

The Mediating Role of Perceptions of Municipal government Performance on the Relationship between Good Governance and Citizens' Trust

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Research Article

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Abstract

The study examined whether elements of good governance affect citizens' trust through citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance. 357 cross-sectional data were collected from residents of Mogadishu Municipality, Somalia. SmartPLS 4 was used to analyze the data. The study found that perceived elements of good governance positively and directly affect both citizens' trust and perceptions of municipal government performance. Also, perceptions of municipal government performance partially mediate both variables. The study concludes that municipality officials need to recognize the importance of good governance and citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance if they want citizens to trust the municipality.

Introduction

Trust in government has been a topic of interest and debate among researchers and politicians (Liu & Raine, 2016). Trust in governmental institutions guarantees the political organization's sustainability, viability, and legitimacy (Van der Meer & Zmerli, 2017). Likewise, trust in the government encourages compliance with laws and regulations and facilitates policy execution (OECD, 2013 & Güzel et al., 2019). Similarly, the citizens' trust in local authorities is a necessary resource that enables local governments to experiment and adopt risky policies (Fitzgerald & Wolak 2016). The decreased trust in the government is a symptom of dissatisfaction with democratic institutions and processes. Therefore, trust is essential for an efficient, successful, and well-functioning government. Without it, government decisions and implementation become considerably more difficult (Holum, 2022).

Citizens' trust in municipal government agencies is essential in countries like Somalia, which still faces conflict and political instability. However, poor governance practices, inadequate service delivery, and pervasive corruption have undermined citizens' confidence in government institutions. The Heritage Institute for Policy Studies (2021) argued that Somalia had not met critical benchmarks for good governance, such as the rule of law, government performance, public participation, accountability, transparency, and corruption control. Similarly, Sofe and Miruts (2017) argued that good governance principles are not practiced in Somalia. The low level of citizen participation in municipal government decisions, the lack of transparency & accountability, and the poor performance of local authority institutions influenced citizens' trust in local governments. Conflicts and civil war in Somalia have already led to a great deal of mistrust in governmental institutions. However, as Somalia is recovering from political instability and trying to stand on its feet, regaining citizens' trust has become an essential asset to municipal authorities. Therefore, it is critical to recognize the predictors and mechanisms influencing people's perceptions of trust in government (Hartanto et al., 2021). Many scholars believe that good governance practices and citizens' trust are inevitably linked (Yousaf et al., 2016; Jameel et al., 2019).

A plethora of prior research has shown that perceived good governance practices among the citizens enhance trust in local governments (Ab. Rahman et al., 2022; Beshi & Kaur, 2020a). So, adopting good governance principles is the pathway to increasing the citizens' trust in municipal authorities (Beshi &

Kaur, 2020b). furthermore, good governance is necessary for creating and maintaining trust in the government in free democratic communities (Blind, 2007). Although existing research has shown the significant impact of good governance practices on trust, there is a scarcity of literature investigating how good governance practices can impact trust in local authorities in developing countries (Hartanto & Siregar, 2021; Mansoor, 2021). In addition to the imperative of good governance in boosting citizens' trust in public sector institutions, a recent study highlighted the importance of institutions' perceived performance in the citizens' trust in such institutions (Rudhanto, 2022). Similarly, Goldfinch et al. (2022) argued that local government performance remains the important critical antecedent of trust.

Furthermore, to date, to the best of the author's knowledge and through a search in peer-reviewed databases, the author found that no prior research has modeled the mediating role of the citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance on the relationship between elements of good governance (perceived public participation, perceived accountability, and perceived transparency) and citizens' trust in municipal government. Furthermore, the researcher noted that several previous studies examined the relationship between various elements of good governance in individual studies. For instance, public participation (He and Ma, 2021 & Holum, 2022), accountability (Farwell et al., 2019), transparency (Grimmelikhuijsen & Klijn, 2015), and citizens' trust in government. Nevertheless, there is a paucity of existing research examining the joint effects of perceived elements of good governance (perceived public participation (PPP), perceived accountability (PAC), and perceived transparency (PTP)) on citizens' trust in municipal government (CTM) via citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance (PMP). Therefore, to bridge this literature lacuna, considering the significance of good governance, it is critical to investigate the level of citizens' trust in municipal government and how to enhance it (Arshad & Khurram, 2020), specifically in Somalia. Therefore, this study is based on good governance theory, which asserts that public sector institutions should manage human and non-human resources fairly and sustainably through transparency and accountability (Beshi & Kaur 2020a). This means that the people in charge of a local government must involve the people they serve and be accountable for their decisions and day-to-day actions. They can do this by being transparent and giving people access to information. Furthermore, municipal governments must improve their performance to rebuild citizens' trust. Hence, rooted in the theory of good governance and examining the perceived elements of good governance, citizens' perceptions of municipality performance, and citizens' trust in the municipality, the purpose of this research is to examine the mediating role of citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance on the relationship between perceived elements of good governance and citizens' trust in Somali Municipalities. Using an online survey of residents of Mogadishu Municipality, the largest municipality in Somalia, the researcher used quantitative analysis to examine the relationship between perceived elements of good governance and citizens' trust, as well as the possible mediating role that citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance play in that relationship. Therefore, in this paper, the researcher builds a theoretical and empirical model to examine the mediating role associated with perceived elements of good governance outcomes. The remaining sections of the paper proceed as follows: the first section discusses the literature review and hypotheses development. The second part explains the research methods and the measures used. The third section outlines the

