews. Furthermore, through participatory budgeting, citizens are in a position to voice their views concerning budget allocation to capture their priorities on the public social services [2].

Citizen participation is frequently characterized as an inevitable outcome of a logical movement from bureaucratic modes of governance to more open, transparent, and

participatory approaches [8]. Democratic theorist proposes that current societal conditions and an understanding of the dynamics of individuals in relation to their governments in liberal democratic makes it ever more likely that citizens will seek to involve themselves in public decisions through dialogue. Societal change, particularly increased education, leads to greater demand for involvement and access to information.

2.2 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework in this work is structured from a set of broad ideas, models and theories that focus on the Effectiveness of Government Support, Citizen and Civil Society Organizations involvement on Budgetary Participation. The key variables or factors that are investigated are government support, citizens' participation and CSOs involvement which are independent variables. The dependent variable is participatory budgeting.

2.3 Literature Review of Variable

2.3.1 Government Support

[1], [17] and [16] alluded that, any policy to be successful it has to have government support and political will backing it up. PB also needs a strong support from the government and local authorities to be implemented successfully and to sustain the whole process. The government support and political will manifest in the legal framework for PB process, provision of information about PB process and feedback on what projects are chosen and why. It also manifests in the implementation phase, when commitments are concretized into tangible investments.

Provision of civic education to citizens is one of government responsibility to its citizenry. Civic education is important in order to equip citizens with necessary tools to make a sound and workable decision. The government should educate the citizen on how the PB process works their responsibility and right to participate in allocation of resources. Government support and political will also manifest in the provision of financial resources for funding the PB process and projects allocated to different localities. Without financial resources the whole process is nothing as it will not demonstrate the expected benefits.

2.3.2 Citizen

The quality and extent of citizen involvement in the budget process is one of the factor that determining the success and effectiveness of participatory budgeting. [16] noted that, for effective citizen participation in budgeting process there should be government support and political will establishing legal framework and legalizing participation, there should be stable financial support that will facilitate participation process allowing citizens especially in rural areas to participate in village assemblies, and to enable provision of civic education to the community in order to empower citizens to be able to make informed decisions. Furthermore [6] elaborated that in participatory budgeting the mechanism which citizens are involved fully in budget process is village/locality assembly where citizens convene with the village/locality authorities to prepare a Village Plan. [4] emphasizes how important it is to maintain quality and

quantity of village/locality assembly as a well informed and educated civil society will be able to provide quality and informed decision.

2.3.3 Civil Society Organizations

Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) play a powerful part in PB from planning, implementing and monitoring of PB projects. These social organizations' responsibilities often include attending meetings, providing civic education and information to the community empowering them to have active participation and conducting public expenditure tracking (PETs) to government projects.

2.3.4 Participatory budgeting

PB refers to the active involvement of different groups of people in the processes of budget priority setting and management. PB allows citizens to have a say in allocation of local resources. For participatory budgeting to be effective it should reflect citizens' needs, improve government performance and increase transparency. For PB to be able to reflect people's needs, it needs support from the government which will lay down the legal framework, provide financial support to the process, provide civic education to the society and provide PB process information so that the civic society understands what they are supposed to do and also be able to hold government to account. Moreover PB needs a strong civil society which will be able to provide civic education to the societies hold government to the account where promises are not fulfilled and provide information to the society when the government fail to.

2.4 Empirical Review

2.4.1 Government support

In many of African countries PB has a legal framework base to operate on and every detail is stipulated there in. In Tanzania, PB is guided by the constitution of United Republic of Tanzania 1977 as amended 1989 whereby an Article 146 gave mandate to citizens to participate in development programs in their localities. It also outlines the legislative function and the role of various bodies involved in the management of public finances, specifically Parliament (the Legislature), the President (the Executive) and the Controller and Auditor General (CAG) in Chapter 7 of the Constitution of the United Republic of Tanzania (1977).

The Public Finance Act, 2001 covers all the four stages of the budget process and issues of transparency and accountability of LGAs to the local people including provision of financial reports showing the allocation and expenditure of the allocated funds. Moreover, Local Government (Urban Authorities) Act of 1982 and its amendment Local Government (Miscellaneous) Act of 1998 and Regional Administration Acts of 1997 (URT 1997, 1998) provides for the establishment of locality (STREET), a structure of local governance that is intended to facilitate community participation in local planning and governance.

