

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENT IN PROMOTING PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN ETHIOPIA: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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Abstract

The legislature is crucial to improving public services and government. Parliament, a critical branch of the state, advances public interest and good governance by establishing checks and balances and service delivery rules. Investigating Parliament's representative function in Ethiopia is crucial to understanding how it responds to public pressure for good governance, accountability, and improved service delivery to residents. Our research method was a qualitative literature review. The study found that Ethiopia's parliamentary system for service delivery and human resource management needs to be examined. Members of Parliament's ability to develop their institutional functions as vital pillars of good governance and checks and balances depends on the administration's cooperation. This is especially important for balancing power across state entities. Finding experienced monitoring teams and overcoming logistical obstacles have been challenges for Parliament in improving public service delivery and good governance in Ethiopia. To solve these issues as they arise, institutional support, collaboration with civil society organizations (CSOs), promotion of e-governance platforms for public service delivery, public hearing forums, capacity building, and alternative venue sites are essential. So, building efficient parliamentary supervision systems is generally popular and improves government in Ethiopia. The study recommends encouraging, supporting, and recognizing Ethiopia's official state-based parliamentary oversight mechanism to promote effective governance and public service delivery.

Key Words: Parliament, Public Service, Good Governance, Ethiopia

1. Introduction

Parliaments, as key state institutions in a democratic system of governance, play a critical role in promoting public service delivery and good governance. Parliaments have the noble duty of ensuring that the people are governed by and for them as the duly elected representatives. Parliaments have the authority to actively participate in the creation and execution of laws, policies, and practices that uphold democracy and sound governance as part of their core duties of representation, legislation, and supervision (ECA, 2020).

Good governance in developing nations now involves parliaments, executive agencies, and civil society organisations. Parliaments should be empowered to do their duties effectively and

efficiently, but the task is worth taking (Taha K, 2017).

Crucially, the Parliament or legislature plays a vital role in the life of a nation. As a result, it has three primary responsibilities: a) creating new laws, amending old ones, and repealing unnecessary ones; b) speaking for and representing the interests of the people in decision-making processes; and c) supervising the executive branch's operations to ensure that the people are kept informed. A robust, functional, and efficient Parliament is necessary for achieving good governance. This is the case because the Parliament is essential for assessing, compiling, and presenting the populace's opinions and requirements, as well as for expressing their hopes and expectations to define the agenda for

national growth. As an oversight body, the Parliament helps overcome bureaucratic stagnation and identifies issues and policy challenges that require attention (ECA, 2020).

The international community has held the belief that parliaments or legislatures are essential for keeping governments accountable for their actions and that, by doing so, play a key role in preventing corruption, creating the conditions for sustainable growth, paving the way for sustainable development, and ensuring higher quality of democracy (Beahan *et al.* 2010; Hudson and Wren 2007; Power 2008). They are therefore one of the most important institutions in any progressive country around the world—if not *the* most important.

According to the FDRE constitution, Ethiopia's Parliament has two Houses. House of Federation and House of People delegates. Therefore, this research only covers the House of People's Representatives. Ethiopian Parliament's formal functions include establishing and arranging committees and other essential House structures, approving or nominating government officials, representing the people in one of the most important institutions of national governance, examining the executive branch's work and taking appropriate action to address government incompetence, and facilitating constituent meetings.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Forms of Parliaments *vis-à-vis* Governance Framework

The ways in which parliamentary power is exercised to hold the executive to account depend on the nature of Parliament. There are four major

types/models of parliaments mentioned by Johnson (2005): rubber-stamp legislature, arena legislature, transformative legislature, and emerging legislature.

Scholars generally summarize the parliament's form's related governance framework, which has five main functions as follows: -

Rubber-stamp legislatures: The simplest form of Parliament is called a rubber-stamp legislature. Those bodies typically endorse decisions made elsewhere within the political system, usually by parties and/or the executive branch (Johnson, 2005). Rubber-stamp parliaments require little internal structure or professional staff and typically hold few extended parliamentary sessions. For instance, the Duma of the former Soviet Union and the Mexican Congress might be considered rubber-stamp legislatures. The second type of legislature is the arena legislature, which is more powerful and effective than the rubber-stamp legislature.