data analysis and results. The fourth section describes discussions, conclusions, and theoretical implications. The final section explains the limitations and future research options.

Literature Review And Hypotheses Development

Good Governance

In 1989, the World Bank was the first international donor agency to adopt good governance in its operations (Weiss & Steiner, 2006). The WB, IMF, EU, and UNDP all have distinct definitions of the concept and principles of good governance (Van Doeveren, 2011). According to the International Monetary Fund (1997), good governance means supporting the rule of law, increasing public sector accountability and transparency, improving public sector efficiency and fighting corruption. Moreover, “good governance is characterized as participatory, transparent, accountable, effective, equitable, and promoting the rule of law” (UNDP, 1997, p. 6). This definition underlines the need to maintain democratic practices, particularly by ensuring all social groups’ participation in democratic decision-making.

However, a common agreement exists on critical principles and the meaning of the abovementioned definitions, such as accountability, transparency, public participation, efficiency and effectiveness, openness, and the rule of law (Van Doeveren, 2011). Yaghi (2008) debated that exercising good governance boosts democracy. Therefore, good governance allows citizens’ voices to be heard when local governments make important decisions and actions that influence their lives. In democratic institutions, good governance describes public administration practices that maximize the citizens’ interests (Keping 2018). Abas (2019) highlighted that good governance theory is most commonly used to explain good governance practices. Similarly, Rose and Miller (1992) claimed that one method of putting good governance theory into practice is through good governance practice. According to Nielsen et al. (2021), public participation, accountability, and transparency are three essential elements of good governance. Hence, the researcher studied the three above-mentioned elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and how they enhance citizens’ trust in municipal government. **Public participation** is “active public involvement in decision-making activities in policymaking and physical development toward meeting the needs of the people” (Sonet et al., 2021, p. 10). Public participation refers to the involvement of all stakeholders in decision-making processes and administrative work. This happens when participation channels are easy to find, people participate in activities, and people are involved in decision-making processes (Wang & Wart 2014). Public participation primarily refers to recognizing citizens’ concerns and demands and acknowledging their interests in the decision-making process (AbouAssi et al., 2013). **Accountability** is the degree to which an institution and its personnel are answerable to their constituents (i.e., the community they rule and serve) for its operations and outcomes (Rapp-McCall et al., 2022). **Transparency** is an organization disclosing information that allows third parties to observe and evaluate its internal operations, choices, and performance (Tran & La, 2022). Transparency is the openness and genuineness with which bureaucratic information is publicly accessible. Ideally, the policy development process requires full disclosure of the information (Im et al., 2022). Porumbescu and Im (2015) define **citizens' perceptions of government performance** as a general measure of how well citizens perceive their government’s performance. Bouckaert & Halligan (2011)

operationalized public sector performance perception at the micro, meso, and macro levels. At the micro-level, citizens' perceptions of performance can be judged by how they perceive the performance of the individuals in charge of providing public services, such as police officers and teachers (Porumbescu and Im, 2015). At the meso-level of performance, citizens' perceptions of performance refer to the opinions about specific public services or the organizations in charge of delivering services, such as the department or agencies. Citizens' macro-level performance perceptions are more diffuse because they are based on the collective performance of government agencies and individuals (Porumbescu, 2014). Hence, citizens' perceptions of the public sector's performance represent an overall assessment of the sector's performance. Bouckaert et al. (2002) identified four dimensions for measuring the macro level of government performance: citizens' wealth, health, security, and overall happiness. The four dimensions of the macro level of citizens' perception of government performance were validated by previous studies (Porumbescu, 2014).

