

THE KEHLER MANAGEMENT SYSTEM®: INTEGRATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS IN THE QUALITY ASSESSMENTS OF MUNICIPAL ADMINISTRATIONS

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Abstract

Research purpose: The Kehler Management System (KMS) is a tool for assessing quality in municipalities. Due to technological advancements, globalisation, greater market dynamics, changing values and demographic change, municipalities find themselves in a complex and dynamic field of tension. The diversity and complexity of these fields of activity and relationship structures continue to increase, making it difficult for municipalities to adapt their processes.

However, in the first stage, the focus of KMS was limited to the internal perspective of the municipal administration. This was coherent in terms of an initially necessary reduction of complexity, but in terms of a holistic view, this is insufficient. Following the successful introduction of the KMS for quality assessment in the internal structure of public administration, the concept is being expanded to include the external perspective of stakeholders. The question is: "How can the satisfaction of various stakeholder groups in the municipality be measured in a way that incurs significant participation and produces relevant results for the decision-makers in the municipality?"

Design / Methodology / Approach: The research design takes the form of a case study and focuses on the municipality of Ottersweier. The basis for developing the external perspective is determining the stakeholder groups interacting with a municipality. Six stakeholder groups are identified: Residents, local businesses, business partners of the administration, capital providers of the administration, civil society actors such as associations, clubs and interest groups, and corporations and institutions under public law, e.g. neighbouring municipalities. In analogy to the KMS's approach to the municipal administration's internal perspective, the first step is identifying impact factors grouped into success clusters. To assess the impact factors, questions relevant to the impact factors are developed. Questionnaires were developed and tested for the stakeholder group of residents, local businesses and clubs. All questionnaires were tested in the Ottersweier community.

Findings: The survey brought about significant results that aligned with the staff's experience in the municipality. Local businesses indicated a "General Satisfaction" of 81%. They were especially satisfied with the work of the administration. The impact cluster is considered to be fulfilled. However, 18 companies indicated a willingness to relocate out of the municipality for other reasons.

The survey of the clubs showed a high level of satisfaction with the service quality of the municipality for this stakeholder group. The general satisfaction of the clubs was 98%.

The evaluation of the residents' views showed that the two impact clusters, "General satisfaction" and "Administration," were above the 80% hurdle. The results for the impact clusters "Municipal Policy" and "Supply and Infrastructure" were noteworthy. Both the survey of residents and local businesses obviously failed to meet the KMS target of 80% effectiveness for these two impact clusters. A closer examination of the detailed

questions revealed that both stakeholder groups perceive the same areas as particularly deficient: communication and implementation of the municipal council's mission statement and public transport.

Originality / Value / Practical implications: In previous surveys of residents in various municipalities without using the KMS, the participation of residents was so low that only limited conclusions could be drawn about the quality of municipal services. Therefore, an attempt was made to keep the number of questions to residents as low as possible to increase the survey's acceptance. The response rate was significantly expanded concerning the number of residents compared to previous surveys.

Since two stakeholder groups perceived two areas as deficient independently of each other, "Municipal Policy" and "Supply and Infrastructure", the municipality of Ottersweier must conduct a weakness analysis in order to develop a plan for action to improve the services. Semi-structured, qualitative interviews with residents can be used for this analysis. Also, the motives for local businesses to consider relocation should be investigated in more detail.

Keywords: Performance and impact analysis of municipalities, Impact-oriented management

JEL codes: H72, H83

Introduction

The Kehler Management System (KMS) is an instrument for analysing municipalities, which depicts the current state of the administration in a self-assessment. It is based on the "St. Gallen Management Model" (SGMM) (Rüegg-Sturm & Grand, 2019). Based on experience with New Public Management projects, the KMS integrates both instrumental and cultural factors and weights them equally, considering that more projects fail because of cultural weaknesses than because of the lack of suitable management instruments.

In the first phase of its development, the KMS focused on the internal view of the administration. The success clusters of trusting cooperation between politics and administration, open and trusting leadership and cooperation culture, sustainable personnel management, integration of a strategic approach, modern budgeting and accounting, and a learning organisation were identified (Böhmer & Kientz, 2015). Hence, the KMS was designed to look at good local government from the internal perspective of culture, processes, and tools but ignored the heterogeneous output of local governments. However, in a turbulent environment, local governments rely more than ever on satisfied residents, local businesses, etc. - both for a stable local democracy and for the co-production of services, from sports clubs to fire departments. Co-production and various forms of participation have been part of the political debate for some time. The logical consequence is to include the external perspective in the KMS - albeit in a very aggregated form, by examining the satisfaction of different stakeholders in the community, e.g. residents, associations, local businesses, etc.