Arena legislature: is a forum for real conversation, expression, and argument. Political and executive parties typically take the initiative on policy. Arena legislatures express societal differences and assess government initiatives and plans from particular angles, but they typically do not incite controversy or fundamentally alter policy recommendations (Johnson, 2005). One could think of the British House of Commons as a local legislature.

Transformative legislatures symbolize various community interests and outline programs and expenditures. Transformative legislatures are the least prevalent type of legislature. They rely heavily on highly qualified, experienced employees, have exceptionally complex internal processes (including

robust committee structures), and have excellent record-keeping requirements. The US Congress is typically cited as an example of a transformative legislative body (Johnson, 2005).

Emerging legislatures assume greater budgetary, policymaking, and oversight responsibilities, requiring specialised staff, data systems, office space, and other resources. MPs expect more from parliamentary workers, expecting them to respond to messages faster, work harder, and accomplish more than they already do. The legislatures of Kenya, Uganda, and Mexico's Congress are categorized as rising legislatures (Johnson, 2005). They can change from one kind to another. The managers and staff of Parliament are under tremendous pressure to satisfy the increasing expectations, which is placing a strain on emerging legislatures.

The supremacy of Parliament should be a sacrosanct fact of life. As such, it performs the following cardinal functions (Meheret, 2019):-

- Examine and contest the government's actions (scrutiny), for instance, by interrogating ministers;
- Enact and amend legislation;
- Engage in discourse about the salient topics of the present.
- Review and authorise governmental expenditures through budgeting and taxation.

Crucially, it is also critical to acknowledge that parliaments are dynamic institutions undergoing constant change due to various factors, which can either increase or decrease their capacity to serve as pillars of accountable governance, representation,

and oversight of the efficient provision of public services.

2.2 Parliament Oversight

Oversight is one of the legislature's "checks and balances," through which it seeks to ensure that programs are carried out legally, effectively, and for the purposes for which they were intended (UNECA, 2004; IPU & UNDP, 2017). The Parliament is the only State institution that can hold the government accountable by hearings, question period, and committees of inquiry (Jahan, 2015). Effective oversight enhances Parliament's functionality to ensure the overall well-being of the common people. By strengthening oversight, Parliament becomes stronger as an institution and thus enjoys greater legitimacy (IPU & UNDP 2017). In the event of gross misconduct by the President, such as high treason, Parliament can impeach the President (UNECA, 2004; Ahmed and Obaidullah, 2007; Jahan, 2015).

Appropriate oversight mechanisms should be provided to the Parliament so that it can examine government activities both before and after they happen. Ex ante oversight encompasses all the measures that parliaments, their members, and their committees can take to determine the necessity and extent to which government plans are practical, useful, efficient, effective, economical, and so forth. Ex post oversight refers to all the measures a parliament may take to verify whether and to what extent the government is implementing the plans, policies, and programs approved by the house.

There are many tools that parliaments can use to carry out their oversight function. These tools include committee hearings, hearings in plenary

sessions of the Parliament, the establishment of commissions of inquiry, questions to be answered in committees, interpellations, urgent interpellations, the ombudsman, auditors general, and public accounts committees. It is interesting to note that public accounts committees (PACs) were originally a characteristic of parliamentary systems modelled on Westminster, but in recent years, they have been adopted by countries that were never part of the Commonwealth. The reason is that political action committees (PACs) have proven highly effective in monitoring government spending and promoting good governance. One must not ignore the importance of providing Parliament with appropriate tools to monitor and control the government. Increasing a parliament's capacity to exercise oversight is beneficial to both democracy and good governance. The greater the number of oversight tools available to parliaments, the greater the likelihood that a middle-income nation will be formally democratic. A nation with seven tools and a middle-income level has a 95% likelihood of transitioning to a democratic form of government.

Currently, there is a lack of effective performance oversight, as official monitoring and supervisory systems are neither adhered to nor enforced, while informal approaches prove inadequate. This encompasses instances in which monitoring and supervisory procedures are inadequately delineated or understood. This encompasses both top-down oversight and various forms of bottom-up supervision (Benjamin R. et al., 2014).

