Assessing the Impact of Social Accountability on Good Governance: Case Study of Puntland, Somalia

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Abstract

This study examines the correlation between social accountability and good governance through a case study of Somalia. The purpose of this research was to assess how social accountability practices could contribute to the improvement of governance in a context characterized by significant challenges. Researcher has been in community development works for over 17 years and he was poised to generate valuable insight that can inform policy makers and drive a positive change towards social accountability and good governance across the country. This area of study was untouched and wasn't examined before but this study would contribute and bring forward to do in-depth further research. Somalia has long been plagued by social accountability challenges and poor governance, with clan structures often dominating the political landscape and hindering the development of effective governance mechanisms. In the absence of an effective federal government that could provide a basic service and uphold the rule of law, resulted poor governance. By examining the potential impact of social accountability on governance in Somalia, this study highlights the importance of fostering a culture of accountability and transparency in order to promote good governance practices. It is argued that social accountability can help empower citizens, hold leaders accountable, and shape more effective and responsive government institutions. Ultimately, this research underscores the transformative potential of social accountability in improving governance outcomes and building a more just and inclusive society in Somalia, by educating citizens about their rights and responsibilities, raising awareness among the population, individuals to better understand how they can actively participate in holding their leaders accountable and demanding transparency in government actions. Furthermore, building strong institutions that have the capacity to oversee government activities and ensure compliance with laws and regulations is essential. Establishing independent bodies for oversight, such as anti-corruption agencies and ombudsman offices help prevent abuses of power and promote accountability at all levels of government. Strengthening civil society organizations (CSOs) and the media is also recommended to amplify the voices of citizens and provide platforms for public scrutiny of government actions. CSOs play a crucial role in monitoring government performance, advocating for policy changes, and representing the interests of marginalized communities. Additionally, creating user-friendly systems for reporting cases of misconduct or abuse of power is vital to encourage citizen participation in accountability processes. Establishing mechanisms for anonymous reporting and protecting whistleblowers from retaliation can empower individuals to speak out against corruption and malpractice.

Keywords: Social, Accountability, Good Governance, Transparent, Civil Society organizations, Media, Government, Community, Corruption, Oversight Body.

INTRODUCTION

Political instability has been a notable feature of Somalia since its independence in 1960. Somalia is frequently considered an archetypal failed state and terrorist haven. Since the overthrow of long-time Somali leader Siad Barre in 1991, Somalia has experienced failed international involvements, large-scale refugee flows, and the ongoing deficiency of even rudimentary state services and institutions; Somalis exist in surroundings of predation and pervasive insecurity and deprivation

(Sequeira, 2012). The politics of Somalia have gone through various periods of change. Following the outbreak of the civil war and the ensuing collapse of the Siad Barre regime in the early 1990s, Somalia's residents reverted to local forms of conflict resolution, consisting of civil law, religious law and customary law. A few autonomous regions, including the Somaliland, Puntland emerged in the north in the ensuing process of decentralization. The early 2000s saw the creation of fledgling interim federal administrations (Ibrahim, 2011).

In this study, researcher sought to investigate the impact of social accountability on good governance in Somalia and it was important to highlight concept background of the social accountability generally and how it contributes to the social delivery, social empowerment, and governance systems. Hence, Social accountability is a concept that has roots in early human civilization, as communities have long held individuals and groups accountable for their actions and decisions. However, the formalization and structured practice of social accountability in governance and social systems have evolved over time.

The social accountability concept is closely related to changing citizenship notions that emphasize on the right, roles and responsibilities of citizens and results in enhanced expectations and engagement of citizens (Ackerman, 2004). A wide range of actions used by communities, civil society organizations and citizens to get accountability from the government are covered by the mechanisms of social accountability. These includes, but not limited to independent budget analysis, participatory budgeting, public expenditure tracking, community scorecards, citizen report cards, social audits, citizen's charters, community radio and public hearings (IEA, 2014).

The historical evolution of social accountability has been shaped by a variety of factors, including changes in political systems, technological advancements, and global trends towards greater openness and citizen engagement. Key milestones in the development of social accountability include the establishment of national anti-corruption commissions, adhere international conventions, the proliferation of participatory budgeting initiatives, and the growing use of technology platforms for citizen feedback and monitoring. These developments have contributed to a more nuanced and multi-faceted understanding of social accountability as a dynamic and context-specific process that requires continual adaptation and innovation.

The modern understanding of social accountability can be traced back to the emergence of democratic societies and movements for greater transparency and citizen engagement in the 20th century. The idea behind social accountability is based on principles of accountability, transparency, participation, and responsiveness in governance and decision-making processes.

In recent decades, there has been growing recognition of the importance of social accountability in promoting good governance, reducing corruption, and improving service delivery in various sectors, including health, education, and public administration. This has led to the development of frameworks and tools for measuring, promoting, and strengthening social accountability mechanisms at local, national, and international levels.

In other hand, the etymologically terms, the term "Governance" originally comes from the ancient Greek (kybernein) that means steering, driving, or guiding men. In the history, the idea of governance as a rule of law, and activity of ruling others has a long history that goes back to the English language. However, most of the current debates on governance, originate from its specific

usage, and the changes occurred in the structure of states since the 1980s. Most of these changes are demanding human rights, freedom of speech, women participation in politics, equality, accountability, and transparency. These changes date from the neoliberal reforms period in the public sector in the 1980s. Later, when these changes attracted international organizations, the term governance has been linked to the government as it means of governing together, running a government with accordance rule of law or any other appropriate entity that matters. So, if there is a link between governance and government this researcher affirms the definition of Michael Mann, as he defined governance as government's ability to make and enforce the rule of law, and to deliver public services in the most effective and efficient way, regardless of whether the country is exercising democratic principles or not (Mann 1994).

