
Adopting Co-Production as a Participatory Governance Approach to Public Services Delivery: The Case of Local Government Authorities in Ghana

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Abstract

Public, participating in their governance system has become a massive contestation in many developing countries. A country like Ghana is not an exception to this discourse. In Ghana, the national constitution makes provision(s) for the public to actively engage themselves in public policy decisions since policy outcomes inevitably affect them. The study focused on public participation in the service delivered by the Local Government Authorities in a time series design from post-1998 to 2018. The result of the study depicted, that there is a widening gap between the Public and Local Government Authorities when it comes to participation in public service delivery decision making. This has reduced the level of public trust for Local Government Authorities and has also lowered the general service delivery performance of Local Government Authorities since there is little or no system support. The study utilized co-production methodology, exercised it through the democracy cube theory to make policy suggestion on how to reinvigorate the participatory governance process on service delivered by Local Government Authorities, to achieve deliberative institution(s) in Ghana.

Keywords: *Co-Production, Participatory Governance, Local Government Authority, and Public Service Delivery*

1.0. Introduction

Governance, since the emergence of the third wave of democratization, has strongly become a recommendable concept in every democratic engagement and discourses not just in theory, but also as a pragmatic mechanism that calls for a harmonious relationship between the rulers and the ruled. Its coining can be affiliated to the Ancient Greek days' scholarships such as Aristotle and Plato, and the late eighteen (18th) and early nineteen (19th) centuries enlightenment and knowledge acquisition championed by Joseph Schumpeter and Max Weber. However, the issue of governance was not massively recognized among leaders and policy deciders of developing world in the 1950s and 60s until it became very popular in international relations and development debate in the late 1980s and early 1990s.

According to Baker (2011), governance is perceived as a broader concept that is purposively used to describe the general responsibilities and duties that is subject to the regulation, control and management of state affairs. It is an “all power relationships, including non-state, sub-state, and supra-state relations” (Ibid). These power relations interact with each other based on the level of authority that each possesses with the aim of not just utilizing political pragmatisms but the promotion of public interest as its core value. With this in mind, governance is said to be exercised within the political context of power and authority. This is clarified in the definition posited by the World Bank, that governance is how “power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development” (1992). However,

it should be noted that power and authority can be exercised to achieve development based on system support. Notwithstanding the above-positing definition of the World Bank, it is thus preferable to operationalize governance as the power to exercise political, socio-economic, administrative actions and inactions by an entrusted and legitimate authority with the defined and enshrined responsibility in the management of state affairs to meet public growth, welfare and development. In non-western societies, the Public has suffered from the spiral and contagious disease of unsatisfactory and dysfunctional government operations for many decades. A country like Ghana, since its fourth republic has searched for and been taking the antidote for weak governance practices through the implementation of various incremental policy strategies and revision of many national laws with the help of its Parliament. But still, has not fully recovered from the wounds of post-independence regimes to the pre-fourth republican regime and even in contemporary state administration and management. The reason being that its governance methodology has undergone a massive evolution under the leadership of the different military and political administrations and has now become a religious conviction. And its Public has become the congregation indoctrinated to be devoted to party lines at the detriment of public goods and services.

As its population rises, Ghana's public policy demand increases as policy supply decrease due to the scarcity of state resources. This mounted a lot of pressure and complex technicalities on governance structures, hence, the need to embrace decentralization of institutional capacities (that is the power to influence). These institutional capacities came in the form of political, socio-economic and administrative powers, and are legitimately entrusted into the hands of a Local Government Authority. In Ghana, the "de-complexity" of centralized power and functions, led to the formation of Local Government System (LGS). The LGS is just an indirect extension of the centralized government to the doorstep of the Public. The article 35/6(d) of Ghana's fourth republican constitution establishes the relevance of LGS as the:

"State shall take appropriate measures to make democracy a reality by decentralizing the administrative and financial machinery of government to the regions and districts and by affording all possible opportunities to the people to participate in decision-making at every level in national life and government."

It is based on this constitutional provision, lies the rationale behind the formation of the LGS with Local Government Authority as the system's leadership in Ghana. Here, Local Government Authorities become the front-liners in the management of the decentralized functions (that is, delivery of public services). However, since service delivery issues are complex to handle and affect the lives of many, conventional wisdom requires the participation of the public to meet up with public service delivery demands.

According to Arnstein (1969), the participation of the ruled in their state leadership is, theoretically, the foundation of democracy. That is, participatory governance is the power of the public. Public participation is therefore operationalized as the redeployment of influence to the exclusionist to deliberately become part of the political and socio-economic governance process on issues that affect them directly or indirectly. With this, participatory governance at the local government level opens a window of opportunity for the grass-root citizens to form part of the public decision making to promote the interest of the affluent society. Here, effective public engagement in public decision making at the local level tend to champion grass-root participatory governance.