2.3 Logistical and Budgetary Tools in Parliamentary Oversight

Budgetary oversight is a core function of department-related permanent committees, since

most government programs entail a budget for their execution (Pelizzo and Stapenhurst, 2004). Budget scrutiny is also a significant source of parliamentary power (Global Parliamentary Report, 2017). Conversely, the budget law authorised by Parliament, or the documents annexed to it, specify how much money is allocated to each policy goal, to be achieved through one or more government programs. (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al, 2020).

2.4 Role of Parliament in Public Service Delivery and Governance in Ethiopia

Public service delivery and good governance have a positive relationship. According to Rashid (2008), the availability of good governance enhances the quality of customer service provided by public agencies. He also argued that most public agency customers were dissatisfied with the quality of service, facilities, service reception procedures, and the general atmosphere of the department because there is a lack of good governance practices in the institution.

2.5 Good Governance

Parliament is crucial to good governance. It performs three main duties: a) speak to and express the perspectives and wishes of the subjects in basic leadership procedures, b) make new laws, change existing laws, and cancel obsolete laws, and c) regulate official activities so the administration is accountable to the public. A strong, effective, and proficient parliament is needed for healthy administration (Taha K, 2017).

Parliament is an essential element of national governance. With its key tasks of representativeness, legislation, and oversight, Parliament can help establish, enhance, and

consolidate democracy and good governance. That is why many studies have been conducted on Parliament's performance, especially in developing countries. Some of these studies (Basedau, Matthias 2004, Eni Eja, Alogo 2014, Hudson, Alan, and ODI and Claire Wren 2007) talked about the ineffectiveness of parliaments in many developing countries referring this ineffectiveness to different reasons such as insufficient knowledge and skills, lack of institutional capacities and resources and the power of the executives which retain the Parliament unable to supervise or even discuss any executive related issues. Other studies talked about the role of parliaments in promoting democracy and good governance in their countries and the challenges that face them to effectively assume their roles (Asia Report, The Role of Parliament in Pakistan's Democratic Transition 2013, Mollah, Awal Hossain, Good Governance in Bangladesh: Role of Government, Consolidating Democratic Governance in The SADAC Region, Mauritius 2008). Other studies talked about challenges that face parliaments to consolidate democracy and good governance and also identify recommendations to strengthen Parliament to perform their functions well (Parliament's Role in the Development Agenda: two case studies, Zambia and Tanzania, Daniel Esemé Gberevbie, Democracy, Democratic Institutions and Good Governance in Nigeria 2014, Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), The Role of Parliament in Promoting Good Governance 2011, This study tries to delineate the contributions Parliament can make to promote good governance and consolidate democracy in Africa (Taha K, 2017).

For any governance to be successful, a just legal framework must be in place. Appropriate enforcement tools and an impartial judiciary that inspires public trust should assist this. Just and equitable legal frameworks, impartially applied, are necessary for good government. Complete protection of human rights, especially those of minorities, is also necessary. An unbiased police force free of corruption and an independent judiciary are necessary for the impartial application of the law (Brown, 2000).

The open exchange of information must be the foundation of transparency. Institutions and data are directly accessible to the relevant bodies in transparency procedures, allowing them to monitor and understand the data. Any mechanism for implementing improvements in responsive governance that involves transparency typically necessitates access to crucial data. Max Weber asserts that governments operating in secrecy are more vulnerable to corruption than those functioning more openly. Transparency, then, is the openness with which government functions and is seen as a necessary component of democracy, with the right to knowledge being a basic democratic entitlement. The elimination of needless secrecy from the government's decision-making process through transparency and the right to information contributes to better decision-making in public policy and administration (Jennifer, 2008).

Good governance has several benefits when applied by a public or commercial organization. The following are the benefits of effective governance in the public sector, as stated by Mlangwa (2016):

- One of the main advantages of competent and excellent governance is economic

growth and development, as it helps achieve the practical goal of reducing corruption. Since fighting corruption is one of the main tenets of good governance, corruption is unlikely to occur in an environment where good governance is practised. Since corruption and good governance are inherently incompatible, corruption is likely to decline or disappear entirely in an institution or state that conducts good governance.