Trust is a mental condition characterized by a readiness to take chances based on favorable assumptions about a trustee's intentions or behavior (Rousseau et al., 1998). Moreover, trust is a crucial aspect of social capital and involves both interpersonal and institutional dimensions (Yuan et al., 2022). Equally, trust in government provides citizens the confidence that government officials and representatives will act as intended in the public interest, whether in a specific action or a set of actions (Warner & Fargher, 2022). Similarly, trust in government refers to the people's trust in government actions to do what is right and just (OECD 2013). Furthermore, trust in the government means that people have a favorable opinion of their government's ability, benevolence, and integrity (Grimmelikhuijsen et al., 2013). Trustworthiness has three dimensions: perceived ability, integrity, and the benevolence of another ((Mayer et al., 1995). According to Porumbescu (2014), the ability was described as the competence to complete a specific task. Rosen & Jerdee (1977) benevolence refers to the trustor's belief that they and the trustee have a close relationship and that the trustee prioritizes the trustor's interests over their own. Integrity, the last dimension of trustworthiness, is the trustor's belief that the trustee upholds a set of standards that the trustor deems acceptable. This can be seen as perceived value consistency between the trustor and the trustee.

Theoretical Study Model

The study's theoretical model was established based on good governance theory, lacuna, and evidence found in the existing body of knowledge, especially in Somalia. The study proposed that elements of good governance, such as public participation, accountability, and transparency, improve citizens' perception of municipality authority's performance, thus boosting their trust in municipal government. In addition, the perceptions of municipal government performance have been investigated as a possible mediator between elements of good governance and the citizens' trust in municipal authority. It is suggested that because of the mediating role of the perceptions of municipal government performance, citizens' trust in municipal authority enhances since they perceive that local administration agencies meet the expectation of the population and satisfy their needs. Farazmand (2004) rightly argued that the governance process is how local governments make policy decisions and carry them out. All actions

occur at local levels. Therefore, the local governments must also be accessible to citizens and stakeholders because they are closer. Therefore, local authorities are very important because it is where people can participate and use their democratic rights (Farazmand, 2004). In line with the literature review and the following subsequent sections, the theoretical model of this present study is provided in Fig. 1.

Good Governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and Citizens' Trust

Perceived elements of good government influence citizens' trust in a positive way. Previous studies advocated that elements of good governance are linked to the citizen's trust in government (Mansoor, 2021; Beshi & Kaur, 2020a). Similarly, good governance significantly affects public trust in government (Spiteri & Briguglio 2018). Also, a recent new study reported that good governance practices positively and significantly impact residents' trust in government (Ab. Rahman, 2022). Public participation as a critical element in good governance enhances citizens' trust in government (Hue & Sun, 2022; Goldfinch et al., 2022). In this sense, public participation in the budgeting and planning of local government programs serves as a tool to foster citizens' trust in government.

Furthermore, accountability, a fundamental feature of good governance, is crucial in promoting the public's trust in municipal administration. Several recent study findings have reported that accountability is essential to enhancing citizens' trust in local authorities (Hartanto et al., 2021). Similarly, accountability practices impact citizens' trust in local authorities (Rudhanto, 2022; Ruslan, 2022). Accountability relates to how the public authority allocates resources and makes significant policy decisions and how this information is shared with the public (Mansoor, 2021). Besides, trust in local government is significantly and positively associated with accountability (Zaini & Kuppusamy, 2017; Spiteri & Briguglio, 2018).

In addition, it is considered that transparency, a vital component of good governance practice, has a crucial effect on the citizens' trust in municipal administration. Transparency is a cornerstone of establishing trust in government institutions (Kettl, 2017). Recent studies found that the perceived level of transparency positively relates to the citizens' trust in local government (Reznik & Lee, 2021). Additionally, transparency significantly and positively influences citizens' trust in local government (Mabillard, 2022). Transparent government activities strengthen trust in government (da Cruz et al., 2016 & Grimmelikhuijsen et al., 2013). Considering the prior debate, the study hypothesizes the following assumptions.

Hypotheses(1, 2, and 3). *Perceived elements of good governance(perceived public participation, perceived accountability, and perceived transparency) significantly and positively influence citizens' trust in municipal government.*

Good Governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and Citizens' Perceptions of Municipal government Performance

Good governance practices predict peoples' perception of municipal government performance. A recent study found that elements of good governance significantly and positively affect local government performance (Ab. Rahman et al., 2022). A previous study reported that elements of good governance had a significant and positive effect on government performance. For instance, public participation was positively related to the citizens' trust (He and Ma 2021). Similarly, accountability, a key element of good governance, has positively and significantly contributed to perceived government performance (Demir et al., 2019). Earlier research discovered that transparency positively and significantly impacted perceived government performance (Porumbescu, 2017).

This study is specifically designed to examine whether the PMP is an underlying mechanism between the (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and CTM. Such studies on the PMP and the literature on public administration are limited, and no empirical support exists to date. Hence, the study made the following assumptions to bridge this literature void about the PMP, (PPP, PAC, and PTP), and citizens' trust in municipal authorities.