A list of review of academic literature on governance and good governance reveals lack of consensus definition on what governance is, since governance is a very broad concept and operates at every level such as, village administration, local government, national, regional and the globally (Ntalaja, 2006). Governance as earlier mentioned was widely used in the literature meaning the term was not new as khan argued that governance has been there for fourteen centuries and during that period, it was used in two senses. One was that governance in action and method of governing others and the second sense was the manner of governing others (Khan 2006).

Though governance has come to mean different things to different scholars, this research tries to define governance in accordance with the well-discussed definition on the academic literature in recent years. Pierre defined governance as something that has dual meaning; that is the empirical manifestations of state adaptation and external environment (Pierre, 2000).

Theoretical Prospective

Social Contract Theory

The term takes its name from The Social Contract (French: Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique), a 1762 book by Jean-Jacques Rousseau that discussed this concept. Although the antecedents of social contract theory are found in antiquity, in Greek and Stoic philosophy and Roman and Canon Law the heyday of the social contract was the mid-17th to early 19th centuries, when it emerged as the leading doctrine of political legitimacy.

According to Weiss (2008), a social contract is a combination of assumptions and rules about patterns of behaviour among the various societal elements. Social contract is mutual understanding and association between the stakeholders and the organization. The focus of the social contract is the connection between the rulers and its citizens. The basis of stakeholder management is the notion of the social

Statement of the Problem

Somalia ranked eighth most corrupt in 2019 (Transparency International, 2019). According to Somalia's Public Service Commission Report (2013), corruption manifested as bribery, power abuses, misappropriation, and collaboration. Notable problems that obstruct Somalia's progress towards sustainable development and efficient public service delivery include the absence of appropriate social accountability mechanisms and the predominance of weak governance structures. Instances of corruption and poor management, along with the lack of inclusive and

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transparent channels for the public to interact with decision-making bodies, underscore the pressing need for better governance procedures in the nation. Resolving these issues is essential to maintaining resource allocation equity, building public confidence in the government, and advancing Somalia's general socioeconomic development.

Significant barriers to social accountability and governance exist in Somalia, including a lack of institutional strength, pervasive corruption, a lack of transparency, political unrest, conflict, low levels of citizen participation, and poor financial management. These difficulties make it more difficult for the nation to set up and maintain efficient governance frameworks, which has a negative impact on public confidence, service delivery, and overall development. The political practice in Somalia under the 4.5 formula relegates the universal notion of citizenary to the rear end of governance. For their part, the citizens do not demand political participation and service delivery. One civil servant interviewed for this report articulated that successive governments have not been able to reduce poverty, increase school enrolment and ameliorate the living condition of the Somali people (Heritage, March 2021).

Objectives of research

The main objective of this paper was to investigate the impact of social accountability on good governance practices in local communities. However, the specific objectives are to,
   i.   assess the significant relationship between social accountability and good governance in Somalia.
   ii. examine barriers hindering social accountability on good governance in Somalia.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide the study:
   i.   What are the significant relationships between social accountability and good governance in Somalia?
   ii. What are key barriers hindering social accountability and good governance in Somalia?
   iii. To what extent social accountability mechanisms play in ensuring transparency, corruptions and fair elections.
   iv. What is the role of citizens in monitoring and oversighting transparent, accountability and local elections?

Hypotheses

There is significant relationship between social accountability and good governance.

Significance of the Study

Social accountability has been recognized globally by institutions such as the World Bank and the United Nations as important for three main reasons. First, it improves governance, which ensures accountability of public officials. Citizens in both the developed and the developing world countries show increasing disenchantment with their governments, with absence of responsiveness, discretion abuse, corruption, favouritism and weak accountability demonstrated by bureaucrats and public officials. Secondly, it increases development effectiveness through effective delivery of public service and policy designs that are more informed. In many countries, particularly the developing ones, the government does not deliver important services to its citizens because of problems such as resources misallocation, corruption/leakages, weak incentives or absence of

articulated demand. Thirdly, social accountability enhances empowerment, particularly of the poor. Empowerment entails freedom of choice expansion and action. Research shows that the dissatisfaction with government among the poor people largely relates to issues of receptiveness and accountability. State institutions do not owe anyone accountability.

Literature Review on Social Accountability and Good Governance in Somalia

Background

According to the world bank report, 2006, social accountability is variety of actions and mechanisms that surpass voting, used by citizens to hold the state accountable, and actions of the part of media, government, civil society and other actions in the society to encourage or enable these efforts, social accountability complements formal accountability machinists, its citizen led, resulting in the reinforcement and improvement of vertical accountability within the state through pressuring institutional offices for instance, ombudsman, ethics and anti-corruption commissions to execute their oversight role.

Various scholarly works emphasize the interconnection between social accountability and good governance. Social accountability is understood as the array of actions and mechanisms that citizens, civil society, and other non-state actors can employ to hold public officials and institutions accountable. Manning highlights the importance of robust governance structures in developing countries, suggesting that foreign aid's impact on governance quality is complex and can sometimes undermine accountability. This is particularly relevant to Somalia, where international aid plays a significant role.

Definition of good governance: According to (IFAD, 1999) Good governance is defined as the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development, also defines governance as a process referring to the way in which power is exercised in the management affairs of a nation. Good governance is generally characterized by accessibility, accountability, predictability and transparency also good governance as having openness, participation, accountability, and transparency as key elements (Morita, Schiko, & Zaelke, 2007).