- Effective governance affects accountability. To be held accountable, individuals must take ownership of their actions and past actions. Holding people accountable for their actions or activities makes it easier for them to fulfil their obligations as expected, thereby improving the institution's performance, strengthening governance, and having positive effects.
- Another advantage of effective governance is transparency. Excellent governance and transparency are intrinsically intertwined, and transparency greatly facilitates the discharge of obligations.
- Equality in society and involvement in decision-making are ensured by good governance, which makes society as a whole feel cohesive. This will facilitate faster service delivery.

2.6 Service Delivery

According to Naidoo (2004), service delivery is the ongoing process of making public services available and reasonably priced, with a particular focus on enhancing their efficacy and efficiency. McLennan (2009) states that the term "service

delivery" often refers to the giving of products or services to those in need or who desire them by the government or other organizations. A multitude of social issues are taken into account when the constitutionally responsible party provides services. This entails distributing resources fairly, promoting social equality, raising living standards for all, and boosting the economy to maintain the viability of service delivery.

According to UNDP (2006), people's needs for essential services and facilities are directly affected by service deficiencies and inadequate working environments. For example, the demand for services decreases as the distance to the service increases. Put another way, inadequate infrastructure and bad service delivery have a detrimental effect on people's daily lives at the local level.

To enhance the delivery process, the impact of the services rendered should be assessed using significant and thoughtfully constructed measuring techniques.

2.7 E-Governance, Parliamentary Supervision, and Public Service Delivery in Ethiopia

E-governance, according to Oliveira, Oliver, and Ramalinho (2020), includes developing policies, organizing, serving, and proposing solutions for global communities living in cities. It develops technology to encourage public participation in several domains (Oliveira et al., 2020).

According to Khan, Khurram, and Zubair (2020), e-government is an integrated system in which the government communicates with the public and offers them enhanced services via electronic apps. The global population is growing, and new methods

are being developed to improve people's standard of living. A new wave of innovation in city services is being driven by numerous projects and emerging technologies (Oliveira et al., 2020).

Notably, e-government is being adopted by the majority of developing nations as a cutting-edge approach to economic reform, as it improves economic efficiency and provides a transparent environment for the public and government (Al-azar, 2012). There is a claim that e-government programs such as e-services, e-administration, and e-procurement eliminate corruption and enhance public-sector service delivery (Bwalya, 2012).

2.8 Parliamentary Engagement and Governance

A crucial component of the democratic process, Parliament and public engagement can help achieve three crucial objectives: enhancing the Parliament's representational role; providing opportunities for the public to offer feedback that can impact public policy; and mandating that elected officials regularly consult with their constituents. All of these serve as crucial benchmarks for responsive and accountable government, enabling the public's demands and the concerns of a wide range of stakeholders to be taken into account when drafting laws and public policies. Good governance and accountability are provided by effective parliament-constituency interactions, which are crucial in reducing poverty in a nation (Grindle, 2007; Aribisila).

The institutionalisation of democracy and good governance in a given nation is influenced by how effectively parliaments fulfil their duties. There are not enough powerful and functioning parliaments in most of Africa to serve as the cornerstones of

representational democracy (Economic Commission for Africa). There is a significant democratic deficit across much of the continent, particularly among the member states of the Inter-Governmental Authority on Development (IGAD). This deficit has led to the continuation of authoritarian regimes and hindered prospects for multi-party politics and responsible governance.

2.9 Capacity Building Training for MPs

Practical training may boost MPs' and parliaments' performance (Abel Kinyondo, 2020). Indeed, human resources development (HRD) research (Holland and De Cieri 2006; Kramar et al. 2011; Rahaman 2008; Tharenou, Donohue, and Cooper 2007; Wright et al. 2005) strongly suggests a link between improved parliamentary performance and legislation performance. The HRD field's human capital theory (HCT) states that parliaments can create, maintain, and retain human capital (HC) by exposing their workforce to relevant training programs, improving workforce and organization performance.

Members of Parliament in numerous nations design the most portable computer applications to enable them to use email, surf the web, and write correspondence. Orientation and technical work programs enable new skilled employees learn Parliament and, when needed, their role (Tonye & Aditya, 2022).