However, Ghana's participatory governance methodologies can be criticized as a textbook oriented but pragmatically disadvantaged. The reason being that, the set rules enacted to ensure

grass-root participation in government activities are only enshrined in various public laws and Acts (such as Local Government Act 462 in 1993, Local Government Service Act 656 in 2003 etc.) and are sometimes narrowly or loosely implemented. Together with other experiences, makes the assertion of Bardhan (2004) very true, that local government in developing nations are pragmatically not connected to the positive values such as participation, efficiency, accountability and responsiveness. In Ghana's public sphere, Local Government Authorities are entrusted with the provision of social services such as public security, education, sanitation, electricity, fire resistance mechanisms, healthcare, and water (Ofei-Aboagye, 2009). But the issue of public participation in the formulation, selection and implementation of such government's policy supply remain contested and challenging in Ghana. This has created a post-independence perpetual power struggle between the Public and Local Authorities (though not a countervailing power) on how public service should be delivered. It is as a result of these deficits that this study seeks to find feasible solutions to a very simple but thought-provoking questions such as:

- i. What is the participatory relationship between Local Government Authorities and the Public on service delivery decision making in Ghana?
- ii. What is the level of Public trust for their Local Government Authorities in service delivery in Ghana?
- iii. How does their relationship contribute to the general performance of public service delivery by the Local Government Authorities?

The study is very key and relevant to the contemporary democratic society of Ghana, since participatory governance as posited by Sherry Arnstein, is a redistribution of power, hence, will provide a mechanism to address the existing participatory power struggle between the Public and Local Authorities. Thus, it will help us to understand which participatory governance model best suits the delivery of public service by the Local Government Authorities.

2.0. Literature Review

For the last three decades, there has been a rising intellectual contestation on the application of the concept of co-production in the distribution of public goods, services and interests. This literature review purposively focuses on co-production as a participatory governance approach and its usage in public service delivery or provision. The review commenced with the anatomic discourse of co-production from the epistemological to semantic perspective. It furthered introduced some configurative country-specific case studies which were based on experimental research conducted. The review is as follows:

2.1. The Intellectual Discourse on Co-Production in the Provision of Public Services: A Review on its Epistemology and Semantics

The concept of co-production has been useful not just in the theoretical perspective but also in the pragmatic participatory approach especially in the management of public sectors activities, the sustainability of an orderly public sphere and even in corporate governance. It has been applied in diverse forms by civil and public servants in many countries across the world (which will be reviewed later as we move along). In contemporary research, the concept of co-production is still relevant and that calls for the need to understand it from the epistemological view (that is how the theory of knowledge on co-production emerged) to its semantic understanding (that is how the concept of co-production has been defined by scholarships) within the scope of public service delivery.

From the epistemological perspective, the concept of co-production was first coined by Elinor Ostrom - a noble price winner in the late 1970s (Ostrom, 1996). She used this concept to explain

the rise of locality crime rate in Chicago in the post – street retreat of the security service; in this case polices services to be precise (Boyle, Stephens & Ryan-Collins, 2008; Boyle & Harris, 2009). In an observational study conducted by Ostrom and her fellows, it was realised that the disconnection and dis-continuity existing between the Chicago Police Service and the public was the major predictive factor to the lack of informant engagement, hence, the manifestation of high crime rate in Chicago. This made Ostrom and her fellows concluded that there was a lack of genuine information for the police service to efficiently and effectively deal with public crimes in Chicago (Ibid). In simple terms, Ostrom observational study showed that the security services delivery needs the assistantship (or participation) of the public and vice versa.

Also, several scholarships have used the concept of co-production in diverse ways but in the long run, they all tried to give an explanatory power to the concepts from a specified point of view which do not deviate from its broader usage by Elinor Ostrom. For example, after Ostrom (1996) spoke about co-production of good or a service, Bovaird (2007) also spoke about it but placed much emphasis on the issue of the regular long-term relationship between the actors of public service delivery. Also, Pestoff (2009), focused on distinguishing the dimensions of citizens participation in the provision of public service. Brandsen and Honingh (2016), narrowly focused on direct citizen’s participation in the provision of public service delivery. This ideology has been followed earlier by Coote and Goodwin (2010) and was recently developed by Cahn and Gray (2013) as the concept of “core economy” to expound on the already existing concept of co-production. So, it can be deduced clearly that scholarships have a common message (that is; public service delivery). These scholars try to communicate the utilization of the concept of co-production from diverse scholastic vistas but in the long run preach service delivery strategies.

