

Good Governance, Public Service Delivery and Public Trust: Case of Banadir Regional Administration of Somalia

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Abstract

This paper aimed to assess the good governance practices in the Banadir Regional Administration (BRA) of Somalia and how they affect public service delivery and public trust. The paper utilized primary data obtained from the 157 respondents. The study reveals that BRA's inadequate governance practices lead to poor transparency, accountability, and a high prevalence of corruption due to non-compliance with rules and regulations. Results also indicate that the public is dissatisfied with BRA leadership due to inefficient and unreliable service and lack of transparency in public funds utilization and management, resulting in a negative perception of BRA. The paper concluded that enhancing good governance practices and improving public service delivery can improve public trust. The article asserts that good governance, characterized by transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, and equity, is the foundation of development and prosperity. The article emphasizes the importance of efficient public service delivery as a vital link between government and the public, fostering trust and sustainable development. Therefore, the paper suggests that BRA should improve its governance practices by adhering to laws and regulations, fostering a corruption-free environment, and implementing effective performance monitoring and control mechanisms. It also recommends investing in human resources, streamlining processes, prioritizing citizen-centricity, adopting technology, and fostering data-driven decision-making.

Keywords: Good Governance, Transparency, Accountability, Public Trust, Public Service, Corruption, Leadership, Banadir Regional Administration, Somalia

INTRODUCTION

Good governance is crucial in fostering public confidence and trust in government, as it provides a practical framework for building a society where citizens feel empowered, engaged, and secure. Good governance refers to making and implementing effective decisions (Mohamed & Kulmie, 2023). Over the past few decades, the discourse on good governance has been gaining traction in public policy-making platforms and conferences. Good governance is a widely accepted concept across various sectors, including public institutions, private sectors, and non-governmental systems. Several countries utilized it as a tool for development, poverty reduction, and democracy. Ali (2015) identifies key elements of good governance, including political freedom, constitutional safeguards, stable currency, universal healthcare, free elections, and administrative accountability.

Good governance is a universal human desire, as it promotes stability, security, economic prosperity, equity, social justice, effective public services, trust, and collaboration (Towah, 2019). In short, good governance is a foundation for sustainable development. This indicates that a well-governed society attracts investment, encourages innovation, and promotes fair competition. A democratic country's success relies on enhancing public trust in the government, which encourages community participation in the government's development process (Prasetya, 2023). This kind of democracy requires essential components to effectively deliver its promises to the people. These components include improving the rule of law, promoting power separation, establishing an independent judiciary, enhancing access to information, and fostering better civic engagement. Certainly these cannot be assured in the public sector without transparency and accountability.

Public confidence is the trust and faith citizens have in their government and its institutions (Newton & Norris, 2000). A growing public confidence in the government is a sign of good governance and successful democracy. Taufiqi & Ariani (2022) emphasize the importance of accountability in boosting public trust in government institutions, suggesting that developing countries can use accountability standards to improve system

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effectiveness, efficiency, and legal, policy, and ethical compliance. However, experts including Kulmie (2023), Free, (2015) and Mohamed & Kulmie (2023) stated that poor governance, including corruption, lack of transparency, and accountability, can lead to delayed service delivery and undermine public trust in the government. In this regard, experts view that trust in government is the public's perception of the government based on expectations of its operations. However, the question of what promotes public confidence and trust in government looms large. This article explores the link between good governance and public confidence and trust, highlighting the importance of effective leadership, transparency, accountability, and inclusivity for a stable, prosperous society.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Good Governance: Nature and Principles

The term governance has been around since the beginning of human history, and while it is now fashionable and gained prominence in development circles and international public policy lexicon (Thomas, 2012). Governance refers to a multifaceted set of structures and processes, both public and private. The World Bank defines governance as the exercise of power in managing a country's economic and social resources, encompassing three aspects: political regime, authority exercise, and government capacity to design and implement policies (Thomas, 2012). The development conversation has recently placed a significant emphasis on good governance. Good governance involves the rule of law, protection of human rights, honest and efficient government, accountability, transparency, predictability, and openness.

Good governance is described as transparent, open, and competent management of a country's resources and affairs (Ali, 2015). Good governance is crucial in addressing global issues, inequality, and social dynamics to create a just and prosperous society. It goes beyond efficiency, focusing on inclusion, trust, and responsible decision-making to foster a just and prosperous society. The author added that good governance requires five key variables: political freedom, individual rights protection, stable currency, education and healthcare, and executive accountability to a freely elected legislature. Therefore, good governance involves effective decision-making processes, focusing on the best possible process, which ultimately improves the quality of life and sustainability of all institutions, from small families to global ones.