H(4, 5, and 6). *Perceived elements of good governance (perceived public participation, perceived accountability, and perceived transparency) significantly and positively influences the citizens' perception of municipal government performance.*

Perceptions of Municipal Government Performance and Citizens' Trust

At the macro level, citizens' perception of public sector performance represents a more generalized assessment of the sector's overall performance (Porumbescu, 2017). Citizens' perceptions of government performance have a significant and positive association with trust in the government (Kim, 2010; Zhai, 2022). In addition, the perceptions of local government performance have positively and significantly impacted public trust in local institutions (Liu & Raine, 2016). Again, government performance is usually an essential factor influencing public trust (Liu & Raine, 2016; Nunkoo et al., 2012). Furthermore, public sector institutions' performance has directly impacted the increasing and developing public trust (Beeri et al., 2019). Similarly, recent studies reported that citizens' assessment of government performance was positively related to trust in government (Bian et al., 2021; Naraidoo & Sobhee, 2021). Therefore, local government performance should be given more attention because they are at the forefront of delivering and providing vital public services on which citizens rely throughout the world. They are frequently the most visible face of the state (Walker & Andrews, 2015). Therefore, the study proposes the following hypothesis.

H7. *The citizens' perception of municipal government performance significantly and positively influences citizens' trust.*

The Mediating Role of Citizens' Perception of Municipal government performance

There has been widespread acceptance of mediation models among scholars in the social sciences (Hamdollah & Baghaei, 2016). The research in mediating effects enables researchers to determine if a relationship between two variables is direct or develops indirectly due to a third (mediating) variable (Shaver, 2005). Specifically based on the scant research background regarding such essential relationships shown in the earlier literature review.

This study recognizes the citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance as a fundamental mechanism in the relationship between elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and citizens' trust in the municipality. This study seeks to establish whether citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance are an underlying mechanism between certain elements of good governance and citizens' trust in municipal government. Several prior studies have given the empirical and theoretical foundation for the mediation role of perceptions of government performance and citizens' trust in government (He and Ma, 2021; Porumbescu, 2013). Several earlier studies explored how perceived elements of good governance relate to institutional performance. For instance, Wahyuni-TD et al. (2021) reported that implementing good governance influences institutional performance. Furthermore, Hue and Sun (2022) reported that public participation positively relates to an institution's performance. Moreover, He and Ma (2021) reported that the perceived performance of government institutions mediates the relationship between public participation and citizens' trust. Similarly, accountability is positively and significantly associated with the perceived local government performance (Rudhanto, 2022; Demir et al., 2019). Likewise, Porumbescu (2017) found that transparency positively relates to the perceptions of public sector performance. However, many studies have reported that institutions' perceptions of government performance influence the citizens' trust. Goldfinch et al. (2022) reported a positive association between local government performance and citizens' trust. Similarly, many recent studies reported that institutions' perceptions of performance are associated positively with the citizens' trust (Zhai 2022; Dong and Kübler 2022). Additionally, a recent study reported that the government's performance evaluation predicts people's trust (Bian et al. 2021). Therefore, this present study is intended to examine whether PMP is mediating the relationship between PPP, PAC, and PTP and citizens' trust in the municipality. There is a paucity of literature concerning the mediatory role of PMP. Therefore, the researcher proposes that:

H(8, 9, and 9). *The citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance mediate the relationship between perceived elements of good governance (perceived public participation, perceived accountability, and perceived transparency) and citizens' trust.*

Research Methodology

Research Design and Sample

The study was designed to investigate the mediating role of PMP on the relationship between PPP, PAC, and PTP and citizens' trust in the perspectives of post conflict countries i.e., Somalia. This study examined the proposed structural model using a cross-sectional quantitative research design. The study's geographic scope was restricted to residents who live in Mogadishu Municipality. Mogadishu is the capital city of Somalia. Politically, the city's administration comprises four main parts (Western, Eastern, Central, and Waliyow Adde). In addition, the city is further subdivided into 17 administrative units (districts). Each district is run by a district commissioner at the district level. Although there is no official population data available, it is estimated that Mogadishu is home to nearly 3 million people. An online Google form survey was used, with hyperlinks created to compile data. The questionnaire was distributed by using snowball sampling among city residents via Facebook, WhatsApp, and email. The researcher gathered the data with the support of coworkers, friends, and university students who had been briefed on the questionnaire's objectives and contents. Subjects who participated in the online survey remained anonymous, and their responses were treated confidentially. Before actual data collection, a pilot study was done to ensure that the questions were clear and appropriate. 357 participants filled out the questionnaires. No outliers or missing values were an issue; therefore, the complete responses were utilized. The respondents were aged nearly 28 years on average, with 79.8% of the participants being males and 20.2% females. More than 39% of participants came from Mogadishu's west, approximately 25% from Waliyow Adde, 23% from the east, and only 13% from the central region. In addition, among the study participants, 59.4% had a bachelor's degree, 37.5% had a master's degree, 1.1% had a secondary school certificate, and 2% had a doctorate.