Also, from the semantic perspective, the concept and practice of co-production are becoming popular among many scholarships, policymakers and the public at large. There are some works of literature written by scholarship trying to operationalize the concept of co-production to its simplistic form. Despite these attempts, there has not been any definitional consensus about this concept (co-production). However, a typical example of the well-known definition of co-production highlighted in many works of literature is that of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). According to definition posited by the OECD (2011), co-production is “a way of planning, designing, delivering and evaluating public services which draw on direct input from citizens, service users and civil society organisations.” With this definition, it indicates one key characteristic of the concept of co-production. That is, there is citizen participation or inclusiveness in the public service delivery, and here, the citizens can be individual(s), collective / group who strive to contribute their quota to public service delivery. The explanatory powers of the OECD’s definition were highlighted in the writings of Bason (2018), which states that co-production has to do with the public participation not only in the context of consultation but also, active engagement in the formulation, designing, and management activities. Bason continued to explain, that the concept of co-production is not only utilized in the public sectors but also in the private space as well as in the not for profit sectors. Also, the report of the Co-production Network for Wales (CNW) operationalized this concept as “an asset-based approach to public services that enables people providing and people receiving services to share power and responsibility and to work together in equal, reciprocal and caring relationships” (Co-production Network for Wales, n. d). The CNW furthered their definitional narrative by highlighting on five (5) features to buttress the definition of co-production. These features include the following:

- i. Recognizing all participators as important as possible
- ii. Development of communal support network

- iii. Promotion of communal interest
- iv. Development of a sense of trust and shared power and duties
- v. The public service institutions are drivers of enabling the public to make a change

Co-production Network for Wales (n. d), concluded these definitional characteristics by positing that the pragmatic manifestation of co-production in the public organization allows people to access public services delivery when the need arises. It also gives people that opportunity to contribute their quota to public development and social change in general (Ibid).

2.2. An Experimental Research Review on Co-Production: A Purposive Sample Selection of Three Country Cases

Over the years, researchers have massively conducted an experimental study on the co-production in the public institutions across continents. As posited in the writings of Scriven (2012), some countries have launched the implementation of co-production in their public service activities. These countries range from the United State of America to the United Kingdom, Denmark, Namibia, Malaysia and many more. This section was devoted to a brief review of some randomly selected countries across continents to avoid selection bias. The review focus on the various institutional players or actors championing the emergence and implementation of co-production in the delivery of public service

The report of Mitlin (2008) and Muller and Mitlin (2007), indicated that the Shack Dwellers Federation of Namibia in less income or disadvantaged localities co-produce with the urban government of Windhoek on the issue of housing and sanitation. Also, in the quest of enhancing the quality of public service delivery in the federation, there is a self-help mechanism for co-production to form and gain political capital and building domestic capacity in such urban localities.

Also, in the context of Italy, a co-production centre made up of the Public Health Service and a Social Association with a membership of persons who has directly or indirectly experienced mental issues before, was inaugurated in 2008. This centre (named as "Marco Cavallo"), since 2012 was recognized and accepted by Italy's Apulia region as its centre for an experiment on co-production. In 2015, the Italian Research Council evaluated the activities of the "Marco Cavallo Centre through the collaborative methodological technique. It was realized in the evaluation, as posited by Pocobello et al. (2019), that there was a high public consumption on the activities of the Marco Cavallo Centre than the consumption of the traditional health services, hence, reducing hospitalization. It was further recorded that 39% of the public utilization of the co-production centre (mainly the experimental group) are no more under psychiatric medication as compared to the case of the 22% who utilized the traditional health services (thus the control group in this case). The Italian case concluded with the experience of the respondents in that study. The study reported that respondents felt a sense of equality and respect in the co-production at the centre. The co-production activities built on the strengths of respondents gave them a sense of freedom, social attachment and belongingness, orientation and many more (Ibid).

In the Canadian settings, a network of diverse professionals was established as co-production under what is popularly known to be the Co-Create Canada (CCC). The mission statement of the CCC was to increase the level of national trust by engaging persons from the public sphere who want to contribute to the development of policies and social inclusion programs with the CCC. The rationale behind this was to make the CCC an enabler of the State to actively engage its citizens in finding solutions to public problems and concerns that gain agenda status, improve existing programs and policies through incremental policy models and make an efficient allocation and utilization of state resources. The experiment brought a new challenge

to the way public workers deliver their services to Canadian society. It further brought to the awareness of policymakers diversified approaches to target the right policy indicators to achieve a policy goal. And finally, it also brought to light alternative approaches or policy options to select for public issues (Ibid).