UNDP 2011 has strengthened parliaments in four ways. These include improving MPs' and parliamentary staff's knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs), supporting parliamentary reforms, promoting parliaments' relationships with other branches of government, including civil society,

and increasing female participation at all levels of parliament. UNDP also builds networks between parliaments and creates web-based parliamentary resources, such as the International Knowledge Network of Women in Politics and a portal for parliamentary development (UNDP 2011), to help MPs worldwide share knowledge and resources for parliamentary development. Several legislative good practice benchmarks are available. MPs need practical capacity-building training to improve their performance and their parliaments.

3. Methodology

This paper employed a qualitative literature review research methodology primarily for the following reasons. First, due to the nature of the research, which focuses on the role of Parliament in public service delivery, good governance, and their interrelationships. Second, this technique enables a deeper understanding of the critical governance frameworks and political context. It also enables one to research into the deep knowledge and literature used in the Multi-Party system. To achieve the study's goals, information was collected from multiple sources. Importantly, to gain a deeper understanding of the broader research on the difficulties, opportunities, and functions of Parliament in Ethiopian public service delivery and good governance, the author conducted a systematic literature review.

3.1 Research Design

This research was carried out as a review study, which was descriptive and analytical. No interviews and surveys were involved, but the focus was made on the analysis of the existing knowledge created by scholars, governmental entities, and

international organizations. This design allowed tracking the changes in the perspectives with time, comparing them, and comprehending how other authors define the performance of the parliamentary institutions and their limitations.

3.2 Data Sources

The analysis was based on the secondary sources, such as research articles on the topic of governance, public administration, and legislative research; books and edited volumes that analyzed African parliaments especially from the Ethiopian context and their oversight behavior; governmental policies, legal sources, and official newsletters; and the sources published by the parliamentary legislatures and other national institutions. It also included reports of international organizations that were involved in matters related to governance. The analysis included material that directly concerned parliamentary functions, practices of governance or provision of public services.

3.3 Data Analysis

The thematic approach was used in the analysis. The sorting of the material resulted in the recognition of recurrent problems and their classification on a larger scale into such themes as oversight mechanisms, committee effectiveness, logistical barriers, citizen participation, and governance outcomes. The themes were also compared among various authors to establish the common findings and contradictions. The political and institutional context of Ethiopia was used to interpret the meanings to make sure that the conclusions were based on the realities of the local governance environment.

4. Results

- The study's findings call for a comprehensive review of the human resources and service delivery checkup system under the parliamentary system in Ethiopia. Equipping Members of Parliament, committees, and personnel is required.
- It is also discovered that, although the field visit is a helpful oversight tool, HoPRs don't always make the most of it due to funding constraints and schedule issues.
- In Ethiopia, parliament offices are required in the regional states.
- Devising strategies aligned with the existing proper mechanisms for public forum hearings and effective service delivery is required.
- The representational role of Parliament must be examined to understand how parliaments respond to the growing public pressure for good governance, accountability, and better service delivery to citizens.
- The engagement of the Opposition party in Public service scrutiny in Ethiopia is required.
- Parliament's collaboration with CSOs is essential to advancing good governance and monitoring the delivery of public services.
- Ethiopia has achieved some success in this area by promoting women's participation in Parliament and good governance.
- Promoting digital expertise and digitally transforming the state are required in Ethiopia.
- The Ethiopian Parliament is required to support or acknowledge the nation's e-governance system for the delivery of public services.

5. Discussion

5.1 Parliament and Governance in Ethiopia

In Ethiopia, HoPRs have the constitutional power to oversee and hold the government accountable for the consequences of its actions. This means the Parliament has the responsibility to ensure that government institutions (especially the executive branch) exercise their powers in accordance with the limits of the Constitution and implement the legislature's bills, programs, and proposals (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al., 2020).

Around the world, there are many different types of parliaments, with differences in size, term, elected members, political parties, and constituencies. Scholars, however, concur that the three fundamental roles of the Parliament are supervision, legislation, and representation. Parliaments are the highest legislative body in a country, representing the diversity of people and groups in the community. They also have the responsibility of supervising executive performance and expenditure, as well as creating the laws that govern society. Although a nation's governance is influenced by a wide range of entities, individuals, and institutions, the manner in which the Parliament performs these duties is vital. In this section, we take a quick look at the three roles parliaments play in maintaining Ethiopia's fundamental systems of administration and public service delivery.

