



**ASSESSMENT OF THE PRACTICE AND CHALLENGES OF GOOD GOVERNANCE: A CASE OF MUNICIPALITY
OFFICE OF BEDELE TOWN**

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this research was to assess the Practice and challenges of good governance in Bedelle town municipal office. The descriptive research design was employed and both qualitative and quantitative research approach is also used. The researcher was employed probability (random sampling) and non-probability (Purposive) techniques. The 16 Respondents were selected from the communities and permanent civil servants of the office. The researcher were used both primary and secondary sources of data. The collected data was analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Based on findings, Bedelle town municipal office gives many services to the society of the Bedelle town. Like: road, clean water, education service, telecommunication service, healthcare service, governance service and etc. However, there are many challenges that are hamper proper functions of Bedelle town municipal office to its customers. This problem includes: lack of man power, Corruption, lack of responsiveness, lack of transparency, accountability and fairness and lack of sufficient budget. Base on the findings, the researcher suggested that, to handle the problems that challenges the good governance system in Bedelle municipal office, the municipal office should appoint the skilled man power, apply the system of check and balance, the municipal office should raise internal income in order to minimize the problems of revenue sources.

Key Words: Governance, Bedele Town

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INTRODUCTION

Governance is the process by which governments are selected, monitored and replaced; the capacity of the government to effectively formulate and implement sound policies; and the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions that govern economic and social interactions among them. Most definitions of governance agree on the importance of a capable state operating under the rule of law. Therefore, Governance describes the application of rules and processes through which authority and control are exercised in a society, political decisions are made, the rules for the scope of action of state and society are structured, and resources for economic and social development are administered, UN definition.

Good governance is a consensus oriented, participatory, following the rule of law, effective and efficient, accountable, transparent, responsive, equitable and inclusive one (UN definitions). Good governance promotes equity and equality of treatment to all based on the concept of non-discrimination. In the context of social developments, it promotes gender balance, enables, synthesis of diverse perspectives and mobilizes resources for social purpose (Ibid).

As indicated by the former secretary general of the UN Kofi A. Annan "Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development." According to organization for economic cooperation and development (OECD), good governance assures that corruption is minimized, the views minorities are taken into account and that voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision making, the elimination of a mal-governance and the establishment of good governance through democratic process and rule of law, the citizens of a country and enhancing the ability of the people to gain better and defined life, grater options to choose from and ensuring transparency in administration, etc.

However, in developing countries in general and in Ethiopia in particular suffer with mal-governance

due to different problems and challenges. Therefore, this study would have assessed the challenges of good governance in municipal office of Bedelle Town.

Statement of the Problem

Good governance appeared on the World Bank's agenda. One of the themes of the Bank's 1991 Annual Development Economic Conference was "Good Governance". On the relationship between development and governance, the Bank conceptualized governance to indicate the manner in which power and authority are exercised for development "in the management of a country's economic and social resources.

According to the International Monetary Fund, good governance is important for countries at all stages of development. It emphasizes on the importance of good governance in fields such as promoting public sector transparency and accountability. Good governance helps create an environment in which sustained economic growth becomes achievable. Conditions of good governance allow citizens to maximize their returns on investment.

So that, the presence of a strong civil society including a free press and independent judiciary is pre-conditions for good governance. We would all be better off, and citizens of many developing countries would be much better off, good governance implies if public life were conducted within institutions that were fair, judicious, transparent, accountable, participatory, responsive, well managed, and efficient. Merilee Grindle (2008).

However, the Ethiopian cities and towns face complex social and economic problems. Most municipal administrations are poorly staffed and experience shortage of professional personnel, including qualified urban managers, planners and architects, accountants and people adequately skilled in the management and delivery of urban services. In addition, severe budgetary and financial constraints have hampered the capabilities of urban government for under taking meaningful local

development program and providing critical municipal services such as clean water, housing, urban transport and other amenities (Taye, A. 2008).

