

## **Public Management Reform and its Effectiveness on Quality Public Service Delivery in Somalia**

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### ***Abstract***

*This paper examines how sustained public management reform impacts on quality of public service delivery in Somalia. It adopted a desk research methodology, which involves reviewing existing literature and collecting data from existing resources to study the research topic.*

*The paper argues that the public administration in Somalia has been disrupted, which prevents Somalia from making significant progress in providing public services. It recommends several measurements for reformation to contribute to the quality of public service delivery and economic growth and development in Somalia.*

*The paper aims to guide public institutions, civil societies, policymakers, and international organizations interested in reforming public management in Somalia to achieve the quality of public service and respond to the needs of the society.*

**Keywords:** Public management reform, service delivery, Public management effectiveness.

## **1. Introduction**

There has been a growing interest in reforming public management globally. Its significance has increased in modern life where governments must revise and respond to the rapidly transforming global economy, citizen needs, technology development within other rising issues (Cheema, 2007). Public management is influenced by the political system of the country, the environment, culture, and historical experience (Musa, 2018). In addition, these factors are dynamic and could be changed through the constitution, regulations, the rule of law, good governance, and the willingness of political leaders. Furthermore, public administration is the area in which the policy and law recommendations are conducted and the board directors of public management are politicians who consider political performance rather than public organizational performance (Steven & William, 2002).

The main importance of public management in moderate states involves the implementation of public policy and providing service to the citizens, and it helps to accomplish peace, security, and order in societies and prevent natural disasters by issuing a warning before a crisis (Polinaidu, 2010). Public management is a mechanism in the application of the law and programs set by the government, and the government cannot exist without public management. Furthermore, public management is indispensable to economic growth and development by facilitating infrastructure, regulation, reducing poverty, promoting exports, and protecting the environment.

Public management reform (PMR) is very all-inclusive and takes place in large areas such as institutional structure, human resources management, public finance, decentralization, and organizational culture (UNDP, 2004). The targeted reform of this paper is to focus on civil servant reform, demarcated to include the issue of recruitment, specialization, and

promotion by enhancing the competencies and skills of civil servants to improve public service delivery. Any reform in public management would face resistance and challenge from extractive and corrupt groups who seek to retain the power to extract the resources from the majority of Somalia citizens.

Bollit & Buocckaert (2000) define public management reform as “*is a deliberate change to structure and process of public sector organizations with objectives of getting them and runs effectively*”. The institutional structure is a fundamental method for reforming organizations because it involves specialization, formulation, departmentalization, centralization, and vertical and horizontal departments (Hill & Lynn Jir, 2008). Reforming Structure in the area of merit-based system and specialization as a tool to improve public management productivity by segregating functions and tasks.

The significance of public management reform in the area of civil servants should be based on a merit-based system and specialization that could bring and attract qualified and skilled employees who undertake their duties and responsibilities consistent with the constitution and legal framework and contribute to the public management performance effectively and efficiently and more responsive to its citizens. In addition, fair competition and meritocracy give an equal opportunity for all citizens and bring the good educated and trained moderate technology technocrats to work with the government which would increase and improve the quality of public service delivery (Idris, 2018). Specialization and division of labor increase the public organizational performance, and the structure of public institutions in terms of specialization could be suitable for public organizations' context including capacity, objective, technology, workplace, and outcomes orientation of the public organization. An institutional structure creates duties and functions into well-trained specialists in public institutions (Idris, 2018). As well as promotion

requires to be based on competencies, merit, and hard work under article 37 of the law of Somalia Civil Servants in 2006. Quality public administrators contribute to the facilitation of efficient management, responsive to citizens' aspirations and service delivery (Cohen & Eimicke, 2002). Additionally, the entrance to the public administration must be based on competitive exam and professional merit, protection of civil servants from illegal dismissal, and rule of the law-based system increase the public trust in the government and satisfaction of citizens. A fair promotion would increase the morale of employees and their competition which would contribute to individual performance, efficiency, and effectiveness of the public service delivery.

To sustain public management reform is a very significant step and arises from reaction to the shifting international economic, social, political, and technological transformation. Besides, the industrialized economy in the advanced and developing countries moving from mass- production-based on industrialization to the technology and education-based system of production and service as well as moderate technology produce and stimulate new production, transportation telecommunication, and new energy determinate the economic growth and development (Cheema, 2007). Reforming in public management needs leadership commitment, good governance, rule of law, separation of public service from politics, and protection of political neutrality.

