

# Good Governance Practices and Public Service Delivery in Jimma Town, Ethiopia

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**Abstract**— The objective of good governance in the public sector is to encourage better service delivery and accountability by establishing a benchmark for good governance. The main objective of this study was to assess the role of good governance practices in enhancing service delivery in public institutions of Jimma town in Ethiopia. The study employed both qualitative and quantitative research design, and a random sampling method was used to select respondents. The study identified that good governance practices are hindered by various factors such as the weak capacity of service providers, corruption, and poor management to effectively deliver public services. The study concluded there are strong relationships between good governance practice and public basic service delivery. Jimma town the administration should ensure all public service providers are aware of good governance principles and an accountability mechanism to hold service providers accountable for poor performance. Additionally, Jimma town administration should ensure participation of community/service users/ in public sector planning and budgeting process and capacitate human resources with appropriate training to enhance knowledge of good governance and make them responsive to the community needs and priorities.

**Index Terms**— Accountability, Good governance Responsiveness, Participation, Public Service Delivery

## 1 INTRODUCTION

THE importance of good governance in the public sector is to encourage better service delivery and accountability by establishing the benchmark for good governance in the public institutions. Effective governance in the public sector encourages better decision-making and the efficient use of resources and strengthens accountability for the stewardship of resources. Effective governance can improve management, leading to more effective implementation of the chosen interventions, better service delivery, and, ultimately, better outcomes. People's lives are thereby improved. Good governance, in this era, has drawn public awareness of the operations of public institutions. It has an important factor in the consideration of a nation's ability to adhere to universally acceptable democratic standards [1]. The principles of good governance such as participation, rule of law, transparency, accountability, fairness, and efficiency enable employees to be more effective and transparent in providing high, quality services [2]. The issue of poor governance in the African public sector has also been well documented in other studies in the field of public management. Considering the fragile nature of governance policies in African public institutions, Timoth [3] pointed out that public service delivery in many African countries is riddled with bureaucracy, corruption, selfishness, and favoritism that tend to benefit the privileged few at the expense of the impoverished many. In Ethiopia, public service delivery faces various challenges including public money wastage, low revenue collections and unmotivated public servants, poor accountability, and generally poor performance on service delivery [4]. Major setbacks to the poor public service delivery include lack of transparency and community participation, poor accountability, and inadequate skill of service provider [5]. Despite the injection of international and domestic resources and public

complaints, public services delivery is still poor in Jimma town, poor waste management and water service, poor electricity infrastructure and power cuts, poor customer services, corruption. This is primarily due to poor management which, in turn, is indicative of poor governance in the town public institutions.

## 2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There is dissatisfaction with access, quality and inclusion of service offered in public institutions mainly in developing nations, and particularly in Ethiopia, Citizens are complaining about the access, quality, and inclusion of public service facilities infrastructures of public institutions. In addition, the delivery of service by the public sector is not properly tailored to customer needs. Therefore, public service delivery faces numerous challenges including corruption and unmotivated public servants, poor accountability and poor performance and management on service delivery. According to the majority of Jimma town resident opinions, poor water services were attributed to poor performance and weak institutional management. Moreover, there is a server problem on inadequate water and health services, corrupted land administration, poor waste management, poor customer services and corruption in Jimma town. The study aims to investigate the role of good governance in enhancing the delivery of service in public institutions in Jimma town.

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### 3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

#### 3.1 General Objective of the Study

The main objective of the study was to assess the factors affecting good governance practices to enhance service delivery in public sectors of Jimma town.

#### 3.2 Specific Objectives of the Study

Whereas the specific objectives of this study are to a) identify challenges facing good governance in public institutions.; b) determine the contribution of good governance to service delivery in public institutions; and c) determine the relationship between good governance and service delivery in public institutions.

### 4 LITERATURE REVIEW

#### 4.1 Governance and Good Governance

Every public sector entity or public service spends public money; how this money is spent and the quality of services it provides is critically important as citizens, users, and taxpayers. The good governance in the public sector defines effective governance in the public sector and application of the principle that encourages better decision-making and efficient use of resources and strengthens accountability for the stewardship of those resources [6]. Governance refers to the formal and informal arrangements that determine how public decisions are made and how public actions are carried out from the perspective of maintaining a country's constitutional values [7]. The United Nations [7] defines good governance as the exercise of authority through political and institutional processes that are transparent and accountable and encourage public participation. According to OECD [8], good governance can be explained as participation, transparency, and accountability, effectiveness, equity promoting rule of law. Public Institutions and Public Services Public institutions are institutions that are backed by public funds and controlled by the state to provide services to the community [8]. The study used the OECD's definition of public institutions. Hence, the term public service is defined as service which is provided by the government to people living within its jurisdiction, either directly (through the public sector) or by financing the provision of services.