[17], [12] and [16] insist that government support is vital because government officials are the ones who make the decision to delegate authority and build necessary logistical, informational, and financial support for participatory

budgeting to function. Moreover, Samy (2017) emphasized that PB also depends on financial ability of the government to fund the chosen public programs as well as facilitating mechanisms and methods of PB to take place. [6] noted that although the LGAs are supposed to prioritize their needs but still the capacity to set financial priority investment was and continue to be undermined by weak resource base at the district level. [7] supported the statement by emphasizing on weak resource base at the district level, noting that support comes more from donor agencies and NGOs not from the central government.

During PB process there should be flow of information between the government and citizens about the budget, allocated resources and financial resources; all these are guaranteed to be transparency when there is a true government support to the whole process. [1] and [9] noted that in Tanzania, accessibility of the budget information in local governments is the major challenge for citizens to participate in decision making and to make follow-up on the implementation of the approved budget.

2.4.2 Citizen

The first President of United Republic of Tanzania Mwalimu Julius Kambarage Nyerere observed with a powerful statement on the need for involving people in communities for development. He stated that:

'Development is the participation of people in a mutual learning experience involving themselves, their local resources, external change agents and outside resources. People cannot be developed; they can only develop themselves by participation and co-operative activities which affect their wellbeing. People are not being developed when they are herded like animals into new ventures' (Nyerere, 1968).

Citizens are the base for PB as it aims at giving power to the people to allocate their resources focusing on the need and priorities of every locality. In order to make sure citizens are aware of the budget process, LGRP established a planning method, opportunity and obstacles to development (O&OD) which provide education, guidelines and opportunity for citizens to plan their own budget at the village/ locality level. Citizens have the best knowledge of their needs, their preferences, and local conditions. Their participation in decision making makes it more likely that available funds will be used to deliver the goods and services most needed, thereby improving government effectiveness.

2.4.3 Civil Society Organizations

CSOs have and continued to play an important role in contributing to efforts to increase transparency and accountability around public budget policies and processes, particularly ensuring that the voices of marginalized citizens are heard. CSOs play a number of different roles in the budget process, analysing public budgets, producing simplified and popular version of the budget and related document, playing a watchdog role, tracking expenditure at the local level, and advocating for improvements in terms of specific requests and overall transparency and accountability [15].

[17] concludes that, although CSOs play important part in PB, in developing countries they are underdeveloped and not supported by the government but most of the parts which are expected to be conducted by the governments are done by the CSOs thus making them highly burdened when they participate in PB programmes as they engage in multiple activities such as recruitment, education, technical capacity and oversight.

2.4.4 Participatory Budgeting

Participation is central to democracy and increasingly citizens' participation in public policy is viewed as a means to make governance more transparent and accountable as it involves community in its all activities. Thus, citizens and civil society along with the relevant organs of the Government and legislature according to [16] deliberate and negotiate over the distribution of public resources.

Citizens' involvement in decision making and development programs enhance transparency and hence improve accountability mechanism at local governments, thus budget transparency is very important in ensuring public resources are used efficiently and achieve value for money in spending for public social services [2].

2.5 Summary and identified research gaps

PB is crucial to developing countries as it promises and aims at bringing about sustainable development through involving civic society in every planning and implementation of development project. PB when applied successful it improves the operations of governments by curbing corruption through increased transparency in financial allocations and accountability of local government officials, increase citizens trust to their government, increased sustainability and quality of service delivered as citizens have been involved, it also open up the government to its citizenly as they will be able to know what the government is doing in addressing their daily problems. Government support is very essential for the success of PB as without it, citizens' involvement will be limited and civil society organisations won't be able to function at its best.

A lot has been done on PB regarding the delivery of services, its functionality in decentralized governments, and its effectiveness to bring development, how citizens are involved in the process and constrains there in. However, the effectiveness of government support, citizens and civic society organizations involvement on participatory budgeting in local government in Tanzania are not yet exhaustive.

3. Sample and Methodology

3.1 Sample

This study was conducted in Mtwara Urban District council in Mtwara region and it involved local Government officials from district level, ward level, Village/street level (rural/urban) and, the citizens of the chosen ward and villages. A total of 113 respondents were involved in the exercise. The data was processed, analysed and results are presented in tables, histogram, graphs and percentages.

4. Empirical Results

4.1 Characteristics of Respondents

Relevant characteristics of the 113 respondents who took part in this study include Gender, marital status, education, and their age. The respondents' characteristics were important in order to provide general information about respondents and their availability and knowledge for the study.

4.1.1. Gender of the Respondents

The study sample comprises 113 respondents, where female were 51 (or 45.1%) and male were 62 (54.9%).