Hence, this article focuses on developing a concept for incorporating the external perspective of stakeholders into the KMS. The question is: "How can the satisfaction of different stakeholder groups in the community be measured in such a way that significant participation takes place and relevant results are achieved for decision-makers in the community?" A case study in the municipality of Ottersweier validates the external perspective developed.

This paper's literature review displays the theories the KMS is based on. The main ideas include the St. Gallen Management Model (SGMM), New Public Management (NPM) and post-NPM thinking, Total Quality Management (TQM) and its developments, especially for the public sector, and with the extension to the external perspective, stakeholder approaches. The methodology chapter briefly explains why this extension was deemed necessary, which stakeholder groups were identified and why, and which impact factors were used to determine their satisfaction with the conditions in the municipality. It then describes how the survey was conducted. The results chapter describes and explains the survey outcome for the case study in Ottersweier. Conclusions give specific counsel to Ottersweier as well as an outlook for the further development of the KMS in general.

Literature review

Even though impact-oriented management exists in its own right in public sector research, the 4th generation of the St. Gallen Management Model is used for the present work. In the forerunning

model, the private-sector enterprise served as the central anchor point. However, in the 4th generation, the perspective of value-creation units was expanded to include companies, public administrations, non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or non-profit organisations (NPOs) (Rüegg-Sturm & Grand, 2019; Seker, 2019).

Both in the private and public sectors from the late 1980s onwards, there has been a shift in perspective towards the customer or the citizen respectively. The citizen has become the focus of attention in municipalities "...political client, customer and co-designer of the municipal community..." (Gourmelon et al., 2018, p. 18) In order to be able to respond to their needs, an external perspective will be added. However, the citizen is a multifaceted being.

From a quality management point of view, citizens who play different roles in the municipality (e.g., inhabitant, business owner or employee in a local business, member of some form of community initiative like clubs, churches, etc.) are recipients of services, and on a larger scale, politics. Their satisfaction is the focus of quality management, which has been focused on in the public sphere (e.g. Broekmate et al., 2001). It is based on private sector concepts like Total Quality Management and - adapted and widely used in the public sector - the EFQM model (European Foundation for Quality Management, 2020). Total Quality Management (TQM) was developed in the 1980s as a holistic approach. In addition to product and service quality, the requirements of customers, employees, investors and the environment were considered (Gourmelon et al., 2018, p. 375). Public sector quality management comprises five central components: customer orientation, product orientation, employee orientation, process orientation and public welfare orientation (Bandemer, 1998, p. 371).

However, from a co-production point of view, these same citizens, in their various roles, are contributing to the common good of the entire municipality, e.g. by organising sports clubs, events or support for marginalised groups.

Therefore, citizens can also be considered stakeholders in their multiple roles and interactions with the municipality. Freeman (1984) describes a stakeholder as a group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of an organisation's objectives.

There is ample research on stakeholder interaction from different perspectives. It has been considered (Haarhoff, 2019):

- an action (Arnstein, 1969)
- a process (Loh, 2012)
- a network or system (Booher & Innes, 2002; Chettiparamb, 2007)
- a complex system (Woodhill, 2009).

Stakeholder interests influencing public sector organisations are considered significantly more complex than most private sector organisations (Davenport & Leitch, 2005; McAdam et al., 2005; Ring & Perry, 1985).

With the need for addressing more complex ("wicked") problems in public sector entities on all levels, it is not sufficient to launch single interventions but rather to pool the resources and the contribution of various stakeholders in a public value co-creation process (Head & Alford, 2015).

Therefore, the last two concepts to be mentioned in this literature review are public value and governance.

Moore (1995), who is considered the founder of the concept of public value, regards public value as a concept focused on management. In contrast, in Bozeman's (2007) perspective, public value is oriented toward more comprehensive social outcomes. Benington and Moore (2011) later attest that the concept of public value has since moved beyond its origins in the American neo-liberalism of the 1990s and is being used internationally as a model for perceiving the changing roles of the public, private and voluntary sectors in a period of comprehensive political, economic, ecological and social change.

In the current literature, the view can be found that together with horizontal coordination in and between networks, vertical integration is a typical feature of "post-NPM" administrations (New Public

Management) (Lægreid & Rykkja, 2015; Margetts & Dunleavy, 2013). It seems that the pendulum is swinging back towards features of traditional public administration in a modernised version, as argued by the tenants of the "Neo-Weberian State" (Byrkjeflot et al., 2018; Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). However, there seems to be a shift toward more relevant networks for policy-making and service delivery (Klijn, 2008; Torfing & Sørensen, 2014).