Furthermore, there are many pros to the application of co-production in the provision of public services. It would be remiss to assume that co-production is a very simple participatory methodology used to address complicated and technical public problems in our political, economic and social sphere. There are several limitations of co-production in this regard. For instance, in the report of Boyle and Harris (2009), it was emphasized that the pervasive changes in the provision of services to the public will not manifest if the major beneficiaries with the experience, prerequisite skills and know-how are undermined, and are treated as passive receivers or birds of passage. Also, Hodgkinson, Rimmer and Salway (2016), believe that without a clear operationalization and explanation of co-production, it becomes very challenging for participants of co-production to apply the right methodology in their research activities and policy formulation processes.

So, having digested the theoretical and contextual meaning of co-production, it should be emphasized that the drivers and purpose of co-production is a significant phenomenon in participatory governance for public decision making on service delivery. Notwithstanding the above review, works of literature have made little attempt to explain how the concept of co-production can be applied as a participatory governance mechanism to public service delivery at the local government level with a specific focus on Ghana. It is thus preferable to consider that as a lacuna to be researched.

3.0. Research Method

3.1. Data Collection Methods

The study relied on mixed-method (that is, both quantitative and qualitative) approach of data collection. With the quantitative data collection, the study used secondary data retrieved from the Afrobarometer to make a time series analysis. Also, with the case of the qualitative approach, the study employed an expert interview as its data collection method. It was a semi-structured interview format which lasted for twenty (20) to thirty (30) minutes via Skype to gather an in-depth opinion and view of three experts on the issue of public participation in local government's service delivery in Ghana. Experts (interviewees) were purposively selected based on their area of specialization in local governance issues in Ghana.

3.2. Data Analysis Method

The quantitative data (indicators) were measured and analysed with an Excel ToolPak to make visualizations for the intended purpose of the research. Also, with qualitative data gathered from the expert interviews conducted, the study used the Nvivo analytical technique to transcribe and make the analysis.

3.3. Ethical Consideration of the Research

The study first, sought for the informed consent of the various experts interviewed for this research. They were made aware, that the research was purely for academic purpose and also, contribute to the strengthening of public participation at the local government level in Ghana. To respect the research ethical principle of anonymity, experts were assured that information and data shared would be treated with confidentiality. Experts were further informed about their free will not to be answerable or share their views on specific topics and questions that they are not prepared to respond to them. These ethical principles were utilized throughout the study process.

4.0. Results & Discussion

In this section, the study looked at the relationship between the Public and Local Government Authorities based on their participation in public decision making to ensure effective delivery of public services. It also looked at the variable on trust (with its associated indicators) since the nature of participation must depict a particular level of public trust for Local Government Authorities. The study finally assesses how the aforementioned variables and their associated indicators affect the general performance of public service delivery by the Local Government Authorities in Ghana. The full assessment is as follows:

4.1. Public Participation in Local Government Authorities Service Delivery Decision Making (in %)

From the study, it was realized that since the post-2004, there has been minimal public participation in the Local Government Authorities public service delivery decision making. From the figure one (1), thirty-five per cent (35%) of respondents claimed that local government authorities do not (Never) engaged them in public service delivery decisions. Also, fourteen per cent (14%) of the respondents recognized the consistent (Always) participation of the general public in the service delivery by the Local Government Authorities in their jurisdictions. About twenty-nine per cent (29%) and seventeen per cent (17%) of the respondents said Local Government Authorities do engage them sometimes and often in public service decision making respectively. And five per cent (5%) had no idea on the issue of public participation in the services delivered by the Local Government Authorities. This is shown in figure 1:

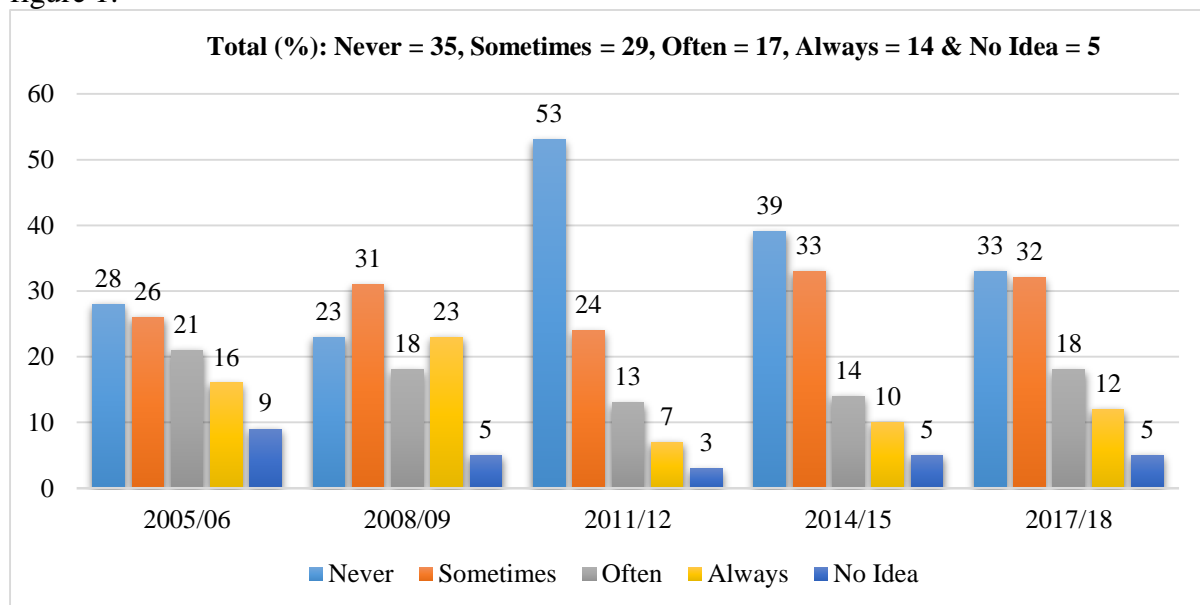


Figure 1: Public Participation in Local Government Authorities Service Delivery Decision Making

The above indicators depict that there is a participation gap between the public and local government authorities in Ghana. This then contradicts with the first feature of co-production (that is, recognizing all participators very important) as highlighted by Co-production Network for Wales (n. d). Also, from expert opinion, it was stated that Local Government Authorities with a limited time-space exclude the public in deliberative decisions that affect them and their respective residential areas. In situations where the public are given the chance to be consulted in the service delivery decision making, their views are only respected during the meeting hours and are flouted when Local Government Authorities go back to their government offices. So,

the consultation process does not give a full guarantee that public concerns will be subjected to consideration, hence, the whole participation process becomes just a “window-dressing ritual.” The participation process only makes the Local Government Authorities accrue enough evidence for the report preparations that public consultations were made before taking a particular public decision. An expert opinion added up by referring to the Article 240/2(e) of Ghana’s fourth republic constitution as the basis of her assertion. The provision reads as follows, “to ensure the accountability of local government authorities, people in particular local government areas shall, as far as practicable, be afforded the opportunity to participate effectively in their governance.” She argued that most of the people within a particular local government area are ill-informed about this constitutional provision as their redistributive power to influence government decisions that affect them and their localities. Also, there is a lack of civic education from the part of the Local Government Authorities in that respect since it comes with investing a hefty amount of resources into public education. Local Authorities prefer to remain powerful by not informing the public about their relevance in service delivery decision making, hence, the emergence of a power imbalance between the governed (public) and the governors (Local Government Authorities). From the above, public participation at the local government level in Ghana is in contrary to the position of Bason (2018), which states that public participation is not only in the context of consultation but also, active engagement in the formulation, designing, and management activities.

4.2. Public Trust for Local Government Authorities (in %)

The issue of public trust for Local Government Authorities in Ghana to some extent is influenced by the existing relationship between them. From figure two (2), it shows that since 2005/06, there has not been any sort of consistency in the public trust for Local Government Authorities. Local Government Authorities experienced a lot of public trust in between 2005/06 and started declining in the year after. In 2014/15, there was a high public distrust for local government authorities. An expert believes that the lack of existing participatory connectivity between the Public and Local Government Authorities was a major predictive factor. This makes the Public reluctant to the activities of the Local Government Authorities. That is, the Public express little or no interest in the public affairs championed by the Local Government Authorities. As asserted by Co-production Network for Wales (n. d), the development of communal support network is very key to participatory governance in public service delivery. But unfortunately, that system support is gradually fading off in Ghana. Evidence from the writing of Pocobello et al. (2019), depicted that when people participate in public service delivery, they feel a sense of equality and respect, freedom, social attachment and belongingness, oriented and many more. When these human feelings are attained by the Public, then they commence developing the trust for their Local Government Authorities. Expert asserted that Local Government Authorities in Ghana have been treating the Public as not active but passive stakeholders, and that is a contributing factor to the experience of high public distrust to Local Government Authorities in Ghana. This expert position corresponds with the assertion of Boyle and Harris (2009), that the pervasive changes in the provision of services to the public will not manifest if the major beneficiaries with the experience, prerequisite skills and know-how are undermined, and are treated as passive receivers or birds of passage. The treatment of public as birds of passage flout the fourth feature of Co-production Network for Wales (n. d) which sees participation as the development of a sense of trust, shared power and duties. Figure two (2) shows public trust for Local Government Authorities in Ghana.