3.2 Development of Measurement

The study adopted the questionnaire scale from valid and reliable previous studies. A five-point Likert scale was used for this study, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The researcher used four items to measure the perceived public participation (PPP) adopted (Wang & Van Wart, 2007). The composite reliability of PPP items was 0.869. Furthermore, a five-item scale was used to measure perceived accountability (PAC) developed by (Said et al., 2019). The value of Cronbach's alpha was 0.895. Additionally, the researcher used five items to measure perceived transparency (PTP) (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011). The composite reliability of the scale was 0.870. Furthermore, the researcher used five items to assess citizens' trust in municipal government (CTM) (Park & Blenkinsopp, 2011). The overall Cronbach's alpha was 0.839. At the macro level, the citizens' perceptions of government performance comprise four aspects pertinent to wealth, security, health, and overall happiness (Porumbescu, 2017). Citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance (PMP) were measured using six indicators developed by Porumbescu (2017). The scale's composite reliability was 0.866.

4. Data Analysis And Results

The study used SmartPLS4 software to analyze the data using Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), a variance-based method, and test the suggested study model (Ringle et al., 2015).

PLS-SEM is a suitable method for complex models with several constructs.

Measurement Model

The study assessed the validity and reliability of all instruments and constructs (Hair et al., 2021). Outer loadings were calculated to measure the indicator reliability. The composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's alpha (α) values were calculated to assess the internal consistency reliability at the construct level. The convergent validity was evaluated using Average Variance Extracted (AVE), and the discriminant validity was established by applying the heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio (Henseler et al., 2015). In this study, all item loadings surpassed the 0.60 threshold and were maintained as endorsed by Chin (1988) (Table 1). Table 1 shows that all constructs were reliable, as Cronbach's alpha and CR values exceeded the threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2021). The convergent validity evaluation is the next step, which assesses how well the latent variables converge to account for the variation of its items (Hair et al. 2019). AVE's values exceeded the 0.50 cutoff (Table 1). In addition, discriminant validity was examined using the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) (Henseler et al., 2015). As Table 2 depicts, all values fall below the 0.85 thresholds. Therefore, discriminant validity has been confirmed.

Table 1
Outer loadings, validity, and reliability.

Construct	Indicator	Outer loadings	CR	α	AVE
PPP	PPP1	0.820			
	PPP2	0.852			
	PPP3	0.847	0.869	0.911	0.719
	PPP4	0.871			
PAC	PAC1	0.778			
	PAC2	0.783			
	PAC3	0.777	0.853	0.895	0.630
	PAC4	0.821			
	PAC5	0.808			
PTP	PTP1	0.782			
	PTP2	0.735			
	PTP3	0.681	0.813	0.870	0.573
	PTP4	0.818			
	PTP5	0.762			
PMP	PMP1	0.713			
	PMP2	0.678			
	PMP3	0.821			
	PMP4	0.819	0.866	0.900	0.602
	PMP5	0.793			
	PMP6	0.817			
CTM	CTM1	0.770			
	CTM2	0.752	0.839	0.886	0.609
	CTM3	0.808			
	CTM4	0.763			
	CTM5	0.806			

CR = composite reliability, α = Cronbach's alpha, AVE = average variance extracted, PTP = perceived transparency, PAC = perceived accountability, PPP = perceived public participation, PMP = perceptions of

municipal government performance, CTM = citizens' trust in municipal government.

Table 2
Discriminant validity - HTMT criterion.

Construct	CTM	PAC	PMP	PPP	
CTM	-				
PAC	0.768	-			
PMP	0.717	0.717	-		
PPP	0.716	0.727	0.732	-	
PTP	0.712	0.733	0.668	0.744	-

Structural Model

After ensuring that all measures are reliable and valid, the second step is to test the inner model results (Sarstedt et al. 2015). The researcher used the procedures suggested by Hair et al. (2021) to measure the structural model. The key steps in determining the inner model are coefficient of determination (R²), standardized path coefficients, t-values, the model's predictive relevance (Q²), and effect size (f²). The inner structural model was assessed using the bootstrapping procedure with 10,000 subsamples to verify the predicted relationship among the constructs.

In Table 3, the findings of the study uncovered a positive and significant association of citizens' trust in municipal government with PPP ($\beta = 0.179$, $t = 2.979$, $p = 0.001$), PAC ($\beta = 0.300$, $t = 4.460$, $p < 0.001$), PTP ($\beta = 0.174$, $t = 3.248$, $p = 0.001$). Also, a positive and significant relationship of PMP has been revealed with PPP ($\beta = 0.348$, $t = 5.670$, $p < 0.001$), PAC ($\beta = 0.303$, $t = 4.380$, $p < 0.001$), and PTP ($\beta = 0.158$, $t = 2.348$, $p = 0.009$). Similarly, PMP had a positive and statistically significant effect on citizens' trust in the municipal government ($\beta = 0.217$, $t = 3.695$, $p < 0.001$). Hence, (H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, and H7) were empirically supported.