4.1.2 Age of Respondents

The study included respondents of different ages as shown in Table 1. It shows that majority (50.4%) of respondents were of the age of 40-49 years. The age factor was important because for a member of society to participate in development activities and meetings they have to be at the age of 18 and above.

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
19-29	12	10.61
30-39	39	34.51
40-49	57	50.44
50-60	4	3.53
60+	2	1.76

4.1.3 Respondents' Education level

The results indicate that 79 out of 113 respondents had primary education which represents 69.91% of the respondents as shown in Table 2. These findings suggest that the study was dominated by people of primary education, but also represent the demographic character of Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council residents.

Table 2: Education Level of Respondents

Education level	Responses from Respondents	
	Frequency	Percentage
Primary Education	79	69.91
Secondary education	13	11.50
Diploma/University degree	16	14.16
No school education	5	4.42

4.2 Government support on PB at Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council

The first objective of this study was to examine the support government provide for facilitation of participatory budgeting process. In this section therefore, the respondents were asked on "How adequate is Government support to participatory budgeting process in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council". The reason behind this question is to find out if the government provides financial and educational support as well as budgetary information needed to facilitate participatory budgeting process.

4.2.1 Financial support

In this component, the respondents were asked to what extent government provides financial support on projects in

their localities. Most of the respondents, 88.17%, answered to no extent at all. When the question was posed to focus group discussion, members strongly agree that government does not provide adequate financial resources to project chosen from Local Areas. These results correspond with the results from [9] who found out that many of chosen projects were not finished due to lack of government financial support. [1] underlines that participatory budgeting among other components, depends on financial ability of the government to fund the chosen public programs as well as facilitating mechanisms and methods of PB to take place. When the government fails to fund the process and chosen projects, citizens will not see the need to involve themselves in the process while opting for other ways to survive and fulfill their needs.

4.2.2 Provision of Financial information

Moreover, the respondents were asked if the government provided needed budgetary information to all participating parts including citizens and CSOs. Majority, 77.4%, of the respondents responded that to no extent at all. [1] also noted that in Tanzania, accessibility of the budget information in local governments is the major challenge impeding citizens' involvement in decision making because it is impossible to make decisions without proper information or feedback. Furthermore, [11] observes that simply placing more budget information in the public domain will not have an impact unless citizens can understand it. Transparency in government budgets and processes leads to accountability as citizens will be able to question if funds are misused [16]. Non-publication of budget information is against the law as per the Financial Act 1982.

4.2.3 Provision of Civic Education

Furthermore, another component in government support was the provision of civic education to citizens so as to empower them for meaningful participation. Majority, 88.8%, of the respondents responded to no extent. One of the conditions for effective participatory budgeting is capacity building [1]. Lack of civic education shows that the citizens are equipped to deliberate openly the budget proposals.

4.3 Effects of Citizens on PB in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council

The second objective in this study was to assess effect citizens have in PB process in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal. This objective has two components quality and quantity of local meetings, looking at the knowledge and the attendance of local meetings, also if citizens were able to bring any changes in the budget through those meetings. Another component was to find out if citizens were involved in making their local plans through opportunity and obstacles to development meetings.

4.3.1 Knowledge of the right to participate

The respondents were asked through interview and questionnaires if they were aware that citizens are supposed to be involved in planning development projects of their localities, and the majority, 41.9%, out of 93 responded to a very high extent. Focus group discussion also had different view on this matter. The others said they knew they were supposed to be involved, but others said "the government

involves us in making decisions when they want to" explaining further that "if it was our rights why the government does not involve us" the statement confirm why other respondents does not know it's their constitutional rights to participate in development activities.

This finding is similar to that of [10] who finds that majority of citizens were not aware of the right to participate. For citizens being unaware of their right to participate hinders their involvement aptitude as they may think it is for government benefit while it's for their own. [9] also discovered that citizens are unaware of the mechanism for participation especially village assemblies.

4.3.2 Attendance of the Locality Assembly

The respondents were asked if for the last one year they have participated in any local meetings. The response shows that the majority, 81.3%, of respondents responded that there was a low extent. During the focus group discussion the question was asked and the major answer was citizens felt no need to participate because their opinions were not taken into account. These results are similar to those [9] and [10] who find that citizens do not participate in Village meetings due to various reason one being "*they don't see the need for them to attend*" citizens' meetings, including the vulnerable and marginalized groups will be empowered with vital information.