Therefore, this study undertook to investigate the challenges of good governance in the study area, consequences as well as measures to be taken to improve good governance in the study area. The researcher also investigated the attitudes of people with respect to good governance in Bedelle Town, municipal office.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study were:

- To identify the main challenges of good governance in Bedelle town, municipal office.
- To identify the causes of the challenges of good governance of Bedelle town municipal office.
- To forward solution to reduce the challenges of good governance in Bedelle town.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

The concept of Good Governance

The term good governance refers to the way government carries out its work. It is “among other things participatory, responsive, transparent, accountable effective, equitable and that promote the rule the law” (UNDP,2003). According to OECD, good governance encompasses the role of public authorities in establishing the environment in which economic operators function and determine the distribution of benefits as well as the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. Good governance assumes the government’s ability to maintain social peace, guarantee law and order, promote conditions necessarily for economic growth and ensure minimum level of social security (*ibid*).

Elements of Good Governance

There are various essential characteristics of good governance. These characteristics are participation, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive, and follows rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are

taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society (Bosselman 2008).

- **Accountable:** is defined as holding responsible elected or appointed individuals and organizations charge with a public mandate to account for specific actions, activities or decisions to the public from whom they derive their authority. In a narrow sense accountability focuses on the ability to account for the allocation, use and control, i.e, budgeting, accounting and auditing. In a broader sense, it is concerned with the establishment and enforcement of rules and regulations of corporate governance (Anderson, 2008).
- **Consensus oriented:** Good governance should mediate differing interests in order to reach broad consensus on the best interest of the group and where possible, on policies and procedures.
- **Participatory:** Government structures should be flexible enough to offer beneficiaries and others affected the opportunity to improve the design and implementation of public programs and projects. The specific areas of action would be in the development processes through, for example, participation of beneficiaries, a public or private sector interface, decentralization of local governments and cooperation with NGOs.
- **Transparency:** It is defined as public knowledge of the policies of government and confidence in its intensions. This requires making public accounts verifiable, providing for public participation in government policy making and implementation, and allowing contestation over choices impacting on the lives citizens. It also includes making available for public scrutiny accurate and timely information on economic and market conditions.
- **Responsive:** - Instruction and processes should serve all stakeholders.

- **Equitable and Inclusive:** - All men and women should have equal opportunity to maintain or improve their well-being.
- **Rule of Law:** - Good governance depends on the rules of law, which is generally characterized as a state's conduct governed by a set of rules that are applied predictably, efficiently, and fairly by independent institutions to all members of society including those who govern. Established and endorsed by many international organizations, the rule of law generally includes independent, efficient and accessible judicial and legal systems (Bosselman et al, 2008).
- **Injustice:** - Injustice injury, wrong governance these nouns denote acts or condition that cause people to suffer hardship or loss of undesirably.
- **Gender Inequality:** - Gender inequality is guaranteed by the constitution of our country article 25 of FDRE. But the gender inequality was reflected in different institutions.
- **Poverty:** -poverty is a major challenge to promote good governance in developing countries like Ethiopia.
- **Corruption:** - high level of corruption has been widely perceived as a major obstacle in improving of quality or good governance (Indian corruption study, 2005).

Essence of Good Governance in Ethiopia

Ethiopia is part of Africa, treating out history separates form other African countries and makes the subject relevant to our case. After several movements, uprisings, resistances, coup attempts and bloodshed wars by different peoples and parties in the past regimes, good governance in Ethiopia come to new force in 1995 Constitution. This constitution protects human and democratic rights of the people. It guarantees the rights of nations and nationalities through self-determination. It also decentralized power various regions of the country and established federal government (Taye, 2003). Even though democracy and good governance are interrelated we cannot say absolutely if there is democracy it also exists or followed good governance, since governance is an endless process, which mean it need a lot of activities (Ibid).

Challenges of Good Governance

There are a lot of things, which are obstacles for the performing of good governance. These obstacles are internal and external challenges.

- A. Internal challenges:** - For promoting good governance
- **The absence of accountability and rule of law:** - It is a major challenge to promote good governance in the institution that shows lack of freedom to peoples to do the government officials sometimes put themselves above the rule of law (Birhan, 2005).

Thus the challenges of good governance need to be redressed to ensure sustained democracy. Public life should be ensured so as to cultivate the culture of democracy and good governance (Kassaye, 2007).

- B. External Challenges:** - for promoting good governance
- **Weak enabling environment at the country level:** - it means the need to implement mechanism in difficult environment with very little political buy in form government.
 - **Donor harmonization:** - lack of harmony donor strategic vision and activities.
 - **Weak Capacity and credibility of national:** - which mean lack of technical and organizational skill to monitors engage in demand for governance mechanism.
 - Dependency on donor support interims of both funds and man power.