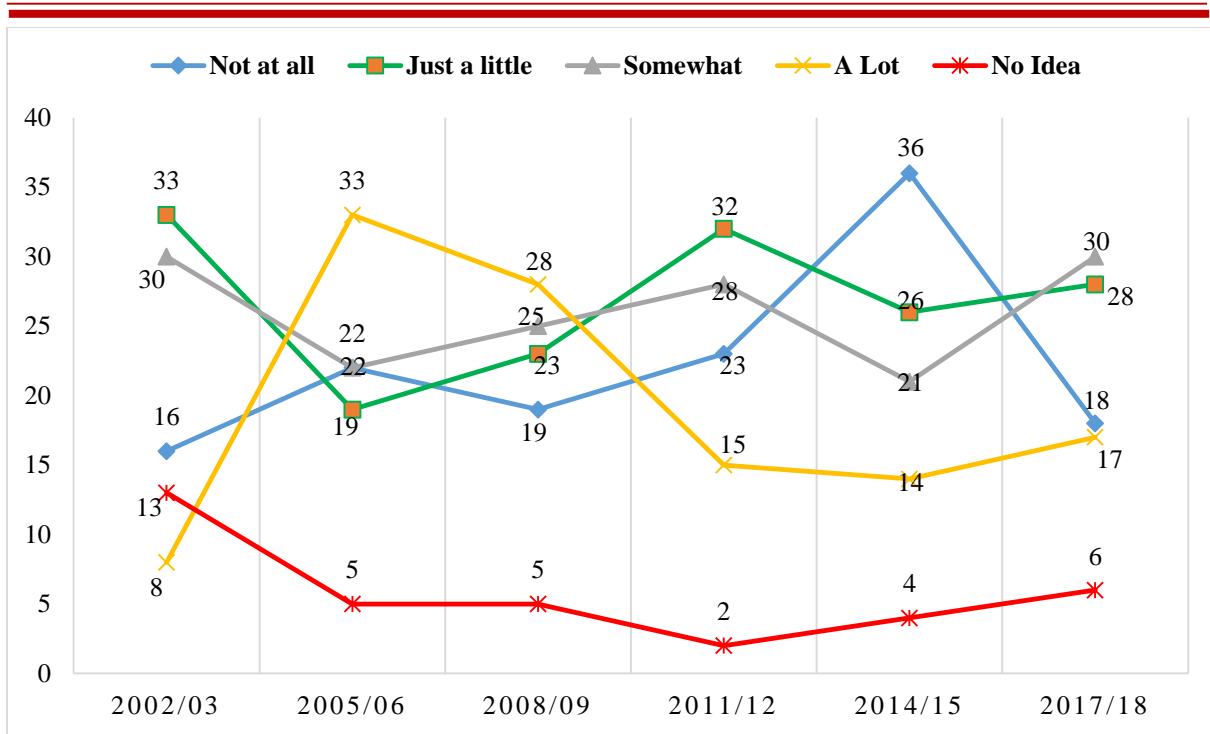


Figure 2: Public Trust for Local Government Authorities

Performance of Local Government Authorities on Public Service Delivery (in %)

Since the post-1990s, the Public has approved the performance of Local Government Authorities in the delivery of public service in Ghana. From the expert position, he argued that the approval rating can be as a result of the social network of Local Authorities. That is, Local Government Authorities are oftentimes embraced by the society as one of their own (such as being a resident of the community, family member, religious and or political affiliate). This social connection and attachment shape the cognitive response of many persons since they want to keep a harmonious relationship with their neighbour who is a Local Authority. He further claimed that such socially constructed relationship is a disadvantage to the performance outcome of local services delivered by the Authorities. The reason being that service delivery policy outcomes undermined the participation of the public, hence, sometimes become problematic in achieving a good performing record and effective social change. This expert’s opinion is a subscription to the position of Co-production Network for Wales (n. d), that public participation in the delivery of public service decision making is a determinant of good social change. This effective social change is mainly driven by the service delivery performance of Local Authorities. However, there are exceptional cases where the Public genuinely approved the actions and inactions of Local Government Authorities in the public service delivered. This is due to the immense performing effort of some Local Authorities to achieve public satisfaction. This case scenarios has no connection to the socially constructed relationship between the Public and Local Authorities as already highlighted. The good performance outcome is purely based on the devoted and selfless effort of such Local Authorities who discharge their service delivery duties as mandated from them.