Crucially, as per the FDRE Constitution, all Members of the House of People Representatives are obligated to uphold the Constitution, the Will of the People, and their conscience (FDRE Constitution, 1994, Art.. 54. Sub. Art. 4). As a result, Ethiopian government institutions are subject to legislative oversight. They are

susceptible to interrogations, inquiries, and remedial actions as determined by the real supervision instruments utilized by the HoPRs.

5.2 Parliament–Executive Relations and Public Service Delivery

The House of Representatives supervises the executive branch under Article. 55 sub. Art. 18 of the 1994 FDRE constitution.

The distribution of powers underpins democracy (Assefa, 2016). The second key aspect of parliamentary democracies is the interaction between the executive and Parliament. Government is answerable to Parliament and the Constitution. The Ethiopian Constitution states that Parliament is the government's accountable body. FDRE's constitution gave the House of People's Representatives (HPR) the most political power. The executive appears to dominate the Ethiopian legislature, limiting lawmakers' ability to promote good governance and check the administration's public service delivery.

Practical support from the parliamentary administration is also crucial for MPs to maintain their parliamentary institutional role as effective pillars of checks on good governance, particularly in ensuring a proper balance of power among state institutions.

5.3 Effect of Parliamentary Field Visits on Public Service Delivery in Ethiopia

HoPRs use field visits for legislative supervision. Every standing committee conducts two annual field visits and sometimes does impromptu ones in response to public complaints. Firsthand observation and double-checking of the executive's reports makes the field visit the most important and

effective supervisory tool, according to empirical evidence

Also, it allows you to communicate with customers, observe job performance, and spot any unreported issues. Field visits by the standing committee include separate talks with management, personnel, and service consumers. The unexpected field visit also better reflects the executive's actual performance than the typical one.

Interacting with customers, observing job performance, and identifying undisclosed issues are also possible. During field trips, the standing committee meets separately with managers, staff, and service users. The surprise field visit effectively manages the executive's true performance, according to evidence.

Despite its significance, some obstacles prevent the field visit from being used to its full potential. These include concerns with funding, capacity, logistics, and other issues. Most standing committees are compelled to rely on reports rather than field trips to assess the executive's performance. Furthermore, there is often a discrepancy between the time allotted and the actual time spent on the job during field visits. Certain committees (such as the education affairs committee) are unable to visit every entity under their supervision during the two scheduled field visits. Consequently, the committee intends to visit every institution under its purview at least once every five-year legislative term. If implemented correctly by HoPs, the ongoing institutional consciousness and reforms within specialized parliamentary committees would significantly enhance the Ethiopian Parliament's ability to address good governance issues in Ethiopia.

Another issue raised was the lack of policies for supervising organizations with various attributes. Researchers also found that while the field visit is a useful oversight tool, HoPRs do not always use it to its full potential due to scheduling conflicts and financial limitations. (Member of HoPR).

5.4 Parliamentary Logistics and Budgetary Constraints in Ethiopia

Recent studies in Ethiopia reveal that more than 73 per cent of respondents from the House of People's Representatives of Ethiopia agreed that shortages of essential logistical facilities pose challenges to Ethiopian federal parliamentary oversight (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al., 2020).

Financial supervision is the main technique department-related committees use to evaluate government projects. Committee oversight is based on the budget law and state finances, but it can also examine the suitability of policies.

It is argued that there must be a Parliament's Office in the Regional States of Ethiopia. This at least addresses the venue or logistical challenges, since the MPs can easily access the information.

5.5 Committee based Parliamentary Supervision

It is not often necessary for legislatures to expand their powers; sometimes, they need to be compelled to use them more effectively and creatively. Public accounts committees, while lacking censure or group action powers, might still pressure the government to reduce corruption by promoting the findings and conclusions of their investigations. Parliaments worldwide use public hearings, including budget hearings, to pressure the government through the press coverage these hearings receive. Committees might have the

authority to conduct investigations; they need to be compelled to use their powers (Awal Hossain, 2023).