Traditional public administration focused on collaboration within the public sector and vertical coordination across different levels of the hierarchy. The main coordination instruments were rules transmitted down the hierarchy (Pollitt & Bouckaert, 2017). New Public Management combines internal and external collaboration, including private sector actors – emphasising privatisation, especially with the anglophone early adopters. There is tension between centralisation and decentralisation, which comprises both the autonomy of the respective units as well as competition and incentivisation. This implies primarily vertical coordination and firm output control (Bèzes et al., 2013, p. 155; Newman, 2001). Governance as a third concept increasingly involves non-state actors both in policy-making and service delivery (Palumbo, 2017; Vabo & Winsvold, 2022). It adds new features - in particular, democracy and quality of life, partnership building as well as learning and innovation (Rösener & Damkowski, 2004, p. 313).

This leads to increased horizontal collaboration to overcome silo culture and solve complex problems that affect several policy areas (Hammerschmid et al., 2023; Lægreid & Rykkja, 2015; Scognamiglio et al., 2023; Torfing, 2019).

Integrating the external perspective into the KMS allows for better quality management. However, it also builds the base for co-production approaches resulting in higher public value, approaches to solving wicked problems, innovation and higher resilience in turbulent environments.

Research Methodology

The KMS is an analysis tool for municipalities to determine the current state of the administration by means of a self-assessment. The process of uncovering, analysing and remedying problem areas in a municipality is holistic, integrative and coordinated (Böhmer et al., 2020).

In the first stage of development, the KMS focused on the internal perspective of the administration (Böhmer & Kientz, 2015). In terms of a holistic approach, stakeholders such as citizens or businesses should be included in the evaluation of a municipal administration. This has led to the addition of an external perspective to the KMS to review the municipal administration's performance vis-à-vis the stakeholder group.

The procedure for developing the external perspective is, in principle, analogous to developing the KMS for the internal perspective of local government. However, from the external perspective, the effect or benefit of services for the inquirer plays a role, so the inquirers of services from local government are first categorised. As a result, six stakeholder groups can be identified (Schweizer, 2021, p. 24):

- **Residents**

The stakeholder group of residents includes all people living in the municipality. The group of residents is larger than that of citizens, as asylum seekers and foreign workers are also included. Residents are the users of public facilities and recipients of public services. However, they can also be the addressee of interventions by the administration, for example, to maintain public safety. The residents' expectations of the municipal administration are the provision of good infrastructure, livable and affordable living in the municipality, high recreational value, transparency of and participation in political affairs and, in general, good service quality.

- **Local businesses**

In the case of the stakeholder group of local businesses, the municipal administration is expected to support entrepreneurial activities by providing good infrastructure, suitable conditions for job expansion and generally good location factors. Upon closer examination, a distinction can be made between the employer and employee perspectives of the local business

stakeholder group. Although employers and employees certainly pay attention to different details, the above expectations apply to both roles.

- Public-sector entities and institutions

The stakeholder group of public-sector corporations/entities includes other municipalities, counties, regional councils, municipal audit institutions, special-purpose associations, the federal government and the state. The expectations of the municipalities are compliance with legal requirements, good exchange of information, and reliable and timely fulfilment of tasks.

- Capital providers

Capital providers as a stakeholder group include the federal government, the states, banks, sponsors, donors and foundations. The federal and state governments are also included in the previous stakeholder group. There has been no fundamental change in the expectations of capital providers from local governments. The fulfilment of tasks is expected based on the provision of capital. The situation is different for banks. Here, the municipality is expected to provide a coherent return on capital and a coherent infrastructure for providing and developing financial services - for example, in the real estate sector. Sponsors, donors, and foundations expect support to appeal to a broad spectrum of people in the community. In the interest of all capital providers are trustworthy financial management of the municipality and mutual service relationships.

- Civil society actors

The stakeholder group of civil society actors consists of clubs, associations, churches, and civil society interest groups. A distinction can be made between the organisation's management and its members. This stakeholder group expects the municipality to support and promote the organisation's activities, e.g., the use of sports facilities and their maintenance, support for public relations via the municipality's social media channels, etc.

- Business partners

Suppliers and craftsmen form the stakeholder group of business partners. They expect as many contracts as possible to be awarded locally, a good payment record on the part of the municipality, and cooperation to be characterised by trust overall.