Table 3
Direct and indirect effects.

Hypothesized relationship	Standardized β value	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1: PPP → CTM	0.179	2.979	0.001	Supported
H2: PAC → CTM	0.300	4.460	0.000	Supported
H3: PTP → CTM	0.174	3.248	0.001	Supported
H4: PPP → PMP	0.348	5.670	0.000	Supported
H5: PAC → PMP	0.303	4.380	0.000	Supported
H6: PTP → PMP	0.158	2.348	0.009	Supported
H7: PMP → CTM	0.217	3.695	0.000	Supported
H8: PPP → PMP → CTM	0.076	2.887	0.002	Supported
H9: PAC → PMP → CTM	0.066	2.535	0.006	Supported
H10: PTP → PMP → CTM	0.034	2.16	0.015	Supported

As revealed in Table 3, the research backs up the hypotheses (H8, H9, and H10) about mediation role. The result showed a positive and indirect impact of PPP ($\beta = 0.076$, $t = 2.887$, $p = 0.002$), PAC ($\beta = 0.066$, $t = 2.535$, $p = 0.006$), and PTP ($\beta = 0.034$, $t = 2.160$, $p = 0.015$) on citizens' trust in municipal government via the underlying mechanism of PMP.

Furthermore, the results show that 54.2% of the variation in the CTM is explained by PPP, PAC, and PTP via PMP. However, 49.8% of the change in PMP is explained by PAC, PPP, and PTP (Table 4). Table 4 depicts that the values of Q2 for the CTM and PMP endogenous constructs exceeded zero (0). Hence, the model has predictive relevance. Finally, the results in Table 4 showed that all exogenous constructs have a small effect on CTM and PMP.

Table 4
Model's predictive power.

Exogenous latent variable	Endogenous latent variable	Q^2	R^2	f^2	Effect size
PAC				0.095	Small
PMP				0.097	Small
PPP				0.052	Small
PTP	CTM	0.507	0.542	0.032	Small
PAC				0.124	Small
PPP	PMP	0.483	0.498	0.034	Small
PTP				0.027	Small

Discussion And Conclusion

The study aimed to examine the mediating role of perceptions of municipal government performance on the relationship between perceived elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and CTM. PPP positively and significantly influences CTM. Earlier studies support this (see Goldfinch et al., 2022). This implies that citizens' participation in municipal government projects and program design and execution is likely to facilitate the implementation of such programs and boost their sustainability. In the end, this makes people feel better about how well their local government performs, making them more likely to trust the people in charge of municipal administration. Similarly, PAC positively influences CTM. The result of this study supports prior research findings (see Rudhanto, 2022). The results suggested how crucial it is to recognize perceived accountability as a positive predictor of citizens' trust in municipal authorities and how valuable it is for local authorities to restore and win over local citizens' trust in the municipal administration.

Likewise, in line with prior research, PTP positively and significantly influences CTM (see Rudhanto, 2022). This implies that local government authorities get more trust and confidence from the citizenry when they practice transparency in their daily operations and activities. Furthermore, the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between perceived elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and PMP. These findings are consistent with a recent study, for instance, (see Ab. Rahman et al., 2022). Similarly, this is in line with the prior research that reported that PPP positively and significantly influences PMP (See Hue & Sun, 2022). In terms of PAC, in agreement with prior research, there was a positive and significant influence on PMP (e.g., Demir et al., 2019). In line with Porumbescu's (2017) research, the study found that PTP positively and significantly influences PMP. Additionally, PMP was positively and significantly related to CTM, supporting earlier research findings (Naraidoo & Sobhee, 2021). Finally, no prior research specifically examined the mediating role of perceptions of municipal

government performance on the relationship between perceived elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, and PTP) and citizens' trust in municipality. The study uncovered that the PMP partially mediates the relationship between PPP and citizens' trust in the municipality. This aligns with prior studies (see He and Ma, 2021). Similarly, the study showed that PMP partially mediates the relationship between PAC and citizens' trust in the municipal authorities. These results support the notion that the influence of PAC on citizens' trust in municipal authorities is via PMP. Furthermore, the study revealed that PMP partially mediates the relationship between PTP and citizens' trust in municipality. These findings corroborate the study's hypotheses that PTP affects citizens' trust in municipal government via PMP. This current study argues that citizens' participation in local authorities strengthens their assessment of municipal government performance, leading to a greater degree of citizens' trust in their municipal government. The possibility of citizen involvement in municipal government institutions appears to improve citizens' assessments of municipal administration performance, which, in turn, boosts citizens' trust in municipality. Similarly, these results validate the notion that the influence of perceived accountability on citizens' trust in municipal authority is through perceptions of municipal government performance. Finally, these findings corroborate the idea that perceived transparency affects citizens' trust in municipal government via perceptions of municipal government performance. The study makes a case for how crucial citizens' perceptions of transparency are to how well municipal governments perform and how this, in turn, promotes strong citizens' trust governments. This concludes that the study's findings show that municipal government officials must comprehend the importance of good governance practices and the performance of local authority institutions to achieve a high level of community trust in municipal government.