Also, looking at the performance from the “strongly approve” rating has been very low since 2000 to 2018. Furthermore, in between the “strongly approve” and “approve” ratings lie the indicator “disapprove” of the performance of public service delivery by Local Government Authorities. The expert claimed that the poor recognition of the service delivery performance of Local Government Authorities is basically as a result of the kind of unhealthy relation existing between the Public and Authorities. As already mentioned, the public feels a sense of

exclusion from public policy decision making that affects them directly and the affluent society in general. The data is shown in figure 3:

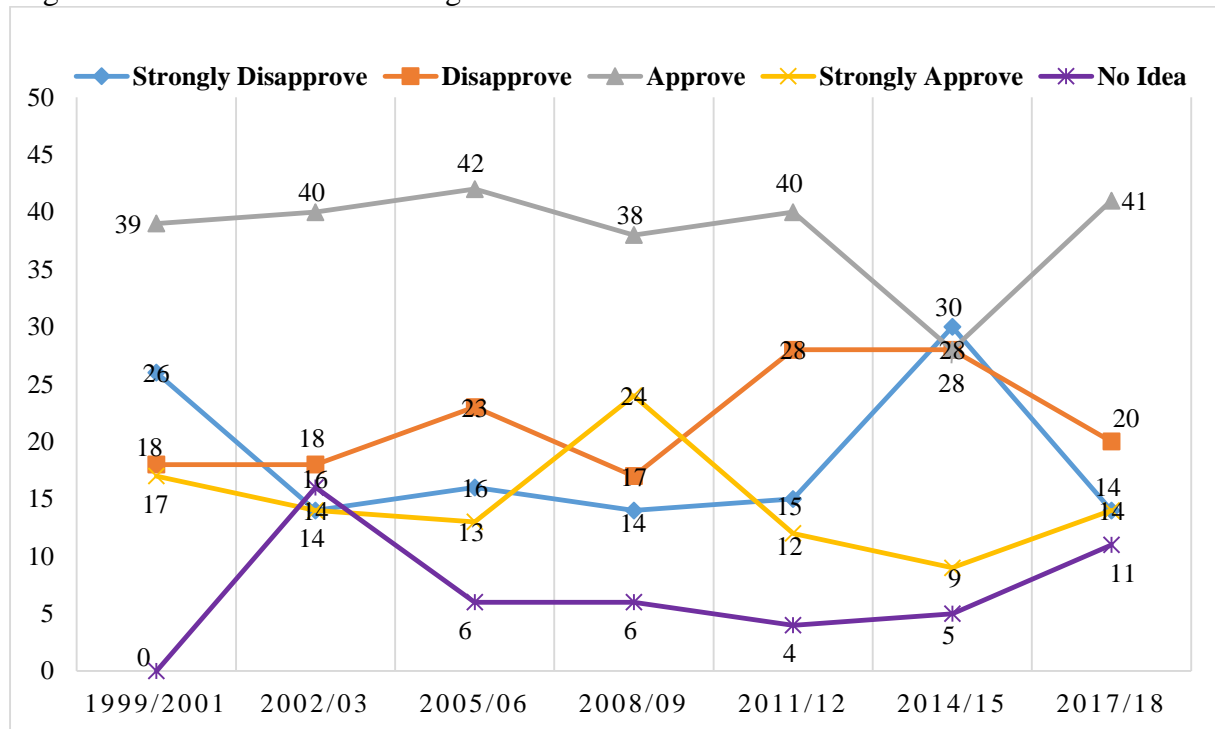


Figure 3: Performance of Local Government Authorities on Public Service Delivery

5.0. Addressing the Participatory Gap between Public & Local Government Authorities

In this research, suggestions are built on the theoretical basis of Archon Fung’s democracy cube (2006). There is the need to acknowledge Fung’s theory since its best help in developing the right co-production model as a participatory governance approach in the public service delivery in Ghana with a specific focus on the interaction between the Public and Local Government Authorities. As already posited in the literature review and discussion section of the study, it can be argued that poor participatory governance approaches encumber the effectiveness and efficiency of public service delivered by Local Government Authorities in general and in Ghana to be precise. This research introduces the concept of co-production as a participation methodology that Local Authorities in Ghana can adopt to enhance public services delivery.

The study formulates an ideal modular assumption, that co-production in public services delivered by the Local Government Authorities in Ghana can be achieved effectively through the coalition of Stakeholder-ships as its mode of participant selection, autonomous deliberation as its mode of communication and public decision making, and co-governance as its tool of influence and authority, ceteris paribus. This is functionally represented as follows:

$$f(CP_0) = (Stkd_1 + Delbtn_2 + Cog_3 - FC_4)$$

Where $f(CP_0)$ = Co-production in Public Service Delivery at Local Government Level, $Stkd_1$ = Stakeholders, $Delbtn_2$ = Independent Deliberation based on logic and reasoning, Cog_3 = Power Redistribution through Co-Governance and FC_4 = other Factors held Constant. This can be modelled through the democracy cube visualization as follows:

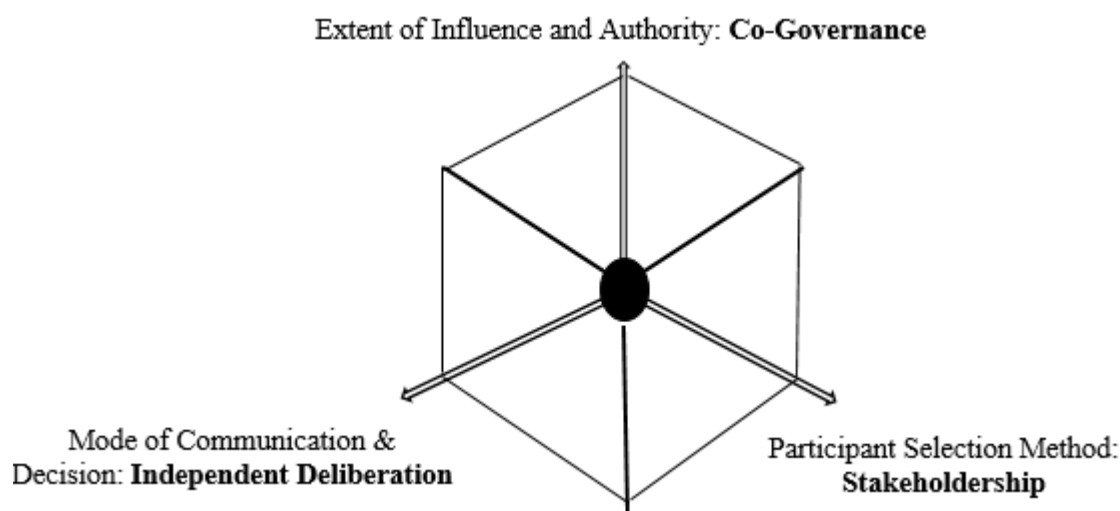


Figure 4: Author's illustration on the utilization of co-production as a participatory governance approach through the democracy cube.

From figure 4, the study suggests that public administrators and managers at the local government level of Ghana in their quest of providing public service delivery should have the institutional incentive to engage the public. They should be the convenors of public participation in the service delivery decision-making process. There should also be an assurance that public participation is primarily free from politics as the interest of the broader society is prioritized. To establish this foundation as a precondition, there must be a neutral assessor who will be responsible for the selection of key stakeholders (that is, individuals or groups who are affected by a public policy service delivery and try to inform or influence others about the consequences of the policy) in the selection of participants. Upon the arrival of these stakeholders at the service delivery decision-making table, the mode of communication and decision making among government and non-governmental participants should be based on a deliberative discussion. Within the discussion process, participants should be allowed to make an autonomous deliberation on issues discussed. That is, participants should be allowed to make their independent decisions based on logic and reasoning. After the extensive deliberation, the final decision that best promotes public good and services should be adopted as the selected policy. Here, participants especially nongovernmental(s) should be free from the first-two rungs on the ladder of citizen participation (that is, manipulation and therapy) to ensure legitimacy in the public decision-making process on service delivery.

After this, there should be a co-governance of the adopted public policy for service delivery where power (influence) and authority are distributed based on the required duties and responsibilities of all participants, hence, the realization of partnership and power delegation. The recognition of co-governance implementation mechanism will promote autonomous accountability for the assigned roles and responsibilities of both the governmental and non-governmental participants. It will further build consensus among the multi-stakeholders involved in the public service delivery decision-making process to avoid policy paralysis, achieve a mutually inclusive relationship, be efficient, stable and meet public satisfaction. However, it should be noted that the integration of the three major activities (that is, stakeholder selection, independent deliberation and co-governance) will bolster public capacity to decide on their choices rather than an imposition by Local Authorities, hence, achieving a deliberative institutionalization. In this case, the Local Authority Agencies become a meta-institution responsible for the accumulation and utilization of local knowledge to attain better public service delivery. This act of co-production will go a long way to reinvigorate participatory

governance in the public service delivery between the Public and Local Government Authorities in Ghana.

6.0. Conclusion

The study focused on the adoption of good participatory governance pragmatism at the local government level in the production of public services to the Republic of Ghana. With this, the study looked at the existing relationship between Local Government Authorities and the public in the context of participation in the public service delivery decision making. It further looked at how the existing relationship has affected the public trust for local authorities and the overall public service delivery performance of Local Authorities. It was realized in the study that there is an existing divergent participatory relationship between the Public and Local Government Authorities. This has gone a long way to have a deleterious influence on other issues such as public trust and performance of Local Government Authorities in the delivery of public services. Based on the meagre outcomes of the above indicators, the study suggested the concept of co-production as a pragmatic participatory governance approach to public service delivered by Local Government Authorities in Ghana through a deliberative institution.

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