Major actors in promoting Good Governance

There are three institutions that promote good governance. These are the *state, the private sectors and civil societies*. The successful interaction between them would ensure sustainable human development. Good governance encompasses effective states, mobilized civil society and a productive private sector. Good governance is facilitated by effective states that create enabling political and legal environments for economic

growth and equitable distribution. It is dependent on vibrant civil societies, which mobilize groups and communities, facilitate political and social interaction, ensure participatory governance, and help generate social capital and faster social cohesion (Abrahamsan, 2000).

The Concept of Municipality

A municipality is a political subdivision within which a municipal corporation has been established to provide general local government service for specific population concentration in a defined area. Municipality may be legally termed a city, village, borough (except in Alaska), or town (except in the new England states, Minnesota, New York and Wisconsin). Included in this category are certain city is that are completely or substantially consolidated with their country governments. Operate outside the geographical limits of any country or for other reasons have no organized country government operations within their boundaries (United States Bureau of the census, 1980).

General Duties of Municipality

A municipality is required to give effect to the provisions of the constitutions and in so acting to give priority to the basic needs of the local community and ensure that all members of the local community have access to at least the minimum level of basic municipal services. Municipal services must be equitable and accessible, be provided in a manner that is conducive to the prudent, economic, efficient and effective use of available resources as well as the improvement of standards of quality overtime, be financially sustainable be environmentally sustainable and be regularly reviewed with a view to upgrading, extensions and improvement (Cray thorne, 2006).

Municipal Function and Management

The major responsibilities of municipalities were defined in proclamation No. 77 of 1945 and proclamation No. 206 of 1981 more recently regional governments have be receiving municipal roles and introducing new legislation on the

functions of municipalities in their jurisdictions. Municipal Functions include:

- Preparation of budget proposals
- Assessment and collecting of allowable municipal revenues
- Preparation and implementation of development plans
- Provision of markets, slaughter houses, terminal, public gardens, recreational areas, and other public facilities.
- Provision of internal roads and bridges
- Regulations of clean lines and provision of solid waste, water, sewage and drainage services.
- Delivery of miscellaneous services, including fire protections, libraries, public toilets, street lighting, nursery schools, ambulance services, etc.

METHODOLOGY

In this study descriptive research design was employed. This research design involves a series of rational decisions considering all of the assessment methods and components that enable the conduct of the assessment to the vast nature of the issues and the limitation of time. Obtaining information from a concurrent triangulation of a population at a single point in time is a reasonable strategy for pursuing many descriptive researches (ibid). Both qualitative and quantitative research approach (mixed approach) were used. To conduct this research, the researcher employed random sampling techniques. Respondents were selected from the communities and permanent civil servants of the office. Executives of municipal office were selected through non probability (purposive) sampling. The total number of respondents of this study were sixteen (16), from this 10 were selected from the communities, 4 were from the permanent civil servants of the municipal office, while 2 were from executives (head and vice) of the office. The researcher was used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary data was collected by questionnaires and interviews from communities, municipal servants and executives of the office and Secondary sources was collected from books,

internet, official records and reports, etc. The method of data analysis and presentation of findings followed an approach of describing qualitative and quantitative data. Moreover, the feedback of questionnaires respondents and the reviewed secondary source regarding to challenges of good governance in the study area is analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively including percentages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Under this chapter the data obtained from the questionnaires were presented, analyzed and interpreted. First the characteristics of the respondents and public officials were presented and then the researcher investigated the

contribution and the institutional challenges for promoting good governance. Second the researcher analyzed questions that had institutional performance and experiences with their attitude and methodologies in the subject matter regarding the public officials and interviews schedule consists of general information and discuss data related with type of cooperation taking in order to promote good governance. So this research focused on the challenges of good governance in Bedelle town, municipal office.

Characteristics of the Respondents

This section contains information of the respondents. It includes sex, age, and educational background of the respondents.