Parliamentary committees have frequently been referred to as 'mini parliaments' since they do perform on behalf of the House, albeit in a particular manner (Firoj, 2013). In modern times, the committee is an indispensable part of the parliamentary system. The functions and standards of a parliament are reflected in its committees. Morris-Jones said that, which may recognize a legislature it maintains (Johnson, 2005). Standing committees (ministerial), Finance and Audit committees, and other standing committees (Committees on Privileges, Committee on Petitions, Committee on Government Assurances).

The parliamentary committee is currently a crucial component of Ethiopia's legislative system. The committees that oversee good governance and the provision of public services represent the standards and functions of a parliament.

5.6 Opposition Party and Public Service Delivery Supervision

Bringing the opposition back into Parliament and keeping them engaged in its work remains the principal and most challenging task. Several procedures implemented in different countries to safeguard and strengthen the opposition's role can also be adopted in Bangladesh (Firoj, 2013). One important measure is to grant the opposition a constitutionally recognized role and status, backed by earmarked resources.

A move in this direction, where the opposition will 'shadow' the responsibilities, policies, and actions

of the corresponding cabinet ministers, will help strengthen the role and status of the opposition.

The trend of engaging the opposition's political parties with the ruling party in good governance and public service scrutiny in Ethiopia represents a new approach.

The role of opposition political parties in cross-checking public service delivery and good governance in Ethiopia should not be undermined. They have different perspectives and roles in monitoring good governance and public service delivery.

5.7 Parliamentary Engagement in Public Hearings and Governance

Setting up platforms for the public and other interested parties to participate in dialogue with the executive bodies is another oversight technique. There is proof that gathering public comments in front of executive officials is aided by such a platform. These forums foster mutual understanding among service providers, users, and the House oversight committee. However, the public's low engagement and lack of interest, along with the government's manipulation and inability to take public feedback into account, make the Parliament ineffective in employing this tool. Thus, HoPs must develop plans aligned with current appropriate procedures for public forum hearings and efficient service delivery.

5.8 Parliamentary Dynamics in Civil Society Engagement

Individuals and groups in civil society may not understand the workings of the legislature and are often unskilled at articulating their needs to it (Tonye & Aditya, 2022). In many systems,

legislators and constituents rarely interact, and institutional weaknesses make it difficult for legislators to respond to citizen needs even when they understand them. A legislature unresponsive to the electorate's needs will tend to lack public support. Finally, legislatures often poorly represent women and other marginalized groups in society.

While these reforms have raised hopes for positive change in Ethiopia, more work remains, and CSOs must play a crucial role in promoting good governance and monitoring the provision of public services.

5.9 Parliament and E-Governance

It has been shown that e-governance can enhance the provision of public services. The results indicated that e-governance improves the quality of public service delivery by enhancing efficacy, efficiency, and equity. Thus, e-governance in Ethiopia was crucial to modernising public administration, enabling the country's population to access services effectively and efficiently. It could also fight corruption and reduce poverty.

The Ethiopian Parliament must encourage or recognise the e-governance provision for public services in the country.

5.9.1 Digital Challenges Confronting the House of Peoples' Representatives



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HOUSE OF PEOPLES' REPRESENTATIVES OF THE FDRE

Source: hopr.gov.et

The HoPRS's digital transformation in Ethiopia is related to broader problems. The HoPRs struggle with large volumes of underutilised data and a lack of shared data spaces to address governance concerns nationwide. However, access to, sharing, and reuse of data, along with data analytics, are essential for new technologies and accurate data.

5.10 The Role of Women Parliament Members

The Ethiopian Constitution guarantees equal rights to men and women under Articles 14 and 35. This could be practically expressed, for example, by recognising and actively involving women in the formulation of laws and policies, as well as by giving them leadership roles in the highest levels of government.

The proportion of elected women representatives in Parliament in the country's national elections over the past twenty years has shown significant increases in the federal legislature and in major regional councils (Meheret, 2019). These groups work vigorously to ensure sufficient representation of women in the six permanent standing committees and actively participate in debates to mainstream gender in budget allocations for education, health, and infrastructure services (Meheret, 2019).

However, Ethiopia has gradually achieved some success in this area by promoting women's participation in Parliament and advancing good governance. Still, much work remains to be done to promote women's roles in good governance activities in Ethiopia.