Public Service Delivery

Public services are those that are primarily or entirely funded by taxation. These services encompass central and local government, health authorities, education, defense, justice affairs, and noncommercial state organizations (Shaikh, et al. 2016)). The author added that public services are guided by principles like equitable treatment and resource allocation based on need. Providing high-quality public service is a basic duty of all governmental levels. However, Improving public service delivery is a significant global challenge. This shows the importance of good governance in public institutions. For instance, Transparency International (2017) revealed that 25% of the global population is forced to engage in bribery and corruption to obtain public work, services, or goods (Kulmie, 2023).

Studies show that poor governance and corruption negatively impact public expenditure cost-effectiveness, leading to mismanagement, inequality, unemployment, and poverty, ultimately destabilizing society's development (Kulmie, 2023; Free, 2015). Also, Briggs et al.'s (2020) study revealed that corruption significantly and negatively impacts service delivery and people management in local government.

Public Trust

According to Modise & Modise (2023) trust in government refers to people's expectations of the government's nature, functioning, and interactions with the populace, as well as the conduct of political figures and officials. Researchers analyze public trust to evaluate government policies, as trust is crucial for connecting the state, government, and society, and is a vital foundation for policy implementation and gain political and social support in its activities (Rifaied, et al. 2023). Trust in a government is influenced by political, economic, and social issues. Factors influencing people's faith in the government as noted by Modise & Modise (2023) include effective regulations, motivated political figures, economic expansion, provision of services like water,

sanitation, healthcare, and education, exemplary leadership, and efficient public management. These factors have a direct impact on citizens and influence their trust in the government.

Experts assert that transparency is a crucial aspect of an effective government management system that can significantly boost public trust (Husni, et al. 2023; Pillay, 2017). Husni, et al. (2023) noted that government transparency and performance are crucial factors in fostering public trust. Poor governance and corruption in the public sector can erode trust in politicians and officials, impacting governance, public policy, attitudes, and political imperatives. However, positive public trust fosters sustainability and development in the future by involving the public in the development process. Trust is a vital component in modern societies and administrations, playing a pivotal role in fostering a democratic system. The literature extensively explored whether government accountability and transparency increase levels of confidence.

Theoretical Review

Good governance has indeed been a central topic in research, policy, and development for a long time, examining how it enhances public service delivery, trust, and confidence in the public sector. The literature provides substantial conceptual, theoretical, and empirical evidence on the role of good governance in improving service quality and strengthening the relationship between public institutions and citizens. Debates on public sector efficiency often revolve around public satisfaction with government services and their perceptions of these institutions. Theories attempt to explain how accountability improves the quality of public service delivery. According to Gailmard (2014), the Agent Theory is a useful framework for studying accountability in the public sector, as it examines the responsiveness of agents' (public servants) decisions to the principal's (citizens') goals and their interactions. This argument was also mentioned by the Keay (2017), describing this theory as a key tool in governance and accountability studies to explain and conceptualize the roles and behaviors of agents, such as managers and directors.

The different governance and accountability theories mainly complement each other explaining the such matter in various perspectives. Keay (2017) suggests that Stewardship theory can be viewed as resented as complementary or an alternative theory to agency theory. The stewardship theory suggests that directors act as stewards, not focusing on their own economic interests (Keay, 2017). The stewardship theory in governance can provide insight into director roles and behavior, raising questions about the logicalness of ensuring accountability. Stewardship theory offers a valuable framework for understanding public service delivery and fostering public trust. From this standpoint, it's essential to achieve these quality public service deliveries and enhance public trust. Consequently, it should be considered to align goals, empower public servants, and build trust with the public. This approach can lead to more effective and efficient public service delivery. Therefore, these two theories guide this study to easily achieve its main goals.

Empirical Studies

Good governance has been studied in various contexts (Garcia-Zamor, 2015; Mohamed & Kulmie (2023; Thomas, 2012). Public service is a strategic issue as it addresses the basic needs of society. Implementing good governance is a challenging task in several countries. Ameh & Aliyu (2024) studied good governance in Nigeria, and stated that Nigeria must foster good governance practices like transparency, accountability, rule of law, citizen participation, and responsiveness to tackle its challenges and ensure social security. Kulmie, (2023) examined financial crimes in public sector of Somalia, and found that corruption disturbs resource allocation, wealth distribution and socioeconomic development, resulting in poverty and loss of public trust in government institutions. The author stated that poor governance, lack of accountability, and transparency are underlying factors that cause corruption.