Table 1: Background of the respondents

No	Item	Alternatives	Respondents	
			No	%
1	Sex	Male	12	75
		Female	4	25
		Total	16	100
2	Age	18-25	3	19
		26-30	10	62
		31-35	2	13
		above 36	1	6
		Total	16	100
3	Educational level	Illiterate	0	0
		1-12	0	0
		Certificate	1	6
		Diploma	2	13
		Degree	12	75
		Above degree	1	6
		Total	16	100

Source: questionnaire survey (2020)

As indicated in the above table 1 (75%) of the respondents were male the remaining respondents 4(25%) were females. On the other hand, 3 (19%) of the respondents were found at the age of 18-25, while 10 (62%) of the respondents were found at the age of 26-30 and also 2 (13%) of the respondents were found at the age of 31-35. The remaining 1(6%) of the respondents were found at the age of above 36. As shown in the above table 1 (6%) of the respondent's educational background was certificate, 2(13%) was diploma, 12 (75%) of

the respondents were degree and 1 (6%) of the respondents are above degree holder.

Meaning of Municipality

According to the respondents, "municipality is a public institution which is established by the government organs and hold different responsibilities to satisfy the needs of the society by satisfying economic, social and other services". This implies that municipality is a public institution that services as a means of the fulfillment of societies

need within its locality. As interview respondent from the manager of the municipal office of Bedelle Town, Dassalegn Oljira defined the concept of municipality by saying, "Municipality is a public institution established by the government to administer the land, and plan of cities in a given area and render services for those societies that settled around the area".

Services provided by Bedelle Town Municipal office

Municipality is a public institution established by the government body and serve to fulfill the public interests, and the functions to the public. According to respondent's argument, municipalities give general services related to urban land

administration, rendering social services to the society (community) like road, electric power, water supply, creating recreational sites for the societies, clean and create conducive environment to living, administer and controlling kebele houses, facilitate social and economic activities. So, Bedelle town municipal office gives multidimensional services to the whole society of Bedelle town (Bedelle municipal office).

The services of municipal to its clients

Bedelle town municipal office give different services to the customers (clients) but it does not mean that it is free from limitation when rendering services to the society (customers).

Table 2: Services of Bedelle town municipal office

No	Item	Alternative	Respondent	
			No	%
1	Do you agree that Bedelle town municipal office give a proper service to customers?	Agree	6	37
		Disagree	10	63
		Total	16	100

Source: questionnaire survey, 2020

As indicated above the majority of the respondents 10 (63%) argued that Bedelle municipal office did not give proper service for the customers. While the remaining 6 (37%) agreed on the successful deliberation of service to the customer. While, those respondents agreed on the ineffectiveness of Bedelle town municipal office raised different reasons. Among the reason that enable them to say unsatisfied service to the customers; the municipal did not give decisions on time, they spend their

working time; the system of accountability, openness and fairness are not implemented properly. Even the respondents argued that the civil servants of Bedelle town municipal office did not give proper service for the society.

Challenges of Bedelle town municipal office

Any institutions may face different factors (challenges) that became a hinder for the successful implementation of its objective.

Table 3: Challenges of Bedelle town municipality

No	Item	Alternative	Respondent	
			No	%
1	Do you agree that Bedelle town municipal office has the challenges in delivering services?	Agree	9	56
		Disagree	7	44
		Total	16	100

Source: Questionnaire from respondents, 2020

As the above table shows, majority of the respondents 9 (56%) agreed on there is a challenges on Bedelle town municipal office that became

hindrance for the success of institution. The remaining 7(44%) agreed on the issue that there is no any challenges Bedelle town municipal, rather

the municipal perform activities successfully. Respondents argued that there is a lot of problems that occurred at Bedelle town municipal office; among others the challenges are the officials give exclusive decisions to those customers, the society also has lack of awareness about the sense of municipality and its functions, lack of budget to perform their tasks, the society have no trust on the institution to take responsibility, problem of skilled man power at Bedelle municipal office, lack of raw materials and lack of attention to done actions from the concerned bodies are the main challenges to Bedelle town municipal office. As respondents, Bedelle town municipal office did not give sufficient services to the society (publics) as a whole.

Possible measurements taken by Bedelle municipality to solve challenges

According to the respondent’s argument there are different measurements taken by Bedelle town

municipal office to solve the existing problems. These measurements were: applying the system of check and balance to create accountable officials, appointing professionals based on their merits, rather than ethnic background and experience, provide panel discussion with in a fixed period of time, the institution apply plans based on budget the institution, enhance the society to give about the weakness and strength of the institution, and giving awareness for the society about the existing situations. By doing so, Bedelle town municipal office try to solve those problems that exist in the institution.

Sources of problems in the institution

The source of Bedelle town municipal office institutional problem, have different sources. These sources of problems may be raised from both of the employees of the municipal (internal problems) and from the communities (external publics).