#### 2.4 Empirical Literature Review

Several studies were conducted by various professionals in the field and academia on the role good governance practices would play to enhance the performance of basic service deliveries in different socio-economic and and political contexts. The focus of most researchers has been on identifying the relationships and roles of good governance practices, perception of public service users and impacts of some good governance reform initiatives. Tikue [9], for instance, conducted the study on the role of good governance in local development regarding transparency, accountability, and responsiveness in Tigray Regional State. The study identified that the prime factors that

inhibited public basic service delivery include lack of transparency corruption, low capacity, low participation, and low responsiveness of institutions [9]. Similarly, Uddin [11] conducted a study on the impact of good governance on development in Bangladesh. The study further concluded that corruption is a major obstacle to good governance in Bangladesh [11].

Another scholar, Siswana, B. [10] conducted a study to establish the relationship between leadership and governance in the South African public service. Specifically, the study aimed to examine how good governance practices improve public finance management systems. The findings of the study show that good governance has resulted in the improvement of public finance management systems by improving accountability and transparency [10].

Ntalaja [12] conducted a study on the role of good governance in improving revenue collections, and the delivery of public services in South Africa. The study found that public service delivery in Africa is hindered by various factors such as corruption, staff incompetence, and absence of good governance, and lack of more transparent [12].

Dayanand [13] conducted the study aimed to assess the effectiveness of community organizations concerning the existence of pillars of good governance. The findings indicate that inadequate community participation, poor responsiveness poor participation, accountability, transparency, and the rule of law has a significant impact on poor service delivery [13].

### 5 METHODOLOGY

Research Design is used to structure the research; to show how a major part of the research project the samples or group, work together in addressing research question. Due to the nature of the proposed study, the researcher used a descriptive design. Descriptive was used to help the researcher to establish the relationship between good governance and service delivery in public institutions. Descriptive research is according to Saunders [14], the research for which the purpose is to produce an accurate representation of persons, events, or situations. Sample Size of the Study This study was focused in four, public service provision sectors –water, health, land administration, and waste management of Jimma Town in Ethiopia. The targeted populations for this study were residents of Jimma town who have familiars with the problems for many years. Kothari [15] defines sample as a collection of some parts of the population based on which judgment is made. He stressed that a sample should be small enough to make data collection convenient and should be large enough to be a true representative of the population to which is selected. The study used the purposive sampling method to select 96 service users that have enough knowledge about public sector service and 32 respondents randomly selected from four public sectors such as water, health, land administration, and different levels of management such as executive, middle, and operational.

## 4 FINDINGS

### 4.2 Knowledge of citizen charter

The study found that significant number of the respondents lack enough awareness about the existence of citizen charter at the public service facilities. Table 1, below, shows that 110 (86%) of respondents have no knowledge about citizen charter while only 18(14%) responded to have some awareness knowledge of citizen charter.

**Table 1: A table summarizing respondents' knowledge of citizen charter.**

Variable	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Have knowledge of the existence of citizen charter	18	14%
Have no knowledge on the existence citizen charter	110	86%
Total	128	100%

This implies local government has not made sufficient effort to create awareness about citizen charter to enhance public service users' capacity to enable them demand quality services and hold the providers accountable to poor performances.

### 4.2 Experience with Service Delivery Problems

The study indicates that most public service users have experienced service delivery related problems and dissatisfied with the quality of services they received.

**Table 2: Experience of Respondents with Service Delivery Problems**

Variable	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Have experienced service delivery problems	106	83%
Have not experienced service delivery problems	22	17%
Total	128	100%

The table 2 above depicts that 106 (83%) of respondents have experienced service delivery related problems, while only 22 (17%) of respondents had not experienced service delivery problems.

### 4.3 Public Sectors lacking quality services.

The findings show that most of the respondents are dissatisfied with the services provided at land administrations, and believe that, related to other service providers, corruption is the main factors they observed.

**Table 3: Responses on Public Sectors lacking quality services.**

Variables	Corruption		Poor management		Weak
	No	%	No.	%	No
Water Service	67	52%	55	43%	56
Waste Management	69	54%	77	60%	77
Land Administration	116	91%	114	89%	81
Health Service	31	24%	99	77%	82

Hence, 116 respondents (91%) indicated corruption as the main causes of their dissatisfaction, while the poor management, political interference, low capacity of service providers are mentioned by 114(89%), 83 (65%) and 81(63%) of the respondents. The Jimma town's waste management appears to be affected by both poor management and weak capacity for 77 (60%) respondents, while corruption is found to be the main bottleneck, for 69 (54%) respondents, in this specific service unit. In water service, corruption is main challenge for 67 (52%) respondents. Whereas poor management and poor capacity are the main factors for their poor service delivery performance for 55 (43%) and 56 (44%) of the respondents, respectively. Regarding Service delivery challenges in Health Services, 99 (77%), 82 (64%) and 31 (24%) of the respondents believe that poor management, low capacity of health service providers, and corruption are their main concerns in this public sector.