Alaaraj (2015) defines good governance as the exercise of authority through political and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable and encourage public participation. Furthermore, he elaborates that good governance makes institution to be democratic making them create avenues for the public to participate in policy making via formal or informal consultations. It also establishes mechanisms for the inclusion of multiple social groups in decision-making processes, especially on a local level. According to OECD (2013), good governance can be explained as participation, transparency and accountability, effective, equity promoting rule of law. This proposed study used the UN (2007) definition of good governance. With regard to good governance, the World Bank (2003) stressed that good governance in institutions is the key to successful and satisfactory efficiency and should thus be initiated and practiced within institutions in orderto achieve better performance.

In additionally, defines governance as 'the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels which comprises, mechanisms, processes and

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institutions through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences, (Rachel, 201 Good governance consist eight major characteristics it is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive and follows the rule of law. Therefore, researchers are tried to describe any above character of good governance from previous explore. According to Amos, Graham, & Plumptre, (2003) participatory is all men and women should have a voice in decision-making, either directly or through legitimate intermediate institutions that represent their intention, also participatory is such broad participation is built on freedom of association and speech, as well as capacities to participate constructively. Participation is an involve consultation in the development of policies and decision-making, elections and other democratic processes, (Mercy Corps, 2000). However, these definitions agree that the participatory is to give a freedom on society to participate political, economical and social decision through represent, election and association.

According to Mercy Corps, (2000) responsiveness is when good governance requires that institutions and processes seek to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe and have mechanisms for soliciting ideas and giving updates to constituents. Responsiveness is an institution and processes try to serve all stakeholders, (Graham, Amos, & Plumptre, 2003). These two descriptions are using same opinion about responsiveness that it is good governance required the institutions and the process try to be serving all stakeholders within responsible timeframe.

UN Secretary-General Kofi Anan has said that "good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development". And a former Kenyan Vice-President has also noted that "good political and economic governance underpins sustainable development". According to the 2002 Human Development Report of UNDP, good governance advances sustainable development for three reasons. First, enjoying political freedom and participating in the decisions that shape one's life are fundamental human rights. In those African countries where leaders are not elected or selected by election (Libya, for example), or where elections are flawed (Zimbabwe, for example), choices are severely

Good governance has been extensively used in the last one and a half decade and is mainly of a political and technocratic term which is different from government and suggests that government should be "good" not "bad' Yet many developing and third world countries lag behind the developed countries when it comes to good governance. For example, politicians and public policy makers in developing countries advocate for good governance mainly in election periods but, missing practicing the principles and elements of good governance. Considering Africa, the concept of good governance began late in the 1980s and spread too many African countries and other regions of the continent. Good governance gained significant attention in the whole Africa, especially among UN and other international organization as well as scholars in the academic field. (Marc & Byong-Joon, 2002; Ladi, 2008).

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Source: Macross Mauritius Council of Social Service 2015

The concept of "governance" has been in existence for a long time now. Basically, "government" means: the procedure of basic leadership and the procedure by which choices are actualized (or not executed). Governance can be utilized in a few settings, for example, corporate administration, universal administration, national administration and local administration (World Bank, 2014). Recently, the expressions "government" and "good governance" are by and large progressively utilized in developed writing. Bad governance is in effect progressively viewed as one of the underlying drivers of all insidiousness inside our social orders. Real contributors and universal monetary foundations are progressively constructing their guide and credits in light of the condition that changes that guarantee "good governance" are attempted (Rasheed & Olowo, 1994).

Social Accountability in Somalia

The intricate cultural dynamics of accountability in Somalia present a challenging puzzle to decipher, given the pervasive presence of corruption and its apparent entanglement with societal norms. Visualizing a potential culture of accountability in Somalia may seem daunting. However, examining the historical and social influences shaping Somali attitudes towards accountability offers valuable insights. Delving into the Somali perspective on accountability and corruption pre-colonization, alongside exploring the native language's terminology related to accountability, adds depth to our understanding (Joakim Gundel and Sean Allen, 2017).

The absence of formal government institutions and insecurity continue to leave Somali citizens disconnected from decision-making processes. According to one recent survey, only 14% of Somali people feel they have a platform to voice their political concerns.10 At a more local level, 40% of Somalis report they do not have access to decision-making in their settlements.11 This lack of accountability is also palpable in the aid sector. A recent survey suggests that 96% of Somali aid recipients do not feel consulted about the aid they receive.12 Recent evidence from research carried out by ReDSS highlights how the lack of accountability is particularly acute for displaced groups in Mogadishu due to a range of factors, including poverty, lack of social capital and insecurity, (common accountability report, January,2019).

Clans dominate decision-making in Somalia, continuing the customs of the country's long-standing, patriarchal, and patronage-based system. Attempts to ensure democratic processes are hampered by the conflict and tensions among clans. This includes the electoral process, which includes the

ambitious goal of one person, one vote for national elections, the promotion of a common Somali vision, and the sharing of resources at the local and grassroots levels. An important portion of the population, including women, young people, and marginalised groups like minorities and historically marginalised clans, have not been actively involved in the clan-based decision-making processes, which are dominated by male elders (NCA report, 2021)

Despite efforts to enhance social accountability in Somalia, significant challenges persist that hinder the effective participation of society in decision-making processes and holding officials accountable. The current situation highlights various obstacles faced by youth, women, and vulnerable groups in accessing and influencing governance in the country.

One of the major challenges is the lack of institutional structures and mechanisms that facilitate meaningful participation and engagement of citizens in decision-making. Limited access to information, resources, and opportunities further marginalizes vulnerable populations and restrict their ability to effectively voice their concerns and perspectives.

Youth, in particular, face significant barriers in actively participating in governance processes. Limited education and employment opportunities, as well as social and cultural norms, impede their involvement in shaping policies and programs that directly impact their lives.