Table 4: Sources of problems in Bedelle town municipal office

No	Item	Alternative	Respondent	
			No	%
1	From where do you think that most of the governance problems arise?	From employees of the municipal	8	50
		From community	3	19
		From both	5	31
		Total	16	100

Source: questionnaire survey, 2020

As the above table shown the majority of the respondents argued that the source of the institutional challenges in Bedelle town municipal office is extremely raised from the employees of the municipal themselves. This implied that the employees at office may not hold their responsibilities that expected from them. The respondents also argued that the employees of the Bedelle town municipal offices did not give attention to those activities, the respondents said even the officials give decisions in a late manner, they extent the urgent cases into other period. Due to this the customers become confused and they did not know what the institution is done. Generally, in Bedelle town municipal office

employees are the sources of the problems with in the institution and different reasons raised to strengthen this view by respondents.

Sources of Revenue in Bedelle town municipal office

Any institution has its own sources revenue that enables the institution to achieve its work. Institutions without sufficient revenue, the goals and objectives may not get the target rather lose may exist. The source of revenue may vary from place to place due to different reasons. Among those reasons, the availability of natural resource and geographical location (center and periphery) relations are the main reasons.

Table 5: Sources of revenue of Bedelle town municipality

No	Item	Alternative	Respondent	
			No	%
1	Does your organization have adequate revenue resources?	Yes	7	35
		No	13	65
		Total	20	100

Source: Questionnaire survey, 2020

As the above table shows, Bedelle municipal office has no sufficient revenue sources that enable the institution to accomplish their risk. There may be different reasons for the scarcity of revenue at Bedelle town municipal office institution. Whatever the case the institutional challenges occurred due to limited amount of sources of revenue. The respondents argued that the main reason for the limited sources of the revenue at Bedelle town municipal office were limited amount of task from the municipality in different mean's the government particularly the state government give budget to local government annually and different programs prepare that enable the municipal to collect revenues. As stated by respondents, the decrease in amount of tax may leads to the decline of revenue. Therefore, the municipal to solve the problems that exist in the relation to budget is solved by collecting the real amount of tax from the community, checking whether the individuals pay tax in their income level. Generally, Bedelle town municipal office has limitation on the sources of revenue, due to this the source of revenue considered as a challenge to perform the activities of the institutions, and also tax from community; government budget and different programs that enable to get revenue for the institutions are the sources of revenue.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major objective of this chapter was to assess the findings of the research and summarize some of the points of the study. It is concluded by giving general conclusion and recommendation about the challenges of good governance in Bedelle town municipal office. The main objective of this research was to investigate the challenges of good

governance in Bedelle town municipal office. According to the researcher findings, Bedelle town municipal office gives many services to the society of the Bedelle town. Some of these services were: road, clean water, education service, telecommunication service, healthcare service, governance service and etc. However, there are many problems Bedelle town municipal office on addressing the proper function for the customers (society). Among these problems, giving a long term appointment for the customers, there is no openness, accountability and fairness. The civil servant of Bedelle town municipal office did not give proper services for the society and there is corruption between the employees and customers.

The other finding the researcher identified was that, the problems of governance system in Bedelle town municipal office are raised from employees of the municipal and from the society (customers). Even though, the problems of governance system in municipal office are raised from civil servants and customers, the problems of governance are extremely raised from the employees of the municipal office themselves. This indicates that, the employees at office did not hold their responsibility that expected from them. While conducting this study the researcher observed that Bedelle town municipality has limitations on the sources of the revenue. Due to this, the sources of the revenue are considered as the challenges of the institution to perform the activities of the municipal.

Base on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following solutions could be suggested for the concerned body to handle the problems that challenges the good governance system in Bedelle municipal office: -

The municipal office should appoint the skilled man powers which are competent enough to respond public interest. The municipal office should apply the system of check and balance. The municipal office should collect the real amount the tax from the communities by checking whether the individuals pay tax in their income level in order to minimize the problems of revenue sources. There should be a panel discussion with in the officials and between the employees of the institution and

customers. Government institution should participate in helping of municipal office in maximizing its revenue sources. The municipal office must apply the concept of transparency in order to remove the act of corruption and its behavior in this area. The municipal must give advice for the society of this area in order to strengthen the act of transparency in Bedelle town. The municipal should give job for professional according to their profession for success.

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