In the case of Somalia, public sector reform was implemented in 1964 by then Prime Minister Abdirisak Hagi Hussein. During the reform, many public employees were dismissed. After the collapse of the regime and the public management institutions in 1991 and their reactivation in 2000, the public management reform in the reconstruction process is a matter of significance to the improvement in public service provision, the Somali citizen's aspirations, the reduction of poverty and the contribution to international markets. In addition, the information age and the

transformation of technology require the government to change its approach to providing service to society and delivering service to the citizens centered on technology. (Cheema, 2007).

The significant purpose of reforming public management in Somalia involves promoting efficient and effective service delivery, promoting merit-process recruitment, and empowering bureaucracies with moderate technology. Furthermore, ineffective public management hampers the country's salient recovery. However, the elected and selected politicians in Somalia since the 2000s have never paid the required attention to public management and the upgrading of bureaucracies, which are essential approaches for economic growth and human development. In addition to the political system's transformation from a unitary to a federal system, it also requires public sector reform in Somalia. Somali leaders discredit the role of public management, resulting in institutional collapse, lack of public service, increasing poverty, unemployment, and lack of access to primary education for 70% of Somali children (Education Ministry of Somalia, 2019).

Still, Public administration in Somalia is centralized although the state recovering from a failed state and civil war, a lack of leadership commitment, and corrupted politicians disband Somali public management. Article 27 of Somalia's constitution provides all Somali citizens the right to receive clean water, emergency health care, and social security, but the successive governments failed to provide those services to citizens. Furthermore, Somalia's public sectors are hampered by corruption, nepotism, favoritism, and political patronage. According to International Transparency (2019), Somalia is ranked the most corrupt country in the world.

Previous studies have paid little attention to public management reform in Somalia; they have not considered the role of public service management

in government. My study is intended as an addition to existing scholarship on the issue and subject of reforming the public sector in Somalia. Indeed, most research in Somalia does not consider public management reform. The diffusion of technology on the global and increase in citizens' expectation requires a sustained reform in Public management. Again, moving of centralized system to another system leads to significant public management reform in Somalia. This study examines how sustained reforming in public management contributes to effective and efficient public service provision. It addresses the ineffectiveness of public service in Somalia and how to improve public service delivery which is affected by not merit-based recruitment, underperformance, lack of specializations, political interference in the public management, and lack of public service.

Having provided a context for this paper, I will proceed to the following introduction, the political system in Somalia, an overview of public management in Somalia, the importance of public management reform and quality public service delivery, challenges to the public management reform in Somalia, the control and supervision over public management, conclusion and policy recommendation. This paper focuses on secondary data of public management reforms conducted, literature review, journals, and Somalia media.

## **2. Political System and Public Management in Somalia**

Public management is a non-political bureaucracy supervised by the executive branch; it works under the order and direction of the executive arm. A political system is a tool for determining the success of public management reform because public administration is under the hands of the executive arm of the government, and various functions of bureaucracies are reflected by development in politics and the economy (Polinaidu, 2010.). The political system in the country has a pivotal role

in public management and the effectiveness and efficiencies of service delivery. The form of the political system of a state, such as democracy, autocracy, monarchy, oligopoly, and partial democracy, affects the performance of the public sector. Again, rule of law, separation of power, accountability, and transparency in the public sector influences the quality of public service. In addition, all ministries are responsible to the minister, and he/she is monitoring what is going on in all departments of ministries and the mistakes committed in the public offices (Igbokwe, 2009). The minister has to take measures against the officers who commit mistakes through the constitution, regulations, and ordinary laws enacted by parliament and also has the right to refer to the independent civil service commission.

The context of bureaucracy in developed countries separates politics from public management but in most African public management and its politics are mixed, in the case of Somalia public management and the executive branch are similar and no difference. Furthermore, the offices of top leaders direct and manage the public management in terms of recruitment, promotion, and dismissal, which is contrary to article 37, clause 5 of the civil servant's law, passed in 2006.