For instance, In Somalia, a number of socioeconomic issues force people—especially women and young people—to leave their communities and migrate elsewhere. These problems were mostly caused by insufficient leadership, corruption and fraudulent practices (Kulmie, 2023) leading to poverty, security concerns, huge human migration, and unemployment issues. Rabby, et al. (2011) assert that the local community may not migrate if they find better work opportunities with higher productivity for their livings. However, this is only

feasible in the presence of sound governance, which efficiently manages public policies and resources to maximize their effectiveness and accessibility.

Shaikh, et al. (2016) investigated public service delivery and e-governance in Pakistan. They noted that in the majority of developing nations, public sector management (PSM) still has difficulties in providing effective public service delivery (PSD). The authors mentioned that good governance and decentralisation aim to reduce corruption and ensure transparency, and strongly advised to cultivate public trust since it is essential to long-lasting partnerships. Additionally, Madu (2023) looked at public service delivery difficulties in Africa and concluded that one of the main goals of governance is public service delivery. The author also noted that a more accountable and responsive government can boost citizen commitment to democratic governance and alleviate conflicts among political, regional, and ethnic groups.

Thusi & Selepe (2023) examined the impact of poor governance on public service delivery in South African Local Government, highlights the detrimental effects of poor governance on public service delivery, including corruption, lack of accountability, and insufficient skills. The study emphasized the necessity for responsive and accountable governance across all government sectors in South Africa. Giri (2019) argued that implementing effective service delivery systems involves human resource planning, clear promotion standards, effective reward and punishment, objective and scientific work performance evaluation, and promotion, transfer, and transparency. He added that the successful, efficient and effective civil service system of the country is in itself a harbinger of national peace, progress and prosperity. In his study on the dilemma of accountability and good governance for improved public service delivery, Adejuwon (2012) stated that the public service has become a source of public scorn due to the government and public servants' inaction on the crucial issue of effective and efficient service delivery. Therefore, the author suggested that enhanced service delivery can enhance public service performance and trust.

Prasetya (2023) linked good governance and public trust. The research indicates that public trust is influenced by responsiveness, accountability, and transparency. He added that public trust can be improved by good governance. Jameel, et al (2019) conducted a study on the relationship between good governance and public trust, and the results confirmed the causal relationship between good governance and public trust. Beshi & Kaur (2020) explored public trust in local government, with aim of explaining the role of good governance practices, and stated that government accountability is crucial in fostering public trust in government. Additionally, they supported the notion that transparency and open government initiatives have significantly enhanced legitimacy and trust in the government. Ahmed (2023) investigated the factors that contribute to public trust in the Somali government, and found that public trust in government is positively influenced by the quality of public services, participation in government, and transparency.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between good governance practices, and public service delivery, and public trust in the Banaadir Regional Administration of Somalia. Descriptive research design was used in this study and questionnaire was employed as research instrument to collect data from the 157 respondents, selected through a simple random sampling technique to ensure unbiased representation. The collected data were analyzed using the widely-used Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software, which offers various statistical tools and techniques. The methodology employed in this study was carefully designed to ensure the reliability and validity of the collected and analyzed data, establishing a robust framework for investigating the research problem.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic Information

Table 1 shows that all questionnaires were collected, resulting in a 100% response rate. Out of the 157 individuals surveyed, 107 were male, which accounts for 68.2% of the total sample. The remaining 50 respondents (31.8%) were female. Data analysis revealed that 82 respondents (52.9%) held a bachelor's degree, 28 (17.8%) held a master's degree, 23 (14.6%) held a diploma, 7 (4.5%) held a PhD, and 16 (10.2%) had no formal educational qualifications.

The respondents were engaged in various occupations. Specifically, 21 respondents (13.4%) were employed in the public sector, 1 (0.6%) in the private sector, 26 (16.6%) were self-employed, 8 (5.1%) worked for NGOs, 14 (12.2%) served as ministry directors, 5 (3.2%) were employed by international NGOs, and 56 (35.7%) were unemployed.

| Table 1 illustrates the demographic Characteristics of respondents | | |
|--|-----------|------------|
| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
| Gender | | |
| Male | 107 | 68.2 |
| Female | 50 | 31.8 |
| Age | | |
| Under 20 | 50 | 31.8 |
| 20 - 30 | 73 | 46.5 |
| 31 - 40 | 24 | 15.3 |
| 41 - 50 | 9 | 5.7 |
| Above 50 | 1 | 0.6 |
| Educational Level | | |
| Diploma | 23 | 14.6 |
| Bachelor | 83 | 52.9 |
| Master Degree | 28 | 17.8 |
| Phd | 7 | 4.5 |
| Other | 16 | 10.2 |
| Occupation | | |
| Public Sector | 21 | 13.4 |
| Private Sector | 1 | 0.6 |
| Self Employed | 26 | 16.6 |
| NGOs | 8 | 5.1 |
| International Organization | 5 | 3.2 |
| Unemployed | 56 | 35.7 |