Similarly, women continue to encounter obstacles in accessing decision-making spaces and influence. Discriminatory practices and stereotypes often exclude women from leadership positions and inhibit their ability to advocate for gender-responsive policies that address the specific needs of women and girls in Somalia.

Vulnerable groups, including internally displaced persons, persons with disabilities, and marginalized communities, also face challenges in advocating for their rights and accessing essential services. Lack of representation and voice in decision-making processes exacerbates their vulnerability and hampers efforts to address their unique needs.

Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort to build inclusive governance structures, promote transparency, and ensure accountability at all levels. By providing greater support and opportunities for youth, women, and vulnerable groups to participate in decision-making, Somalia can advance social accountability and build a more democratic and equitable society for all its citizens.

Governance in Somalia

Governance in Africa is that most African countries got their independence from the colonial power and Africans start thinking their position in the world. Since then, the term good governance has become the leading socio-economic agenda and better governance have taken a significant leap in Africa and the idea of political parties, election, human rights and democracy have come to exist in many parts of African continent. The concept of political leadership is generally liberalized in African including Somalia. (ECA, 2005).

During pre-colonial time, before a central government was introduced in Somalia, this pastoral society was driven by traditional practices in which the political, economic, social and cultural

sphere were all embedded. However, during the colonial rule as well as the first years of independence and later during Siad Barre's socialist rule, Somalia experienced western-type governance characterized by a centralized government. Following the civil war and the collapse of state institutions, the people of Somalia had to fall back on their traditional system, which in reality never ceased to exist, but was not as widely practiced (Interpeace 2008: 30,43; Gundel 2006: 16). The political and social affairs of the society resumed to be ruled as it always had throughout the history of the country, by customary law and order (referred to as "xeer" in Somali) with much incorporation from the Sharia (Islamic jurisprudence), and the individual security of clan affiliation (Gundel 2006: 8). With the absence of a centralized nation-state, regional administrations in different parts of the country were established to meet the needs of the population (Interpeace 2008: 25). Of these, the self-proclaimed state of Somaliland in the northwest has been the most stable and organized so far, with relatively well-functioning institutions (Richards 2008: 2). Puntland has also established an institutional structure of governance and administration but with weak capacity and has followed a different path than the modern and democratic transition of Somaliland. In south-central Somalia a central government with formal institutions exist, but are ineffective as the government authority in practice does not surpass the borders of the capital (ibid).

The present condition of good governance in Somalia is not satisfactory, corruption is very high, lack of accountability and transparency, poor control of public finance, abused of human rights, lack of rule of law and Al-Shabaab militant groups that attack the government institutions are all impeded to the existence of good governance in Somalia.

All formal institutions in Somalia are fragile and lack legitimacy due to several reasons, mainly due to the inability of the government to provide security and basic services for their citizens, together with lack of trust in the state as previous experience of a centralized state was extremely oppressive and unjust. On the other hand, the traditional system (xeer) and the clan-configuration in which the political and social units of the society is based upon, is highly valued and entrusted. This immemorial customary system is deep-rooted in the social fabric of the society, functioning as the main and sometimes only form of governance that the Somali people are familiar with (WSP 2001: 58).

The northern parts of Somalia, namely the autonomous regions of Somaliland and Puntland, are usually described as type-examples of a bottom-up approach for governance, while the south parts of Somalia, which include the capital of Mogadishu, where the central government is located, have been heavily influenced and pressured by the international community to unite the country and therefore focused on a top-down approach (Richards 2008: 9). In the discourse of combining the old with the new, Somaliland has taken an alternative statebuilding process by incorporating traditional authorities within the parliament, creating a house of elders called "guurti". In Puntland, however, these two institutions "have not been merged; instead they are two different systems on each side of the society" (Richards 2009:104).

Gaps to bridge by Research

Generally literature on social accountability and good governance in Somalia has neither been exhaustive reached nor disseminated. The two variables however have been independently examined, though no studies have investigated the relationship between them. This research sought to establish the relationship between social accountability and good governance.

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In subsequent section, the ideas by different authors indicate that lack of social accountability has heard impact in some African countries. It was upon these that the research is intending using methodologies in chapter three to find out contribution in Somalia.

I picked this social contract theory Youth empowerment model to assist professionals with social accountability, poor governance challenges were identified from different literature to assist professionals working with young people, different youth empowerment models were identified in the literature. The social contract theory by French: Du contrat social ou Principes du droit politique). The theory is based on the hypothesis that aggression is. These theorists have tried to understand the relationship of the social accountability and good governance. I have been used more theories in my research but the theory of social contract is the most relevance one of my topics. The gap that I found was that am one of the persons who tried to carry out research on this topic in Somalia because many studies have been done were only focusing on governance not social accountability and colleration among variables. At end of this research, I expect to find out the possible causes of the problem, and the solution in this area of research

Research Methodology

This section of the paper summarized the approached on how the researched was conducted, these include the research design, area of population, sample size, data collection, analysis and limitation of the study.

Research design
The study used a descriptive design which is a method of collecting information by administering questionnaire to sample of individuals, both qualitative and quantitative methods were used. It dealt with the relationship between variables, testing of hypothesis and development of generalization and used theories that have universal validity. It also involved events that have already taken plan and might be related to present conditions (Kothari, 2004).

Area and population of the study
The research target population was 100 and constituted politicians, academician, community workers, NGO workers. The case study was Puntland, Somalia.

Sample selection and size
The study used the following respondents 13 politicians, 14 academicians, 18 community and 15 NGO worker making it a total of 60 respondents.