It should be noted that the various stakeholder groups are interconnected. For example, the state can evaluate a municipality in both the role of a public entity and as a capital provider. Different perspectives can also be taken by residents when evaluating a municipality. When residents are surveyed, other stakeholder groups are also partially involved simultaneously, as the following example illustrates: Mr Miller lives in the municipality and runs a local business (handicraft); he is also a board member of the local music club. Since he runs a handicraft business, he is a business partner for repairs to public buildings in the municipality. In this case, Mr Miller is a resident, entrepreneur, association board member and business partner. Therefore, it will be difficult for him to complete an evaluation only from a purely resident's point of view. Subconsciously, the interests of the company or the association will have an influence.

For this reason, it is necessary to develop a survey scheme that is structured into central topic areas that are used for all stakeholder groups. This allows a meaningful and comparable analysis of the results across stakeholder groups. The approach offers - at least to some extent - the possibility of recognising role dependencies in the survey and taking them into account in the evaluation.

Since the impact of administrative performance on third parties is surveyed when applying the external perspective, the term impact cluster is introduced. The following impact clusters can be identified and are used for all stakeholder groups (Schweizer, 2021, p. 31).

- General satisfaction

In order to obtain an initial impression of the performance relationship between a stakeholder group and the municipality, general satisfaction is surveyed. Here, undesirable developments can be identified at an early stage.

- Cooperation and participation

Interests and needs should be heard and taken into account. Sufficient exchange of information is of central importance. It should be possible to influence the essential affairs of the community.

- Supply and infrastructure

A sufficient supply, a good condition of public facilities and a well-developed and high-quality infrastructure are the basis for a high level of public welfare. The constant adaptation of the infrastructure to current conditions and its maintenance are of central importance.

- Municipal council

The municipal council is the main body of the municipality. In order to create a basis of trust, a good relationship between the stakeholder groups and the municipal council is essential. Furthermore, this body decides on the long-term goals of the municipality.

- Administration - process areas

The administration is in direct contact with the stakeholder groups. The goal is to provide high-quality services. The focus is on the process areas of the municipality. It is assumed that a high level of digitisation can expand the municipality's services.

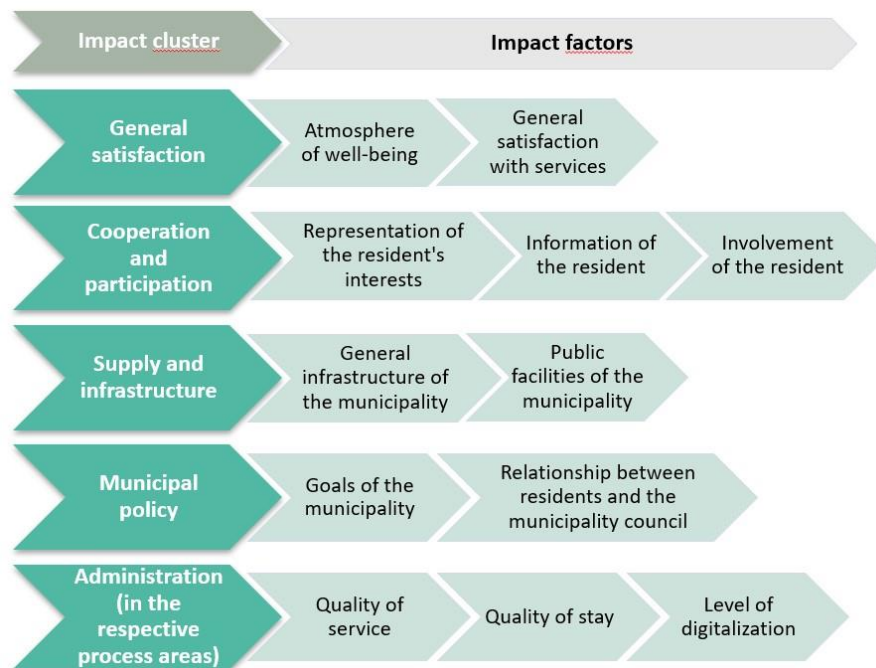


Fig. 1. Impact cluster and impact factors (Source: Schweizer, 2021, p. 33)

Specific impact clusters can be added as needed for surveys of individual stakeholder groups. For example, in the survey of associations – stakeholder group civil society actors – this could be an impact cluster "municipal association promotion," and in the survey of local businesses, the impact cluster "municipal business promotion" (Lipps, 2022, p. 21).

In order to be able to make an assessment, the impact clusters are again subdivided into individual subcategories. The term "impact factors" is used to align with the internal view, which also uses the term "factor". Figure 1 shows an overview of impact clusters and impact factors (Schweizer, 2021, p. 33).