Theoretical implications

The present study enhances the existing body of literature by exploring three elements of good governance (PPP, PAC, PTP) and their influence on citizens' trust in the municipality via the mediating role of perceptions of municipal government performance in post-conflict countries, specifically in the Somalia. Additionally, it is original research in good governance while considering the three elements of good governance in a single study. Previous research have examined these three elements separately with citizens' trust, in light of this, the joint framework adds to the body of existing literature. This study's results validated good governance theory with the citizens' perceptions of municipal government performance and citizens' trust incorporated into a single conceptual framework. The current study answers the questions from the previous literature about why citizens' trust in local authorities is diminishing. Finally, the researcher expected that the findings would provide key policy insights to municipal decision-makers and future governance and public administration researchers

Limitations and Future Research Direction

The current study has some limitations. First, the present study gathered data from citizens regarding their perceptions of Mogadishu Municipality. Future research may collect data from local government officials and citizens. Furthermore, the second limitation is using cross-sectional research designs, which can be fixed by employing longitudinal or time-series study designs to improve causality and predictability. A small sample size ($n = 357$) might influence the generalizability of the study's conclusions. Future researchers must expand the number of participants to represent the city's larger population. In addition, the study was conducted in Mogadishu, the capital city of Somalia; future researchers will need to extend the analysis to include other major cities in the country. The fourth limitation relates to using a quantitative data analysis method. Future researchers can also use a mixed approach to learn more about why citizens trust their local governments.

Declarations

Compliance with Ethical Standards

Conflict of Interest: The author declares no conflict of interest.

Informed consent: Informed consent was obtained from all respondents involved in the study.