Table: 3.1 Approach: Sampling, data collection methods and types of samples

Approach	Sample selection	Data collection	Type of sampling
Questionnaire	Stratified random sampling	Structured interview	10 politicians 14 academicians 15 community 15 Ngo workers
Questionnaire	Purposive sampling	Key Informant Interview	6 Key informant.
		Total	66 Respondents

The research used Slovin's formula to get the sample size

The research used Slovin's formula to get sample size, whereby S stands for sample size, P stands for population, (0.05)2 stands for allowable margin of error that exist between sample of statistics and the corresponding.

Population Parameter
The sample size determined by using Slovin's Formula
N= 100
1+n (0.05)2
N=100
1+100 * (0.0025)
1+0.5
N=200
1.5
N= 66

3.5 Sample technique.
The researcher used probability sampling especially stratified random sampling because the respondents were divided according to the characteristics of the interest such as age, gender, education, when it comes to the key informant interview, researcher used purposive sampling because respondent were divided according to the researcher's judgement. Under this technique, respondent from sample were selected deliberately. The result was reliable.

Sample Procedure
The researcher given an introductory letter which was presented to them. This letter was to lower the authority and when the lower authority grants permission appointment made to meet the selected respondent's semi structured and structured interview.

Methods of data collection
The study used both primary and secondary data which were relevant to the topic under consideration. Primary data was collected from field in particularly in Puntland whereby academicians, politicians, community and NGO workers contributed. Secondary data was gotten from previous research, journals,

Research instruments
This research used the research instruments, namely interview, questionnaire in conducting the study. According to Amin (2005), the researcher preferred to use this instrument to politicians, academicians, community, because first-hand information was obtained and this saved time. Structured and unstructured interview are fairly quick to conduct which means that many interviews could take place within a short time. During the study the researcher has used the following instruments:

Interview
Interview was used to have direct interaction with individuals and take key informant questions.

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Questionnaire
Questionnaire was used to collect the data needed in the research, according to the Denscombe (2007), questionnaires are carefully designed instrument for collecting data directly from people. Questionnaire.

The researcher selected the questionnaire as instrument of data collection because, it was most appropriate to respondents especially the fact that some respondents were reluctant to be interviewed since they believe the information provided by them through interview might be disseminated to the government and other supporters and might adversely affect them.

The research instrument that researcher used was semi-structured and structured interview. Interview guide and schedule was categorized into 3 sections of social accountability and good governance, challenges, opportunities, social empowerment and service delivery which was best appropriate way to gather more information on subject matter.

Validity and Reliability
Validity
Validity is the ability to produce findings that are in agreement with theoretical or conceptual values; in other words, to produce accurate results and to measure what is supposed to be measured. Content validity is a comparison between what to be included in the instrument, give its intended purpose, and what is actually included by establishing Content Validity Index (CVI). CVI = (no. of items declared valid)/(total no. of items) therefore the average result should be 0.7 for the instrument to be accepted as valid (Amin,2005).

Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1. Data Analysis

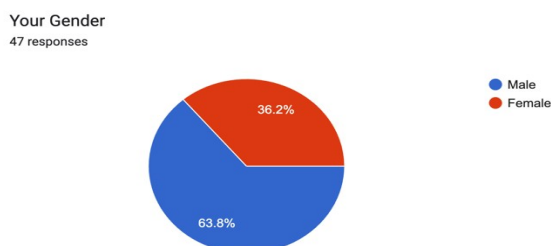Your Gender
47 responses

- Male
- Female

36.2%

63.8%

Figure 1 Participants in Gender

In the research study, a total of 66 participants were originally intended to be interviewed. However, only 48 participants responded to the survey. Among the respondents, there were 30 males and 17 females. This translates to approximately 63.83% male respondents and approximately 36.17% female respondents in the study.

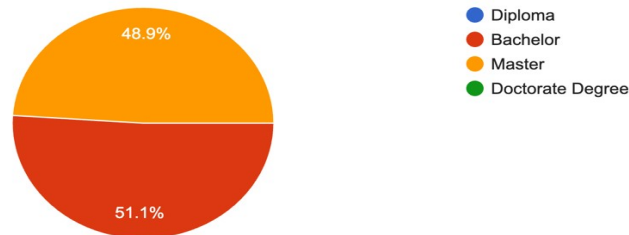*Mohamed Assair, 2024, 8(4):1-21*

Figure 2 Educational background of participants

Figure 2. The distribution of educational status among the participants revealed that 24 had a bachelor's degree and 23 held a master's degree. This indicates that the researchers specifically targeted individuals with higher educational qualifications for their study. Such a deliberate focus on respondents with advanced degrees may suggest a preference for participants with specialized knowledge and expertise in the research field

The composition of professions among the respondents shows that 22 individuals work for non-governmental organizations (NGOs), making this the most prevalent professional background among the participants. This is followed by students, constituting 14 respondents, while 6 are employed in the private sector, 4 in government positions, and 1 serves as a community volunteer. This distribution highlights the diverse professional backgrounds of the participants, providing valuable insight into the perspectives and experiences brought to the study from varied sectors.
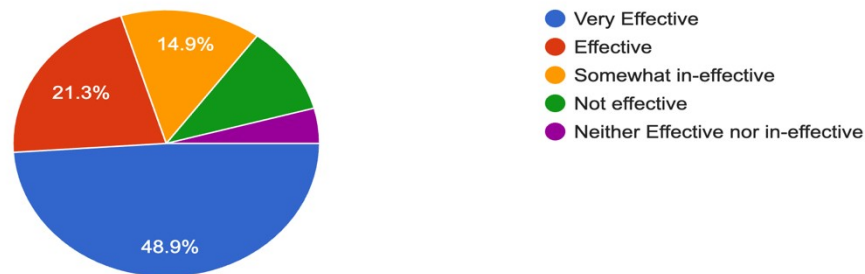
Question 1:

Figure 3 Question 1 feedback

In response to Question 1 on the effectiveness of social accountability mechanisms in promoting good governance in Somalia, 23 respondents indicated it was very effective, 10 said it was effective, 7 reported it was somewhat effective, 5 considered it non-effective, and 2 responded as neither effective nor non-effective. Converting these numbers into percentages, it is evident that a majority of respondents, totaling 66%, agreed that social accountability mechanisms are effective in promoting good governance. This suggests a general consensus among the participants on the positive impact of social accountability in advancing good governance practices in Somalia

Question 2: Do you think increased public participation and involvement in decision-making processes can lead to better governance practices in Somalia.

In response to the question about whether increased public participation and involvement in decision-making processes can lead to better governance practices in Somalia, the majority of participants responded affirmatively. They highlighted that such involvement enhances public engagement, promotes accountability, legitimacy, public outcomes, on-time service delivery, capacity building, and enhances the social intelligence of the community. Overall, the respondents emphasized the positive impact of increased public participation and involvement on governance practices in Somalia. Lastly, increased public participation can enhance the social intelligence of the community, fostering a culture of collaboration, communication, and mutual understanding among different stakeholders. These various outcomes collectively contribute to better governance practices in Somalia and create a more inclusive and responsive system that serves the interests of the people.

Question 3: In your opinion, how transparent are government institutions in Somalia in terms of accountability and responsiveness to citizen feedback?

The majority of participants in the study indicated that current government institutions in Somalia are not transparent, responsive to citizen feedback, or focused on improving good governance practices in the country. These findings suggest that Somalia's institutions are somewhat ineffective when it comes to fostering transparency, accountability, and responsiveness to citizens.

One of the key reasons for this lack of effectiveness is the limited public participation in decision-making processes that have a direct impact on their lives. Without meaningful engagement from the public, it becomes challenging for government institutions to truly address the needs and concerns of the citizens they serve.

Additionally, the absence of democratic processes for electing leaders and representatives in Somalia further compounds the issue. When citizens do not have a say in who represents them in government, it can lead to a disconnect between the people and those in positions of power. This lack of accountability and responsiveness can erode trust in government institutions and hinder progress towards better governance practices.

Question 4: Have you observed any instances where social accountability initiatives have led to positive changes in governance policies or practices in Somalia?

Respondents, particularly those working with INGOs and community workers in Somalia, have observed instances where social accountability initiatives have led to positive changes in governance policies or practices. An example cited is health facilities run by INGOs in partnership with the government, such as the Ministry of Health.

Another key instance where social accountability initiatives led to positive changes in governance practices in Somalia was observed during local elections held by the government of Puntland. People were eager to hold elected officials in municipalities accountable, demonstrating a growing demand for transparency and accountability in governance at the local level.

Question 5: Do you believe that increased access to information and data can enhance transparency and accountability in government operations in Somalia?
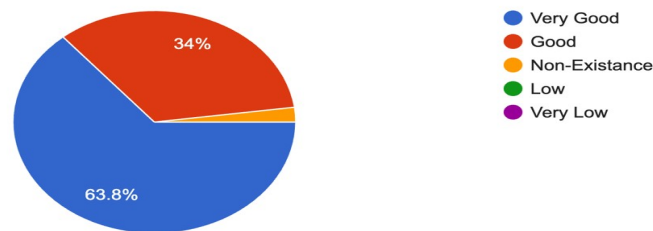47 responses

Figure 4 Question 5 respondents feedback

Responses provided by the respondents indicates a high level of support for the belief that increased access to information and data can enhance transparency and accountability in government operations in Somalia. Out of the 47 individuals who participated, 63.8% (30 persons) considered it to be very good, 34% (16 persons) found it to be good, and only 2.1% (1 person) thought that transparency and accountability were non-existent. Access to information is crucial for communities in various ways. Specifically, increased access to information and data can have a significant impact on transparency and accountability in government operations. When communities have access to relevant information about how their government operates, they can hold their leaders accountable for their actions and decisions. This transparency helps to prevent corruption, misuse of resources, and abuse of power.

Question 6: What challenges do you think hinder the effectiveness of social accountability mechanisms in promoting good governance in Somalia?
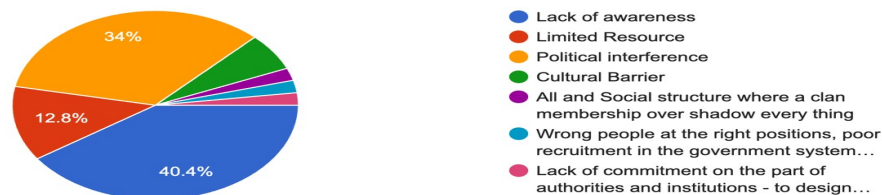47 responses

Figure 5 Question 7's feedback

As per the responses provided, lack of awareness by the community was identified by 19 respondents as a key challenge hindering the effectiveness of social accountability mechanisms in promoting good governance in Somalia, constituting 42.2% of the total responses. Limited resources were identified by 6 respondents (13.3%), political interference by 16 respondents (35.6%), cultural barriers by 3 respondents (6.7%), clan social structures by 1 respondent (2.2%), wrong people at positions by 1 respondent (2.2%), and lack of commitments from authorities by 1 respondent (2.2%).