Based on the approach of impact clusters and impact factors, a diagnostic tool is designed as it has been for the internal perspective. Questions are developed for the individual impact factors. If necessary, the impact factors are weighted differently within the individual impact clusters. The

individual impact factor questions are categorised according to importance, as not every question has the same significance. Therefore, the colours red, orange, and yellow are introduced. Red represents the indispensable questions that are an integral part of the survey. Orange stands for important questions that should be included in the questionnaire. Yellow are only additional questions that can be added. The answers to the questions are used to evaluate the efficiency in the efficiency factor. This, in turn, is used to calculate the efficiency in the efficiency cluster. The efficiency indicates the percentage of fulfilment of each question. The following classification of efficiency is based on the Pareto principle (Newman, 2005):

- Below 50%: The addressed aspect of this question is hardly fulfilled by the municipality. There is a very large potential for improvement.
- From 50% to 79%: The addressed aspect of this question is partially fulfilled by the municipality. However, there is still a need for action.
- From 80%: The addressed aspect of this question is satisfactorily fulfilled. There is no or only a very small need for improvement.

The following excerpt from the external perspective's diagnostic tool illustrates the systematics:

Importance of the questions			Weighting of the points
indispensable			100%
important			80%
supplementary			40%
Question no.	Question	Rating	Description
General satisfaction			
WF01	Atmosphere of well-being		
F1	Do you feel at home in our community?	Scale: 1-4 + don't know (0 p.) (does not apply - applies)	It identifies how much the community cares about the well-being of its residents.
WF02	General satisfaction with services		
F2	Are you satisfied with municipal services overall?	Scale: 1-4 + don't know (0 p.) (does not apply - applies)	Provides information about the general performance of the municipality for its residents.
Cooperation and participation			
WF03	Representation of the resident's interests		
F3	Is your interest in the following local issues high? - goals of your municipality - etc.	Scale: 1-4 + don't know (0 p.) (does not apply - applies)	Provides information on which municipal matters are important to a resident. Thus, the municipality knows in which municipal matter it should inform residents more and in which areas residents' interest should be further increased.

Fig. 2. Excerpt from the external perspective of the diagnostic tool

The municipality of Ottersweier, with its approximately 6,400 inhabitants, is the southernmost municipality in the district of Rastatt, in the administrative district of Karlsruhe. It was selected to validate the external perspective of the KMS because the municipality of Ottersweier had already been involved in developing the Kehler Management System® in the past in the function of a pilot municipality since 2017. Here, surveys of the employees of the building yard and the administration, the municipal councillors and managers were carried out from an internal perspective. The potential for improvement uncovered was discussed, and measures were implemented. In 2019, a second survey was conducted with the Kehler Management System®, which essentially validated the measures from 2017 that addressed the weaknesses uncovered from the internal perspective. However, at the same time, it identified new potential for improvement (Böhmer et al., 2020).

In an initial pilot test using the external perspective, three stakeholder groups were surveyed: local businesses and associations as a subset of civic stakeholders in 2021 (Lipps, 2022) and residents in

2022 (Wissenbach, 2023). The 2021 surveys were announced and promoted through mail and electronic cover letters, social media, and the community newsletter before contacting local businesses and associations directly to complete the survey. In 2022, a representative sample of residents who were contacted directly was used.

An extract from the commercial register was used as the data set for the survey of local businesses. 200 local businesses were contacted, and the response rate was 28 %. One-third of the respondents had been in the municipality for over 20 years, and another third for more than 40 years. The largest group was in services (34 %), followed by 27% from the trade/construction sector and 25% in trade.

The 60 clubs and subdivisions had a response rate of 63 %. Half of them existed for more than 50 years; one-third were social and cultural associations, and another third were sports clubs.

The citizenship was comprised of 5,650 inhabitants aged 16 or over. Their selection was based on a sample of 1,500, allowing a confidence interval of 5% and a confidence level of 95 %. The response rate was 36 %. To achieve the highest possible response rate, participation was possible online and in paper form. This was intended to also reach less tech-savvy residents. The use of two survey types (online and paper) turned out to be suitable. The internet platform worked without any problems and was used by the majority (93 %) of all sample participants. The paper questionnaire was used by 7% of all sample participants. It should be emphasised that the average age of those was about 67 years. The assumption that the paper-based survey method primarily takes into account older residents who are less tech-savvy was thus confirmed.

In a citizen survey in 2015 in the municipality of Ottersweier, which was carried out independently of the KMS, the response rate was 33 %. It is impossible to determine the proportion of the increase in the response rate of 10%, which was due to the use of online and paper questionnaires, the reminder postcard, or the reduction in the number of questions.

Research Results

The research results are subdivided according to the three stakeholder groups involved: local businesses, clubs and residents.