Good governance Practices in Banadir Regional Administration (BRA)

The study sought to assess the public perception of good governance practices in Banadir Regional Administration (BRA), examining mainly transparency, accountability, decision-making process, corruption, regulations, and policy compliance in BRA. Participants were asked five questions to identify their perception of good governance in Banadir Regional Administration (BRA). Only 34.4% (N=157) of the respondents express their satisfaction with the transparency and accountability in BRA, while 48.4% confirmed their dissatisfaction. When respondents were asked their perception whether BRA decisions align with public interest, only 28.6% believe that that the BRA makes decisions that are in the best interests of the public, but more than half of the them (54.7% responded that BRA decisions do not align with public interest.

Also, 51.6% stated that BRA does not effectively meets the needs of the public, and 44.5% believe that corruption is prevalent within the BRA while only 30% stated that corruption is not prevalent, and the remaining 24.8% were neutrally responded. Finally, regarding the respondents' perception of BRA compliance with laws and regulations, more than half of them (55.4%) stated that BRA does not comply with laws and regulations. These results demonstrate that good governance practices in Banadir Regional Administration are very weak, and the public is not satisfied with their leadership due to poor decision making processes, poor accountability, and transparency in BRA. Ahmed & Koech (2019) state that the government must prioritize accountability and transparency to combat corruption, which is significant threats to service quality. The authors added that effective enforcement mechanisms are crucial for accountability, ensuring policy frameworks.

Table 2 shows the Public Perception on Good Governance Practices in BRA

| # | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|---|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | Citizens express high levels of satisfaction with the transparency and accountability demonstrated by the Banadir Regional Administration | 24.2 | 10.2 | 17.2 | 19.1 | 29.3 |
| 2 | Citizens believe that the BRA makes decisions that are in the best interests of the people of Mogadishu | 17.8 | 10.8 | 16.6 | 22.9 | 31.8 |
| 3 | BRA effectively meets the needs of the people in Banadir Region. | 18.5 | 15.9 | 14 | 22.3 | 29.3 |
| 4 | Corruption is not prevalent within the BRA. | 15.9 | 14.6 | 24.8 | 19.7 | 24.8 |
| 5 | The BRA adheres to the laws and regulations | 18.5 | 10.8 | 15.3 | 24.2 | 31.2 |

Good Governance and of Public Services Delivery

The study assesses the impact of good governance on the delivery of public services. Participants were asked five questions to identify the impact of good governance on the delivery of public services of Banadir Regional Administration (BRA). Respondents amounting 51.6% disagreed that citizens are satisfied with the quality of public services provided by the BRA, and 57.9% believe that BRA public services are not reliable, while 61.2% of the respondents disagreed that BRA officials are responsive to the needs and concerns of the public. Also, 51.6% of participants state that BRA public service is not efficiency, while 55.4% of them believe that BRA does not provide equal public services to communities within the Banadir Region. Previous studies demonstrate governance and accountability have positive correlation with community development. The author also stated that transparency in public service delivery aims to meet societal needs. Bile (2013) found a positive correlation between local governance and improved public service delivery in Benadir Region Administration-Somalia, indicating a strong connection between these two factors. However, public service delivery can be enhanced by having sufficient and skilled staff as noted by Nor (2023).

Table 3 presents the Impact of Good Governance on the Public Services Delivery

| # | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| Assessing the impact of good governance on the delivery of public services | | | | | | |
| 1 | Citizens are satisfied with the quality of public services provided by the BRA, such as sanitation, infrastructure maintenance, healthcare, and education. | 20.4 | 12.7 | 15.9 | 15.3 | 35.7 |
| 2 | BRA offers reliable public services to the citizens. | 18.5 | 7.6 | 15.6 | 24.8 | 33.1 |
| 3 | BRA officials are responsive to the needs and concerns of the public. | 19.1 | 7.6 | 12.1 | 26.8 | 34.4 |
| 4 | BRA efficiently provides public services to citizens in terms of cost and timeline. | 15.3 | 12.7 | 20.4 | 24.8 | 26.8 |
| 5 | BRA provides equal public services to various communities within Banaadir Region. | 14 | 14.6 | 15.9 | 26.1 | 29.3 |