Lack of awareness by the community is a significant obstacle as it hampers the engagement of citizens in social accountability practices. When community members are not aware of their rights, the importance of holding leaders accountable, or how they can actively participate in governance processes, social accountability mechanisms struggle to gain momentum. In Somalia, this lack of awareness means that citizens may not know how to access information, report misconduct, or demand transparency from their government. This can lead to a lack of oversight and accountability, allowing corruption and mismanagement to go unchecked.

Question 7: How can stakeholders improve social accountability practices to enhance good governance in Somalia?
46 responses

- Strengthening CSO voice
- Establishing independent oversight body
- Enhancing access to the information
- Implementing accountability Mechanisms
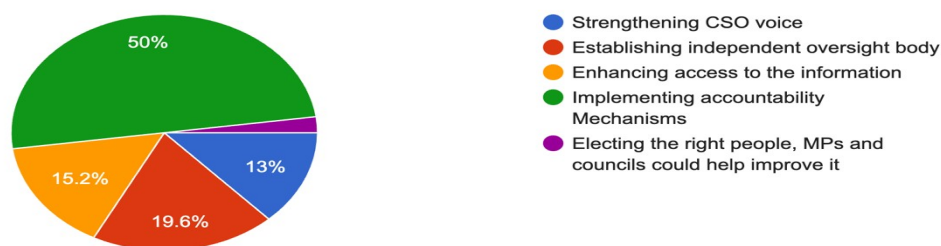- Electing the right people, MPs and councils could help improve it

Figure 6 Question'7 respondent feedback

The question pertains to the enhancement of good governance in Somalia through the improvement of social accountability practices by stakeholders. The respondents provided specific suggestions on how this can be achieved. One prominent suggestion from 23 respondents was the implementation of accountability mechanisms, indicating the importance of establishing processes and systems to ensure transparency and responsibility in governance. Additionally, 9 respondents highlighted the need for setting up an independent oversight body to monitor government actions and decisions. They emphasized the importance of having a separate entity that can hold authorities accountable.

Moreover, 7 respondents emphasized the significance of ensuring access to information as a crucial component of social accountability. This includes promoting transparency by making government data and processes accessible to the public. Strengthening the voice of civil society organizations (CSOs) was also highlighted by 6 respondents as a means to improve social accountability. They suggested that empowering CSOs to actively participate in governance processes and advocacy efforts can lead to a more transparent and accountable government.

Finally, 1 respondent mentioned the importance of electing the right individuals to key positions, such as Members of Parliament and council members, who can drive positive change and promote good governance practices.

Question 8: To what extent do you believe that social accountability mechanisms play a role in ensuring free and fair local elections in Somalia?
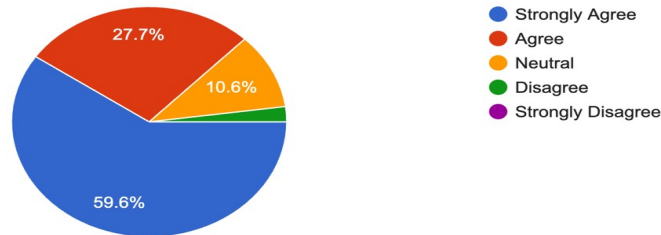47 responses

Figure 7 Question's 8 respondent feedback

Based on the responses provided, a majority of respondents (28 strongly agree and 13 agree) believe that social accountability mechanisms play a significant role in ensuring free and fair local elections in Somalia. There are also a few respondents who are neutral (5) and only one disagrees with this perspective.

Question 9: How important do you consider citizen engagement and oversight in monitoring the transparency of local election processes in Somalia?
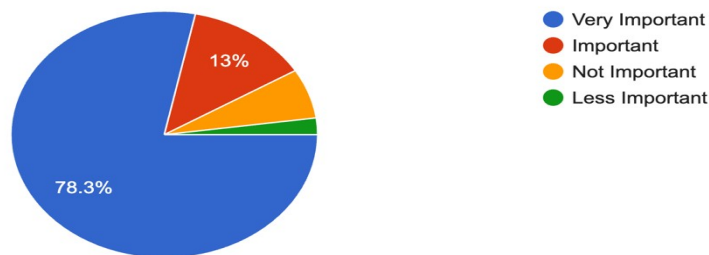46 responses

Figure 8 Question's 9 respondent feedback

The majority of respondents (36) consider citizen engagement and oversight in monitoring the transparency of local election processes in Somalia to be very important. Six respondents found it important, while only a few respondents indicated that they consider it not important (3) or less important (1).

Ensuring citizen engagement and oversight in monitoring the transparency of local election processes in Somalia is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, it promotes accountability and trust in the electoral system. When citizens are actively involved in monitoring the process, it holds electoral officials accountable for their actions and reduces the likelihood of fraudulent activities.

Secondly, citizen engagement can help identify and address any irregularities or issues that may arise during the election process. By having citizens involved in monitoring, they can raise concerns, report violations, and ensure that the election is conducted fairly and transparently

Question 10: In your opinion, what measures can be taken to enhance social accountability in local elections in Somalia and promote good governance at the grassroots level?

Participants provided a variety of suggestions to enhance social accountability in local elections in Somalia and promote good governance at the grassroots level. These suggestions included:

1) Voter education
2) Inclusivity
3) Information sharing and civic education
4) Justice for all from top to bottom
5) Decentralization of power to the community
6) Strengthening media
7) Citizen participation in elections
8) Use of technology to ensure transparency
Question 11: In your opinion, do you believe that social accountability mechanisms contribute to empowering communities and promoting good governance in Somalia?