### 4.4 Transparency in Service Delivery

Regarding the existence of transparent service delivery practices, the finding reveals most respondents, 92 (73%), agree that there is lack of transparency in the selected service sectors of Jimma town. While 22 (17%) of respondents agree there is transparent service deliveries. Here, only 14(11%) respondents are neutral regarding their agreement on transparency in service delivery sectors.

**Table 4: Respondents Perception on Transparency in Service Deliveries.**

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No. of Responders	13	9	14	48	44
Percentage (%)	10%	7%	11%	38%	35%

### 4.5 Accountability in Service Deliveries

**Table 5: Summary of Responses on Accountability**

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
No. of Responders	5	19	7	78	19
Percentage	4%	15%	5%	61%	15%

(%)					Poor	9	7%
					Total	128	100

The above table depicts many respondents, 79 (76%), disagreed on the availability of accountability in the selected public service sectors of Jimma town. On the other hand, 24 (19%) of respondents agree that there are accountable public service delivery practices in Jimma town. Only 7(5%) responded neutral.

#### 4.6 The participation of community in Service Delivery

The table 6 below shows that significant number of respondents 108 (84%) disagree that community participation is in place, in service deliveries, while 20 (16%) of respondents are agreed there is a community participation in service delivery planning and budgeting process in Jimma town.

**Table 6: Responses on the participation of community in Service Deliveries.**

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No. of Responders		20		41	67
Percentage (%)	%	16%	%	32%	52%

This implies that effective community engagement in service delivery planning and consultation on budgeting is still lacking.

#### 4.7 Responsiveness in Service Delivery

**Table 7: Summary of Responses on Responsiveness of Service Providers.**

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
No. of Responders	0	27	5	96	0
Percentage (%)	%	21%	4%	75%	0%

The above result shows 96 (75%) of respondents strongly disagreed and disagree there is responsiveness in service providers to their needs, and 27 (21%) of respondents disagree about responsiveness of service providers. The rest, 5(4%) of respondents feel neutral on the responsiveness issues.

#### 4.8 The Respondents Perception on the Relationship between Good Governance Practices & Delivery of Services

**Table 8: Relationship between Good Governance and Service Deliveries.**

Relationship	No. of Respondents	Percentages
Very Large	20	16%
Large	68	53%
Medium	31	24%

The result shows that (16%) of respondents agree to a very large extent, there is a strong relationship between good governance and service delivery, (53%) observed large extent relationship, (24%) observed medium relationship while (16%) observed very large relation, but only (7%) observed relationships to be poor. These results imply the respondents recognize the existence of strong relationship between good governance practices observed and service delivery performances.

### 6 CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that people’s awareness about of governance practices and knowledge on the existing service standards would enhance service delivery practices performances. Absence of good governance practices such as lack of transparency, accountability, and community participation would lead to non-responsiveness of service providers, low satisfaction among service users, and to the overall poor service delivery performances. Hence, good governance practices would significantly contribute to enhance quality of services in the selected public sectors of Jimma town. The main challenges hindering good governance in Jimma town public sectors are found to be corruption, poor management, and weak capacity of service providers. It was also concluded that lack or improper implementation of the principles of good governance practices, and poor knowledge about citizen charter among users leads to poor service delivery satisfaction. The study lastly concludes that service users are strongly feel that there is a strong relationship between good governance and service delivery performances, interlocking the existing poor performance of effective service deliveries.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

This study is descriptive in nature and it aims to assess and describe the main factors affecting the public service deliveries from the demand side. Hence, we recommend that more explanatory assessments would be required to investigate the relationships among the variables of good governance practices from the service users’ and providers perspectives. Based on the findings, we would like to recommend the following actions to mitigate the factors negatively affecting the performance of service deliveries in Jimma town.

- Jimma town’s administration should effectively engage service users in sectoral office planning, budgeting, and monitoring activities to understand the real need, and preferences.
- The town’s administration should also pay attention to human resources capacity development and pro-

vide appropriate training to enhance knowledge of good governance practices.

- The town's administration should ensure dissemination of information and make the citizens' charter accessible to users in all public sectors. The administration shall also ensure the performances of service providers are regularly monitored and evaluated in terms of good governance practices to improve the quality and performance of services, accountability, and transparency.
- The town's administration should be committed prevent corruption and wastage of public resources and hold public officials accountable for their poor performances.

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