Local businesses

The analysis from the perspective of local companies was chosen because the municipality had implemented many measures in the field of municipal business promotion in the past. In order to investigate the impact of such measures and to learn about the effect of the municipality and its processes in terms of external impact in general, the external stakeholder group "local businesses" proved to be essential.

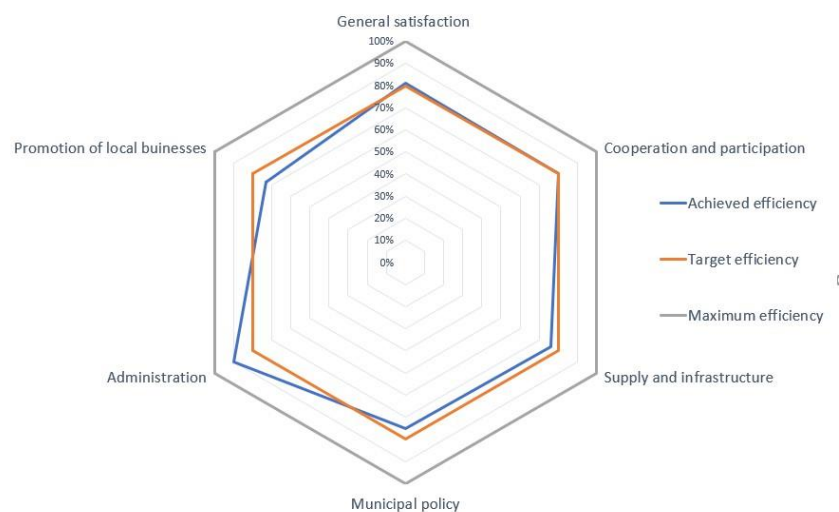


Fig. 3. Results of the local businesses' survey (Souce: developed by the authors)

In the impact cluster "General Satisfaction", the municipality achieved an impact level of 81% from the perspective of local businesses. The impact cluster is considered to be fulfilled. However, it is worth noting that 18 companies indicated that they have considered relocating out of the municipality. The motives for this should be investigated in more detail. In the "Cooperation and Participation" impact cluster, there is also no potential for improvement, with an impact level of 80%. In the impact cluster "Administration", the municipality also has no need for action with 90%. The quality of advice and accessibility are rated as very good, and the municipality is also well positioned in the area of digitisation from the point of view of the local companies.

The impact cluster "Municipal business promotion" shows the greatest potential for improvement in the survey, with 73%. In particular, communication in municipal business promotion between the companies and the administration and between the companies themselves is considered insufficient by the respondents. Some companies also see potential for improvement in the support provided by the authorities. The effect of the marketing campaign "Ottersweier lohnt sich" is also questioned by some of the companies. In the area of "Supply and Infrastructure", there is also potential for improvement with 76%. Above all, the connection to public transport needs improvement from the point of view of the companies. When asked about satisfaction with public transport connections, 50% of respondents said they were hardly satisfied or not at all satisfied with the connections. In the "Municipal Policy" impact cluster, another area for action was identified with 75%. From the point of view of the companies, the communication of municipal goals still needs to be improved. The relationship between the municipality and local businesses is rated as predominantly good. However, the municipality must ensure that its goals are consistently implemented in line with the municipal mission statement. Local businesses still see room for improvement here.

Overall, the municipality achieved a score of 79%. Individual impact clusters showed potential for improvement, which can be addressed in the future by the administration, the municipal council, and municipal management.

Clubs

The community of Ottersweier has an active club life with about 60 clubs and their subdivisions. The clubs registered in Ottersweier include mainly sports and music clubs. In the area of "society and culture", the community's club life is also well established with several carnival clubs as well as clubs for other cultures or the history of the community. They make a significant contribution to the city's cultural offerings.

The evaluation of the clubs' view showed that the municipality achieved a value of over 80% in each of the six impact clusters. The general satisfaction of the clubs presented reached a very high value of 98%. This satisfaction was also reflected in the remaining impact clusters. For the impact cluster "Cooperation and Participation", a value of 85% resulted and thus no need for action. The impact factor "Information of the association" shows an impact level of 99%. The participating clubs agree that the municipality's information policy is excellent. In the impact cluster "Municipal promotion of clubs", the municipality achieved an excellent value of 93%. The appreciation of club work in the area of honorary offices and youth work was particularly praised by the clubs. The clubs are also satisfied with the financial support provided. However, it was noted that the municipality should make public facilities such as sports facilities and training rooms available to the clubs free of charge. The clubs are equally satisfied with the "supply and infrastructure" impact cluster, with a value of 89%. Municipal facilities such as sports facilities and training rooms were rated as sufficiently available and in good condition.