Yes, social accountability mechanisms contribute significantly to empowering communities and promoting good governance in Somalia. They provide channels for citizens to actively participate in decision-making processes, hold authorities accountable for their actions, and advocate for transparency and responsiveness in governance. By fostering citizen engagement, these mechanisms help build trust between the government and the people, enhance the effectiveness of public services, and promote inclusive and responsive governance practices. Therefore, they play a crucial role in strengthening democracy and improving governance outcomes at the grassroots level in Somalia.

Discussions, Conclusion Recommendation

In this section, the findings of the research regarding the impact of social accountability on good governance in Somalia are discussed. The study aimed to assess the challenges faced in promoting social accountability and providing recommendations to enhance good governance in the country. The respondents highlighted various key challenges such as lack of awareness, limited resources, political interference, and cultural barriers, lack of commitments that hinder the effective implementation of social accountability mechanisms.

Discussion of Findings

From the analysis of the data, it was evident that the lack of awareness and knowledge among citizens regarding their rights and responsibilities was a major barrier to promoting social accountability in Somalia. Many respondents mentioned that citizens were not fully aware of the mechanisms available to hold the government accountable. Additionally, limited resources, both financial and human, were identified as a significant obstacle to ensuring effective social accountability processes. Political interference in accountability mechanisms was also a prevalent

issue raised by respondents, with many citing instances where political influence undermined the transparency and accountability of governance practices. Furthermore, cultural barriers were identified as a challenge in promoting social accountability, as existing cultural norms and practices may hinder citizens from actively participating in holding the government accountable.

Recommendations

Based on the challenges identified by the respondents, the following recommendations are proposed to enhance social accountability and promote good governance in Somalia:

I. Improve Public Awareness and Education: There is a need to invest in public awareness campaigns and educational programs to inform citizens about their rights and responsibilities in holding the government accountable. This could include civic education curriculums to raise awareness about existing accountability mechanisms and processes

II. Strengthen Resource Allocation: Efforts should be made to allocate sufficient resources, both financial and human, to support the implementation of social accountability mechanisms. This may involve increasing funding for oversight institutions like parliamentarians or oversight body of the government and providing training for personnel involved in accountability processes.

III. Address Political Interference: Measures should be put in place to prevent political interference in accountability mechanisms. This could involve strengthening the independence of oversight institutions and creating safeguards to ensure transparency and impartiality in governance practices.

IV. Overcome Cultural Barriers: Strategies should be developed to overcome cultural barriers that hinder citizen participation in social accountability processes. This may involve engaging with community leaders and influencers to promote a culture of transparency and accountability. Youth and women are commonly affected people as clan leaders don't give space for contribution towards nation's rebuilding process and enquiry issues affecting themselves.

V. Create User-Friendly Systems: Efforts should be made to create user-friendly systems that facilitate citizen engagement in social accountability processes. This could include the use of technology solutions to provide accessible platforms for citizens to report grievances and hold the government accountable. Toll free calls could be initiated and given accesses to the community report any misuse, frauds or any suspects.

VI. Combat Corruption: In addition to promoting social accountability, efforts must be intensified to combat corruption within government institutions and society at large. Anti-corruption measures should be strengthened through the implementation of robust legal frameworks, enforcement mechanisms, and oversight bodies. Emphasizing transparency, accountability, and zero tolerance for corruption can help rebuild trust between the government and citizens.

VII. Enhance Access to Basic Services: Recognizing that poverty and lack of access to basic services can exacerbate corruption, efforts should be made to improve service delivery in essential areas such as healthcare, education, and infrastructure. Enhancing access to basic services can reduce the prevalence of corrupt practices and contribute to improving the overall well-being of the population.

VIII. Empower Civil Society and Media: Civil society organizations and media play a critical role in promoting transparency and accountability. Supporting the capacity-building of

civil society groups, journalists, and other watchdog institutions can provide additional checks and balances on government actions. Encouraging investigative reporting and whistleblower protection can help expose corruption and hold officials accountable.

IX. Build Strong Institutions: Strengthening institutional capacity is essential for promoting good governance and combating corruption. Investing in the independence and effectiveness of key institutions such as anti-corruption agencies, ombudsman offices, and auditing bodies can help enhance accountability mechanisms. Institutional reforms should focus on professionalizing public service, ensuring merit-based hiring practices, and implementing robust internal controls.

X. Engage International Partners: Addressing the challenges of corruption and poverty in Somalia requires a multilateral approach. Engaging with international partners, donors, and development agencies can provide technical expertise, financial support, and best practices for strengthening governance systems. Building partnerships with organizations such as the United Nations, World Bank, and regional bodies can help leverage resources and expertise to drive sustainable change.

By implementing these recommendations, Somalia can work towards enhancing social accountability practices and fostering good governance in the country. It is essential for stakeholders at all levels to collaborate and commit to promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement in governance processes for sustainable development and democratic progress.

Conclusion

This was a new area explored by researcher, no research has been done before. This was first research done on the social accountability and good governance in Somalia. This was done by Mohamed Assair independently. Aim of the study was to find out the relationship between social accountability and good governance, case study of Somalia. Researcher works for international NGO and he met in several occasions the accountability and poor governance facing by Somalia community, that encouraged to scientifically study this and know more about it.

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Mohamed Assair is currently Deputy Area Representative, save the children Puntland Programmes, academician, researcher, blogger, humanitarian worker, social development activists, public management, and international relations expert, he advocates for free equitable and quality basic social services for community in need. Assair has a Master of arts in international relations from Liverpool John Moores University, MA in Public administration and Management from Kampala International University, MA in international Cooperation and Humanitarian Aid, Postgraduates from Social work, Postg in Education Management and BA in community development.

Disclaimer: The views written in this article don't represent the views of INGO. Assair can be reached via his LinkedIn'' Mohamed Assair'' or his email: assair14@gmail.com

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