## **2.1 The Political System**

Following its independence in 1960, Somalia embraced democracy with a centralized system, the president is elected by parliament, and Prime Minister is nominated by the president with the endorsement of the parliament. The Prime Minister and his cabinet undertake all functions of the government, formulate, and implement the public policy of the state. In 1969, the military ousted the civil government; they underpinned a totalitarian unitary system with a centralized form. In 1991, armed oppositions toppled the military regime, the central government

collapsed, the institutions of public administration completely collapsed, and most of the public infrastructure was destroyed.

In 2000, after ten years of political vacuum, civil society activists, intellectuals, and traditional leaders gathered in Djibouti and formed a transitional national government, but the government faced armed opposition and other obstacles. In 2004, warlords and factional leaders gathered in Nairobi, the capital city of Kenya, they agreed to establish the federal system and established a transitional federal government. In August 2012, Somalia's Federal Provisional constitution was adopted by National Constituent Assembly; the Provisional Federal Constitution is applied in Somalia since 2012. Somalia currently relies on an amorphous political system, based on political patronage and clan-power sharing, which undermines the quality of public service and does not treat the underdevelopment, economic stagnation, and extreme poverty.

## **2.2. An Overview of Public Management**

Public management is not the formation of the moderate period but its track back to an ancient period (Emmanuel .A. Shom, 2012). Moreover, in the period of emerging moderate states the public management was surrounded by political connection, nepotism, political loyalty, and patronage and it was based on a centralized traditional approach.

In Somalia, there are three stages of public management that took place; first, pre-independence and civil government: during the trusteeship time, servant recruitment was done and trained by the Italians in southern regions and the British Protectorate in northern regions. After independence in 1960, the first Somalia Government faced challenges about how to assimilate the civil servants from two regions because they received two different training and experience (Aroma, 2005). In 1960 - 1969, during the nascent democracy, the corruption and nepotism of civil servants in terms of recruitment and promotion spread in all sectors of the



government, although article nine (9) of the Somalia Republic Constitution in 1960 mentioned: "every Somali with qualification can hold the public office". After four years of independence, reforms based on informal law were carried out by then Prime Minister Abdirisak Hagi Hussein. As unqualified officers were fired, some additional achievements were realized in terms of enhanced public recruitment and enhanced public service.

The second stage was during the military regime period from 1969, although, there were some achievements attained in terms of training and promoting the competencies and skills of civil servants, and the government established the Somali Institute of Development Administration (SIDAM), which provides training for the public officials. The citizens had accessed a free public service in terms of education, health care, and other necessary service but the main criteria required for joining civil service was to undertake military training and believe in the ideology of the Somalia Revolutionary Socialist Party. In addition, the high-rank officers such as general directors, district commissioners, and regional mayors have been appointed through their loyalty to a military regime, clan affiliation, political patronage, and the revolutionary ideology (Aroma. 2005).

The third stage was the political vacuum era of 1991-2000, where all government public institutions collapsed and civil servants dispersed. But in the 2000s, a transitional national government formed in Arta, Djibouti, had called previous public servants but armed opposition from warlords and clan militia made the government dysfunctional. In 2004, the Transitional federal government was established in Nairobi, Kenya. The Transitional Federal Government succeeded to establish and approve civil servant Law No.11 in 2006 through the House of the People of Somalia Federal Parliament. Positively, law and legal framework are indispensable for any reform in public management. In 2012-2016,

Somalia started to reestablish and recruit public servants but still the process of hiring and recruitment is based on nepotism, favoritism, group affiliation, and political patronage. Since 2017, public recruitment was suspended due to World Bank and IMF conditionality.

In brief, since 2000, successive governments have done positive forward steps to rebuild public service management. However, this sector suffers, with other factors, from corruption and mismanagement where powerful politicians use their power to get appointed to positions such as general directors, district commissioners, and other high-rank posts.

### **3. Challenges to Public Management Reforms in Somalia**

There are numerous challenges confronting the public management in Somalia; among the main challenges are the following:

#### **3.1 Political Instability and Ineffective Executive Arm**

The civil service is under the executive arm because the executive branch determines public policy. On another hand, public policy has been defined as "what government chooses to do or not to do (Dye 1976). Public policy arises in the reaction of policy aspirations and concerns submitted by citizens and other stakeholders (Eneanya, 2010). Furthermore, executive power is pivotal in public service delivery because the minister is the head of the ministry who runs the activities of his/her ministry to serve the citizens. Resources and budget allocation that drive public service are under the hands of the executive arm. Public services are conducted and implemented by the public servant under the constitution and laws of the state and the direction of the executive branch which has the right to control the recruitment, promotion, and removal (Igbokwe, 2009).