The impact cluster "Local council" achieved an efficiency of 92%. For the specific impact factor "Relationship between the clubs and the municipal council", an impact level of 100% was achieved. The clubs unanimously stated that the municipal council was always open to their concerns. The "Administration" impact cluster was rated at 93% overall. The impact factor "Service quality" shows, with a rating of almost 100%, that the municipality is characterised by a high quality of service. Overall, the municipality achieved an efficiency rating of 91% in the club survey. There is, therefore, no need for action.

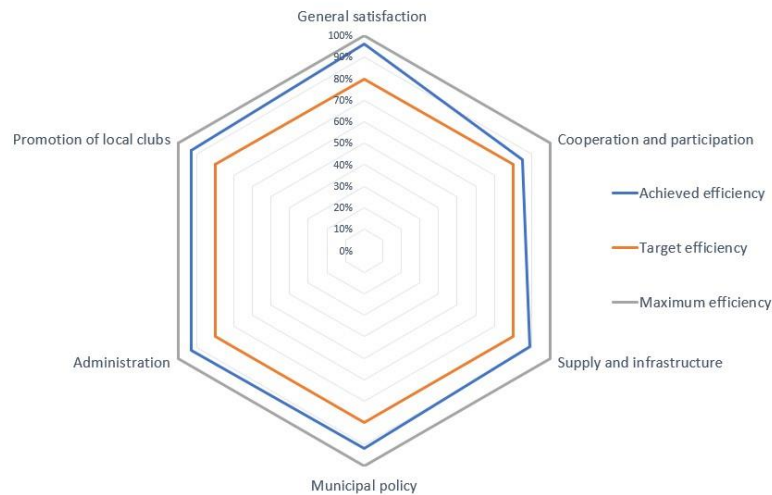


Fig. 4. Results of the clubs' survey (Source: developed by the authors)

Residents

As a starting point, the residents' diagnostic tool was developed in 2020 (Schweizer, 2021). The underlying questionnaire was revised in advance to reduce the number of questions per impact factor while maintaining the same validity (Wissenbach, 2023, p. 21). The idea is that as the questionnaire size increases, residents' willingness to participate decreases. This must be avoided. As a result, in four meetings with people from municipal practice, those questions that can be bundled without loss of information were summarised. Questions aimed at collecting information that the municipality could obtain elsewhere were deleted. In sum, the original number of 40 indispensable and important questions could be reduced to 28. The number of supplementary questions was limited to 6, although up to 10 are possible.

The evaluation of the residents' views showed that the two impact clusters, "General Satisfaction" and "Administration", are above the 80% hurdle. The other impact clusters, on the other hand, do not reach the required 80% hurdle. The "Supply and Infrastructure" area represents the greatest weakness of the municipality. Here, the efficiency level is only 60%. A closer look reveals that the specific impact factor "General infrastructure of the municipality," with 55%, contributes significantly to this low value. In particular, the public transport service in the community of Ottersweier is seen as a weak point by the residents. This is surprising because the community of Ottersweier is a rural area in which individual transport is more pronounced than in the city, and public transport has played a rather subordinate role and is also difficult to optimise. A precise investigation of how this value comes about seems necessary. The impact cluster "Municipal Policy" is also below the 80% hurdle at 70%. Here, the impact factor "Mission statement of the municipality" is rated lowest at 68%. At 75%, the impact cluster "Cooperation and Participation" appears rather uncritical compared to the other two impact clusters, which did not reach their target. A closer look at the specific impact factor, "Involvement of residents," shows an impact level of only 58%. Specifically, there is potential for optimisation in informing residents about opportunities to participate in community decisions. However, it should be noted that participation opportunities represent the field of action where residents are least interested according to a classification of interests. This must be considered. Nevertheless, there is a need for action here.

A detailed investigation of the identified weak points, "Involvement of residents" and public transport, appears necessary. For each of these points, a weak point analysis should be conducted in order to be able to develop measures based on it. Semi-structured, qualitative interviews with residents can be used for this analysis. As with the resident survey, a sample survey will be conducted for the qualitative interviews. A small, non-random sample should be sufficient for this survey (Döring & Bortz, 2016, p. 297).