4.3.3 Knowledge of Opportunity and Obstacles to Development

The respondents were asked if they have any knowledge about the O&OD meeting. The responses show that the majority, 71.3%, responded that there was a very low extent. The focus group discussions also confirmed the above response that citizens have a limited knowledge about O&OD. The findings shows that contrary to a common belief, citizens have no clear knowledge and understanding on planning tool O&OD as well as some of the LGAs who are supposed to supervise the exercise does not know about that planning tool, never attended nor been trained for it.

O&OD is a planning tool established by LGRP aiming at capturing people's views intending to restore the spirit of self-reliance, local resource mobilization, transparency and accountability by ensuring effective community participation in planning, decision making, implementation and, therefore, ownership of the development activities (URT 2007) as quoted by [7]. The local meetings help citizens identify what they need in their localities and find local solutions as they examine the opportunity and obstacles present in their locality to solve the articulated needs, also it's a platform where citizens make development plans to be incorporated in the Local government budget.

4.5 Influence of CSO's on PB process in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council

This study also aimed at identifying the influence civil society organizations have in participatory budgeting process in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council. This objective has three components which were used to identify to what extent CSOs has influence on the participatory budgeting.

4.5.1 Provision of information on participatory budgeting

The respondents were asked if they receive any budget information from CSOs in their localities. The 100% of respondents replied 'no extent'; 100% of LGAs responded to 'some extent' owing their response to the information provided by CSOs citing [13] (Faidika Wote Pamoja) through PETs (Public Expenditure Tracking) on schools in their areas.

The discussion in focus group agreed with the previous response and cited that "CSOs help in educating our girls by taking them to VETA to learn how to saw. [15] identified opportunities for CSOs to participate in participatory budgeting one of them is at the O&OD by mobilizing, facilitating and empowering people especially marginalized group to equip them with necessary information to be able to identify real needs and prioritize. [5] finds that CSOs have a significant role to play in helping citizens to build the capacity to access and use information to demand accountability.

4.5.2 Holding government to account

The respondents were asked if they have seen any officer of the government or any project being implemented as a result of CSOs holding government to account. The response as 100% to 'no extent'. The answer which was also supported by LGAs by 80% response. The focus group discussion although their response was to no extent at first but later they provided the same story on their part being sensitized by CSOs. When CSOs were interviewed they supported LGAs response by 33.33% a high extent response and further elaborated that after conducting PETS always any discrepancy found communicated to the government and often the government correct those discrepancies.

4.5.3 Provision of civic education

The respondents were asked if they have received any sensitization or training on issues concerning civic education from any CSOs in their localities. The responses were 5% to a very high extent, 6.3% responded to a high extent, 76.3% cited no extent, 5% cited to a low extent and to a very low extent response of 7.5%. LGAs when interviewed about the same question 60% of the respondents cited to a high extent. This response was supported by CSOs [13] elaborating through interview that, they provided training for local leaders so as to help them even conduct a local O&OD by themselves in their localities without waiting for the government.

5. Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Summary

The aim of this study was to assess the effect of government support, citizen participation and Civil Society Organizations to participatory budgeting in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council. It has been found that citizens have knowledge about their right to participate in development programs in their locality, although they may not know it is embedded into the constitution but they are aware of the importance of their participation. Regardless the knowledge citizens have, still they choose not to involve

themselves in locality meetings/assembly due to years of un-catered needs, being ignored and lack of information from the government. With this regard citizens have no influence in participatory budgeting in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council.

The study also established that civil society organizations are included into participatory budgeting process in Mtwara Mikindani Municipal Council, though their role is limited at the Municipal level and in PETs, still they can stretch and reach local leaders to train them how to better plan for O&OD in their mitaa and wards.

5.2 Conclusion

In light of the findings of this study, the study concludes as follows. First, there should be a strong government support to finance the PB process itself through planning to implementation of PB projects, failure to provide financial resource is to stagnate the whole process. Secondly, the findings of this study confirm that citizens have no influence in participatory budgeting process. Citizens can only be able to influence budgetary process through discussion in meetings and through making locality plan through O&OD. Thirdly, Civil Societies main influence in participatory budgeting is through PETS where they track public expenditure.

5.3 Recommendations

This study recommends the following: first, the government should deliberately adhere to stipulated laws governing participatory budgeting and make sure local government authorities follow those laws also for the sustainability of the participatory budgeting process. Secondly, financial resources collected in the region should be retained on the respective locality for development expenditure to make sure at least the projects chosen by citizens are financed. Fourthly, the government should provide budgetary information to citizens so as to empower them to understand the budget process but also to enhance transparency. Finally, the government should provide civic education to citizens, it should make it part of the agenda for mitaa/village meetings.

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