Only constitutional practice, rule of law, separation of powers, an independent judiciary, and independent public service commission can

limit the power of the executive branch. Therefore, the success of public management depends on the executive arm; the corrupt and dysfunctional executive in Somalia undermines public service. The embezzlement of the resource allocated to public service, infrastructure, education, and health causes economic stagnation and poverty.

Somalia's judiciary is not independent because the President nominates the supreme judge without the endorsement of the Somalia Federal Parliament. On other hand, political instability in Somalia undermines the main functions of government, and economic growth and development. Finally, political instability induces dysfunctional institutions and leads to damage to the state and society (Daron Acemooglu & James A. Robinson, 2012).

### **3.2 Underdevelopment of Public Management**

Public service still is under development and has the traditional style, machinery, and tools used in public administration in Somalia is not appropriate for national development, engagement of international markets, and economic growth. Equally important, to complete one process service in Somalia you need to deal with several institutions and it takes a long time. However, the government is a factor in national and human development and any development depends on the skills and quality of the public service. Public management in Somalia is incapable to deliver social-economic, poverty reduction, quality education, and a better life because the development needs resources, professional human capital through merit-based recruitment, specialization, leadership commitment, and political stability (Emmanuel .A. Shom, 2012).

### **3.3 Corruption and Unethical Behavior.**

Since 2006, Somalia has become the lowest country on transparency international's corruption perception index (International Transparency, 2019). The definition of corruption "is an abuse of the public office for

private gain”. (2005, World Bank) as similarly Lampsdorff (1999) defined corruption as the “misuse of the public power for private gain”. Corruption occurs in public sectors in terms of public recruitment based on nepotism, favoritism, and political patronage. Public corruption impedes the viability of the state and brings unskilled staff that works in the public sectors and misuses national resources for individual gain. Moreover, lack of integrity, unfairness, and mistrust of Somali citizens delays the process of public services (Aroma, 2005).

### **3.4 Political System-Based on Clan Rule**

Clan politics remains and makes the Somalia public service ineffective because this system directly shapes the political system which influences the public management. Furthermore, from top leaders to junior civil servants come through this system, and they are giving most of the high jobs to people affiliated with their clans and groups' loyalty to them to persist the power. Additionally, there are many incompetent and unskilled workers in the public sector due to the recommendation of their clans. The influential clans and powerful politicians get high posts as civil servants like general directors and departmental directors, and even military positions and appointed positions such as ambassadors, consuls, and diplomats. This system undermines merit-based system, competition, and equal opportunity employment of the whole people in the country.

### **4. The Control and Supervision over Public Service**

It is mandatory for the public workers to behave ethically and morally in consistence with Islamic values, constitution, laws, and public values because they are responsible for their actions. However, it is necessary to control public service through internal and external control to avoid corruption, none merit-based recruitment, misuse of power, bribing, unethical behavior, delayed service, mistreatment of public workers,

social injustice, and embezzlement of public funds and resources. Internal control is very significant for public management performance. In contrast, it is necessary to find external tools which control the public management to avoid abuse of power against public workers and violation of national laws.

#### **4.1 Internal Control**

Internal control operates within the administration itself, and it is the duty of the executive branch, according to article 99 of the Somalia Federal Constitution states the power of the council of ministers is “to set the general policy and implement it”. Furthermore, every minister has the mandate to oversee and supervise his/her ministry’s activities because the executive arm is a planner of national and human development and is responsible for delivering quality public service.

#### **4.2 External Control**

External control is an essential tool in controlling the public management service. It may be considered from several main angles, namely – the legislature, independent civil service commission, the judiciary, and civil society and media.