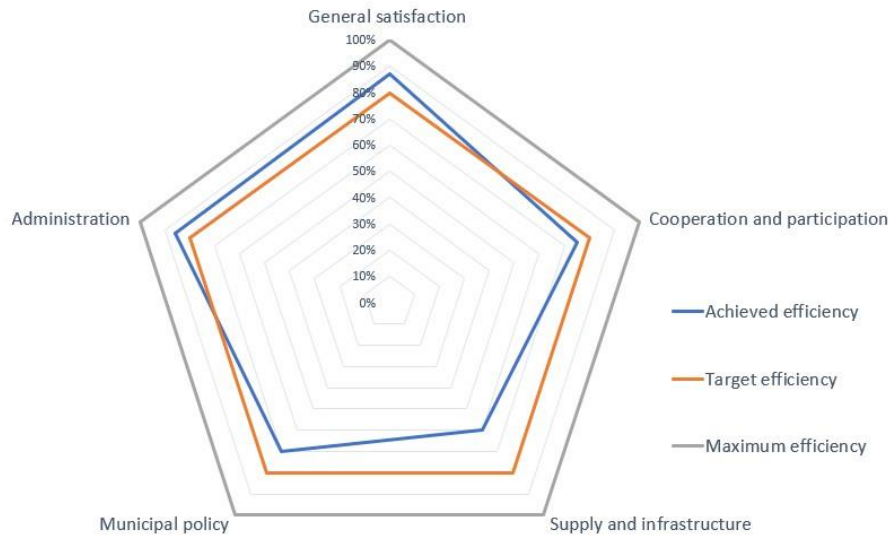


Fig. 5. Results of the residents' survey (Source: developed by the authors)

Conclusions

The research question of the case study was, "How can the satisfaction of various stakeholder groups in the municipality be measured in a way that incurs significant participation and produces relevant results for the decision-makers in the municipality?" It could be shown that the survey created produced both significant participation and relevant results.

When looking at the survey of the Ottersweier municipality, it is noticeable that the mission statement is considered to be in need of improvement both in the survey of local businesses and in the survey of residents. Although there is a difference in the levels of impact achieved, in both surveys, the implementation and communication of the mission statement could be improved. Since two stakeholder groups note this independently, this clearly indicates that a qualitative vulnerability assessment should be conducted to address the deficiency. The situation is similar to the public transport network system. For local businesses, the efficiency was 50%. For residents, public transport contributed significantly to the fact that the impact factor "General infrastructure of the municipality" was only rated at 55%. This is a strong indication that there is a need for action with regard to the public transport system and that a weak point analysis should be carried out. Within this analysis, it should also be checked whether the weak connection to the public transport system is a reason why 18 out of 56 companies are considering relocation. However, the general satisfaction is over 80%. The idea of possible relocation should be a focus of the qualitative analysis of local business since relocation could drastically reduce the business tax revenues of Ottersweier's municipality. As a result, the municipality's room for manoeuvre could be limited in the future.

However, more general conclusions can also be drawn from the survey in Ottersweier for surveys in other cities and municipalities. For future surveys in other municipalities, whether the questionnaire can also be shortened for the other stakeholder groups should be examined. The results suggest that there may be a relationship between the length of the questionnaire and the response rate. A higher response rate may lead to a higher validity of the results. On the other hand, reducing the number of questions must not be at the expense of the validity of the diagnostic instrument. These two conflicting aspects must be carefully weighed against each other. Any shortening of the questionnaire must be carefully considered and justified. The involvement of experts from municipal practice in this process seems sensible.

The parallel use of online and paper questionnaires has proven successful, at least for the stakeholder group of residents. It should be examined to what extent - at least in the foreseeable future - both ways of participating in the survey should also be made available to other stakeholder groups.

It should be emphasised that the KMS can only provide quantitative indications of where there may be

a need for improvement. It is important to subsequently conduct a weakness analysis of the identified areas of action using qualitative survey techniques in order to derive recommendations for action.

One approach for the future could be to include the external perspective in the regular self-assessment and to compare the self-assessment with the view of external stakeholders.

In general, it would be interesting and desirable if many municipalities used the KMS for internal self-assessment and to survey external stakeholders. In this way, a comprehensive database could be created, on the basis of which the following hypotheses, among others, could be tested:

- Municipalities with significant weaknesses in the internal perspective do not fully benefit from strategic instruments - implementation of their own strategy even fails more often in these municipalities
- Municipalities which score high in soft skills can compensate for weaknesses in other areas
- Municipalities with strengths in external perspectives are more resilient to emergencies and can work with their citizens to mobilise additional resources in times of crisis.

A comprehensive database is yet to be available. However, additional promotional measures for the KMS and translating the diagnostic tool into English should increase the number of municipalities and cities using the KMS.

A comprehensive database would also be a prerequisite for examining cause-and-effect chains with regard to the early detection of developments in order to strengthen or mitigate them if necessary.

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