Good Governance and Public Trust

The study evaluates the impact of good governance on public trust by asking participants five questions. A total of 50.3% of participants disagree that the BRA is trusted by the public to deliver services effectively and efficiently; 53.5% disagree that the public trusts the BRA to use public funds responsibly and transparently; and 51% disagree that the public trusts the BRA to act in the best interests of the people, even when it must make difficult decisions. Furthermore, 57.3% of respondents don't feel that people are willing to follow the rules and regulations established by the BRA. Lastly, the results show that 58% of respondents disagree that citizens are more likely to participate in civic activities like community clean-ups or local elections. Previous studies including Mohamed & Kulmie (2023), (Jam et al., 2018) and Kulmie, et al (2023) stated that poor governance, including corruption, lack of transparency, and accountability, can result in delayed service delivery and damage public trust in the government. Also, Prasetya (2023) stated that good governance has positive correlation with public trust, adding that responsiveness, accountability, and transparency significantly influences public trust and confidence in their leadership. Nor (2019) argued that effective public fund and resource management enhances revenue collection and resource utilisation efficiently. One of the techniques that can be used is

effective budgeting system. A budget is a formal, and written, and monitory statement of management's strategy for a specific timeframe (Abdulle, et al, 2023). These fund and resource management strategies ultimately will boost the transparency, accountability and efficiency of public sector, leading positive public attitude towards their government.

Table 4 illustrates the Role of Good Governance on Public trust

| # | Statement | SA | A | N | D | SD |
|---|--|------|------|------|------|------|
| 1 | Citizens place their trust in the BRA to effectively and efficiently deliver public services. | 22.3 | 8.9 | 18.5 | 22.9 | 27.4 |
| 2 | Citizens trust the BRA to responsibly and transparently use public funds | 13.4 | 12.1 | 21 | 23.6 | 29.9 |
| 3 | Citizens trust BRA to act in the best interests of the people of in Banadir Region, even when it makes difficult decisions. | 17.2 | 11.5 | 20.4 | 21.7 | 29.3 |
| 4 | Citizens are willing to comply with the rules and regulations set by the BRA | 19.7 | 8.3 | 14.6 | 24.8 | 32.5 |
| 5 | Citizens are more likely to participate in civic activities, such as engaging in community clean-ups or voting in local elections. | 21 | 10.2 | 10.8 | 23.6 | 34.4 |

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to assess the effect of good governance on public service delivery and public trust as well. These intricately linked concepts form the foundation of a healthy and well-functioning society. The study collected primary data from 157 respondents and analyzed using SPSS. The results show that most of the respondents (68.2%) were male, while 82 (52.9%) held a bachelor's degree. Further, 56 (35.7%) of the participants were unemployed, while 26 (16.6%) were self-employed. This shows the level of unemployment is the region, affecting people's well-being and development. The situation requires developing and implementing effective programs planned to eradicate unemployment and poverty, such as training programs, and boosting young individuals' skills and capacities (Kulmie et al., 2023; Nor, 2021). Moreover, the results indicate that the good governance practices in BRA are not adequate, meaning the transparency and accountability in BRA is very poor, which eventually hinders the quality and delivery of public services to the public. Also, the results revealed that corruption in BRA is prevalent due to their incompliance with the rules and regulations, as shown in Table 2.

The results also indicated that the public is not satisfied with their leadership since BRA service is not responsive and efficient, thereby not reliable. Additionally, the results revealed that the public fund's utilization and management are not transparent and lead to the public's negative perception of BRA, as shown in the 3 and 4. The paper concluded that good governance practices and public service delivery need to be improved. Thereby, public trust can be enhanced. The paper argues that good governance is the foundation of development and prosperity, and its characterized by principles like transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law, and equity. By adhering to these principles, governments build trust with their citizens. The article regards public service delivery as the bridge between government and the public, and, when these services are delivered efficiently, effectively, and equitably, it strengthens public trust in the government. Therefore, the paper regards the public trust as the outcome of good governance and effective delivering quality public services. This eventually improves citizen engagement and better sustainable development.

Recommendations

Based on the literature and the findings, the paper recommends that BRA enhance its good governance practices by adhering to laws and regulations, and fostering a corruption-free environment. This will enhance public confidence in the system and its leaders. The paper, also, recommends for BRA to implement effective performance monitoring, control mechanisms, and e-governance practices to enhance service delivery and strengthen government-public relationships. Furthermore, the study suggests that in order to improve the delivery of public services, BRA should invest in human resources, streamline processes, prioritize citizen-centricity, adopt technology, and foster data-driven decision-making. By implementing these strategies, governments can work towards creating a public service delivery system that is efficient, effective, equitable, and accessible, ultimately fostering public trust and strengthening the social contract.

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