##### **a) Parliamentary Oversight**

Legislative oversight is very significant in controlling public management performance, and avoiding irresponsibility of public officers, corruption, bribing, non-merit-based recruitment, mistreatment of public workers, and unethical behavior. According to article 69/2 of the Somalia Federal Constitution, the House of the People of the Federal Parliament has the power of “*to hold accountable and monitor the national institutions, and to ensure the implementation of national laws.*” as well as “*to hold*

*accountable the Prime Minister, members of ministers and chairpersons of independent commissions.”*

**b) Independent Civil Service Commission**

Somalia civil commission is established under ordinary law No.11 of Somalia civil servants which passed by parliament in 2006. The roles and mandates of the Civil Service Commission are to ensure public recruitment through impartiality, fairness, and independence, set rules to be followed in the recruitment process suitable for the all applicants, and prevent a public employee from being abused by the executive, and protect the rights of public servants. This commission is nominated by the executive without the endorsement of parliament which hinders its independence.

To get an effective and more independent civil service commission, it needs that the members of the commission and its law be approved by the parliament.

**c) Judiciary Control**

According to article 106 of the Somalia Provisional Constitution, *“the judiciary is independent of parliament and the executive arm and it carries out its functions under the constitution and laws.”* So, the judiciary has the power to look into any legal violations or abuses by public officials. The judiciary is also in charge of applying the law to everyone.

The courts can intervene in the public management acts and orders whenever there are power abuse and unregulated procedures. In addition, if a public worker uses his mandate to damage the dignity and rights of a person, the judiciary has the power to intervene in the case and punish that public official if he is found guilty. Nevertheless, the court cannot intervene in any administrative acts because some administrative conflicts have special procedures (Muçaj & Gruda, 2016).

#### **d. Civil Society and Media**

Civil society and media are very important in controlling and overseeing public management because the media informs the citizens what is going on in the government institutions. In addition, the media conducts an investigation and delivers news to the public (USAID, 1999). Today, Social media and the internet make people more aware than before and increase public participation in the government. The effectiveness of civil society can symbolize society and influence public service decision-making, and civil society is a key factor that pushes the government to foster the quality of public service because it represents a diverse range of interests, including labor unions, the education sector, doctors, women, and youth. In addition, civil society can inform and mobilize the community while also strengthening public service (D.zatkova, 2016). The media play an important role in the dissemination of information in society and influencing society's attitudes, which may have an impact on public management decision-making.

#### **5. Conclusion and Policy Recommendations**

Public management reform is vital to improve the quality of public service delivery and strengthen the public trust in the government. Organizational reform in the areas of merit based-system and specialization would contribute to an increase in the quality of public service delivery. The good quality of public management shapes the direction of the economy. The effects of globalization, information and communication technology necessitate reforms in Somalia's public administration and service delivery methods. Additionally, Somalia's public management has malfunctioned because of nepotism, favoritism, political patronage, and corruption preventing it from making remarkable progress in public service delivery. Public management reform in the recruitment process and specialization might lead to and attract qualified

and professional employees which contribute to the quality of public service delivery and economic growth and development. The effectiveness and efficiencies of public service could be achieved through institutional capacity and the selection of educated and skilled public workers. It is very difficult to achieve sustainable public management reform without leadership commitments, lack of political will, and absence of the rule of law.

In the light of the above challenges, the following policy recommendations are introduced for successful public management reform:

- a) Somalia has to move from clan-based power-sharing to multiparty and inclusive institutions because the executive and system of politics shape the effectiveness of public management and its ineffectiveness;
- b) Separation of the executive branch from the bureaucracy by avoiding political interference, nepotism, and favoritism from the top officials;
- c) Establishing of independent civil service commission nominated by the head of the executive with the endorsement of Somalia's parliament. The commission is responsible for setting recruitment strategies based on fair, open competition, and neutrality in government hiring, it is also responsible for promotion based on merit that is free from political interference, encouraging rewards, and protecting the rights of public staff and job security;
- d) The recruitment of all public jobs should be based on an open exam and merit-based system, and have to protect public workers from illegal removal and should follow proper performance management;
- e) Building the capacity of the public servants by training and empowering, with increasing and enhancing the condition of the



ethics through professional and ethical standards, and eliminating corrupt officers; and

- f) Strengthening public institution accountability through Parliament, judiciary, civil society, and media.

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Published by Institute for Somali Studies

Hodan District, Near Km4 Square

Website: [www.isos.so](http://www.isos.so)

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