5.11 Institutional Capacity Constraints and Organizational Consciousness

Capacity limitations are another challenge that affects the functioning of parliamentary oversight (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al., 2020). In many legislatures, members' loyalties to political parties or leaders far outweigh concerns for the legislature as an institution. An institutional consciousness may be weak or non-existent, and members may lack a vision or concern for the power and development of their legislature. Unless at least some key members are concerned about legislative power and the legislature as an institution, it is unlikely to improve.

In this regard, studies in Ethiopia show that the lack of technical knowledge about the subject matter also limits members of the committee from obtaining the information necessary for their oversight function. Particularly during the first year of their electoral term, parliamentarians need continuous capacity-building training; however, according to responses from MPs in Ethiopia, they are not provided with the necessary training (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al., 2020).

Another challenge posed by capacity limitations is that members of Parliament lack access to experience-sharing opportunities with other countries due to limited interest from management, resource constraints, and a lack of consensus on the importance of such exchanges (Terefe Gemechu, Dereje, et al., 2020).

Ethiopian legislators, staff members, and committees need to be strengthened, and

parliaments as a whole require the development of new specialised capacities.

6. Conclusion

There are various challenges affecting the roles of the Ethiopian HoPRs in monitoring public service delivery and ensuring good governance. Accordingly, this research paper finds that Ethiopia's regional states must have parliament offices. Maintaining the opposition political parties' role in observing Ethiopia's effective public service and governance is also crucial. They have different viewpoints and functions in assessing the efficiency of government and the provision of public services. HoPs must develop plans that adhere to the appropriate, current procedures for conducting hearings in public venues and provide efficient services. To provide public services, Ethiopia's e-governance system must be acknowledged or supported by the Parliament. On the other hand, Ethiopia has made incremental strides in this direction by promoting good governance and encouraging women to run for office.

The Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia's House of Representatives (HoPR) examines the executive branch's work through a range of oversight instruments, including question time, plenary discussion, motions, field visits, public hearings, and reports. Reports and committee hearings are the most frequently utilized of these instruments. However, field visits, although more effective, are infrequently used due to financial constraints, capacity limitations, logistical challenges, and other concerns. The effectiveness of the parliamentary administration also affects MPs' ability to establish their parliamentary institutional function as effective pillars of good

governance, notably in ensuring an acceptable balance of power among state institutions.

Thus far, the Parliament's efforts to advance good governance and public service delivery in Ethiopia have been hindered by logistical challenges and the difficulty of locating skilled oversight teams. Leveraging institutional support, establishing a culture of public hearing forums, developing MPs' capacity, and seeking alternate venue sites at the regional state level are all necessary to overcome these issues. Therefore, creating efficient parliamentary oversight mechanisms is generally acceptable and greatly aids Ethiopia's good governance.

7. Recommendations

The findings of this oversight study were derived solely from the systematic literature review. Therefore, the research team believes that studying the oversight activities of the HoPRs from both executive and public perspectives is necessary to gain a fair understanding of the House's role in monitoring public service delivery and ensuring good governance in Ethiopia. Based on the major examination of this research paper, the following recommendations are made.

- Since the parliamentary committee system in a democratic assembly ensures parliamentary governance, it is necessary to use the power of committees effectively.
- In Ethiopia, there must be parliament offices located in the regional states. As MPs can readily access the material, this at least addresses the location or logistical issues.
- HoPs need to devise strategies aligned with the existing proper mechanisms for public forum

hearings, as effective service delivery could be paramount.

- Equipping Members of Parliament and Employees is required. Strengthening committees, personnel, and lawmakers in Ethiopia is necessary, as is the creation of new, specialized capacities for parliaments as a unit of measurement.
- Parliament must collaborate with CSOs because there is still more to be done; they are essential to advancing good governance and monitoring the delivery of public services.
- The efficacy of Ethiopia's legislature can be enhanced by implementing adjustments to the fiscal, administrative, and legislative procedures under parliamentary administration.
- The ongoing institutional consciousness and reforms within specialised parliamentary committees could significantly enhance the Ethiopian Parliament's ability to address issues of good governance in the country, if HoPs apply them correctly.
- Promoting digital expertise and digitally transforming the state is required in Ethiopia. The Ethiopian Parliament must support or acknowledge the nation's e-governance system for delivering public services.

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