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Figures

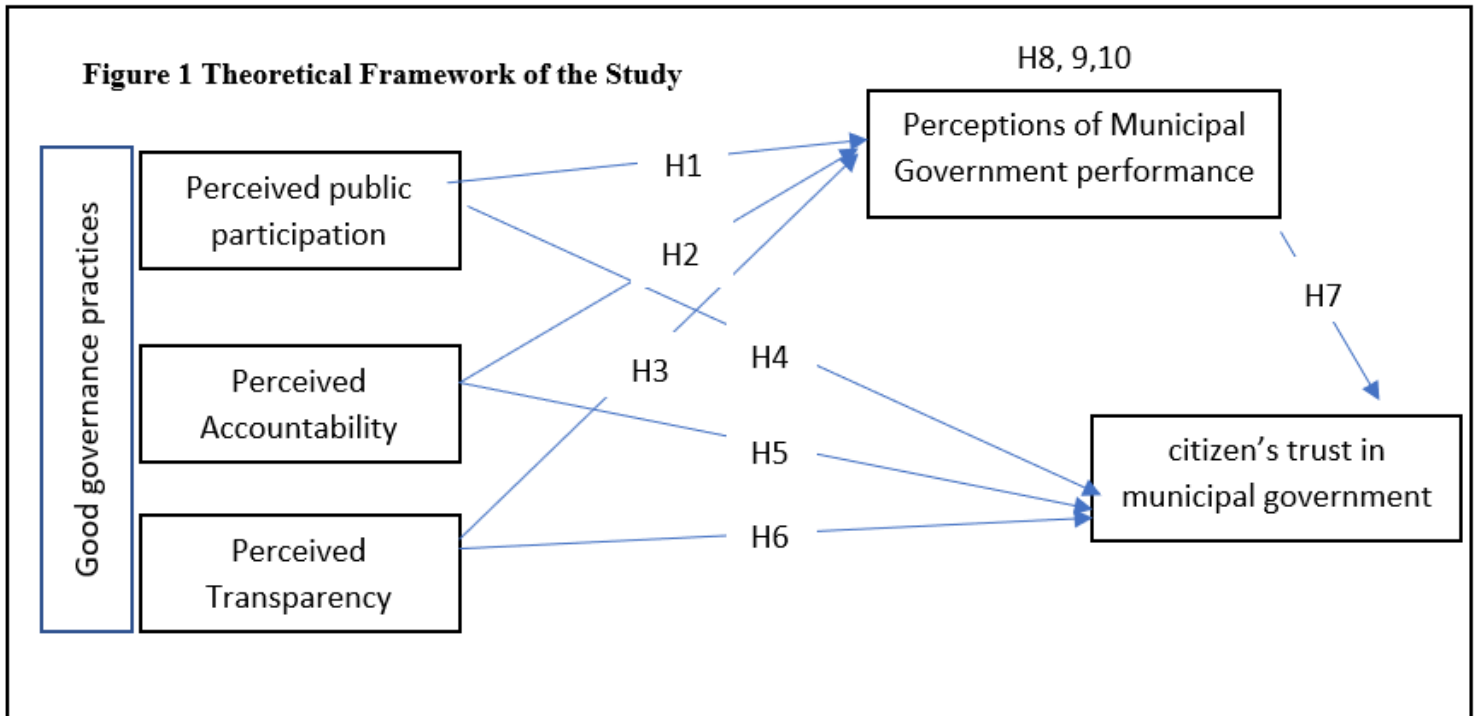


Figure 1

Theoretical study model.

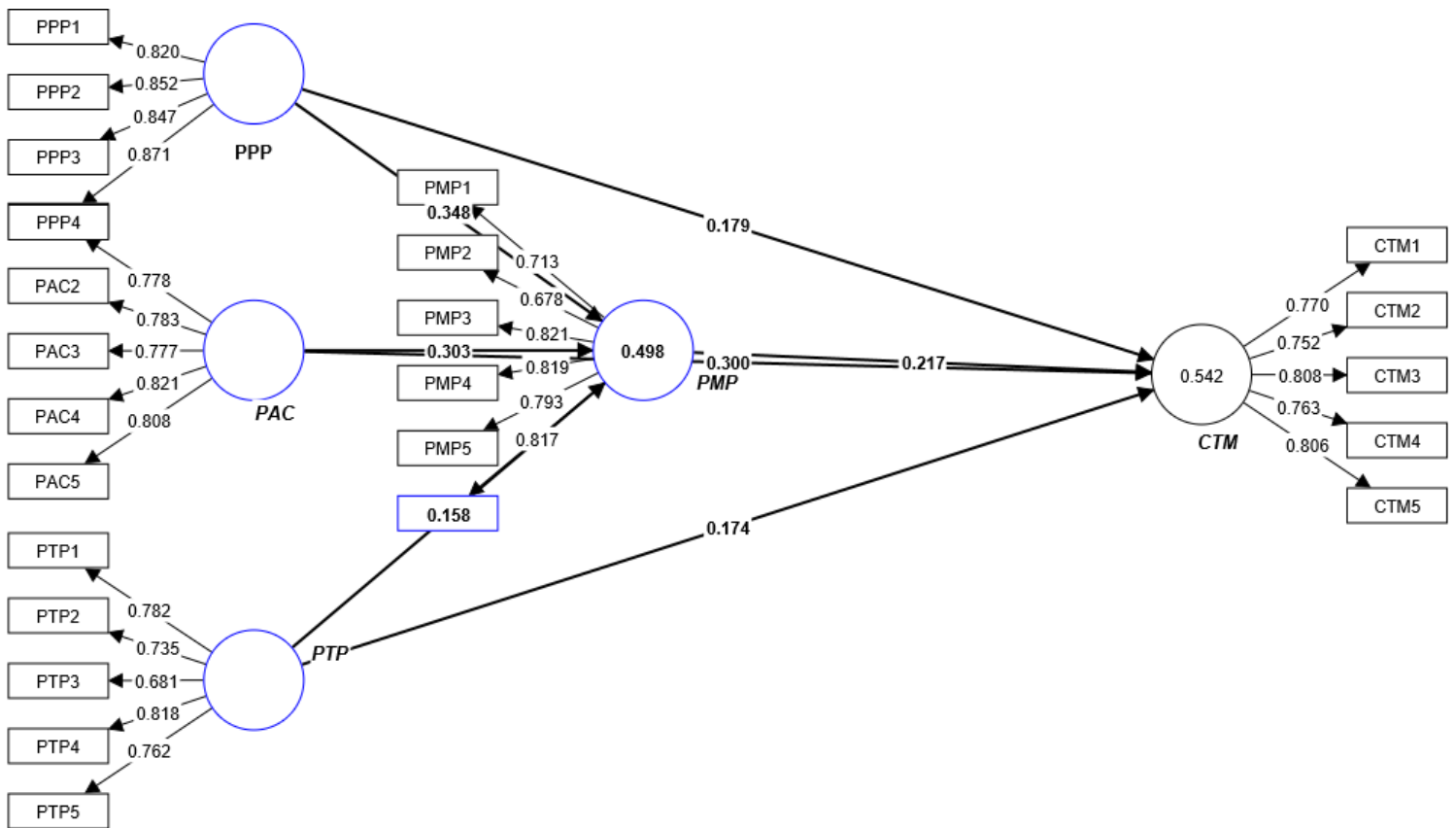


Figure 2

Measurement model.

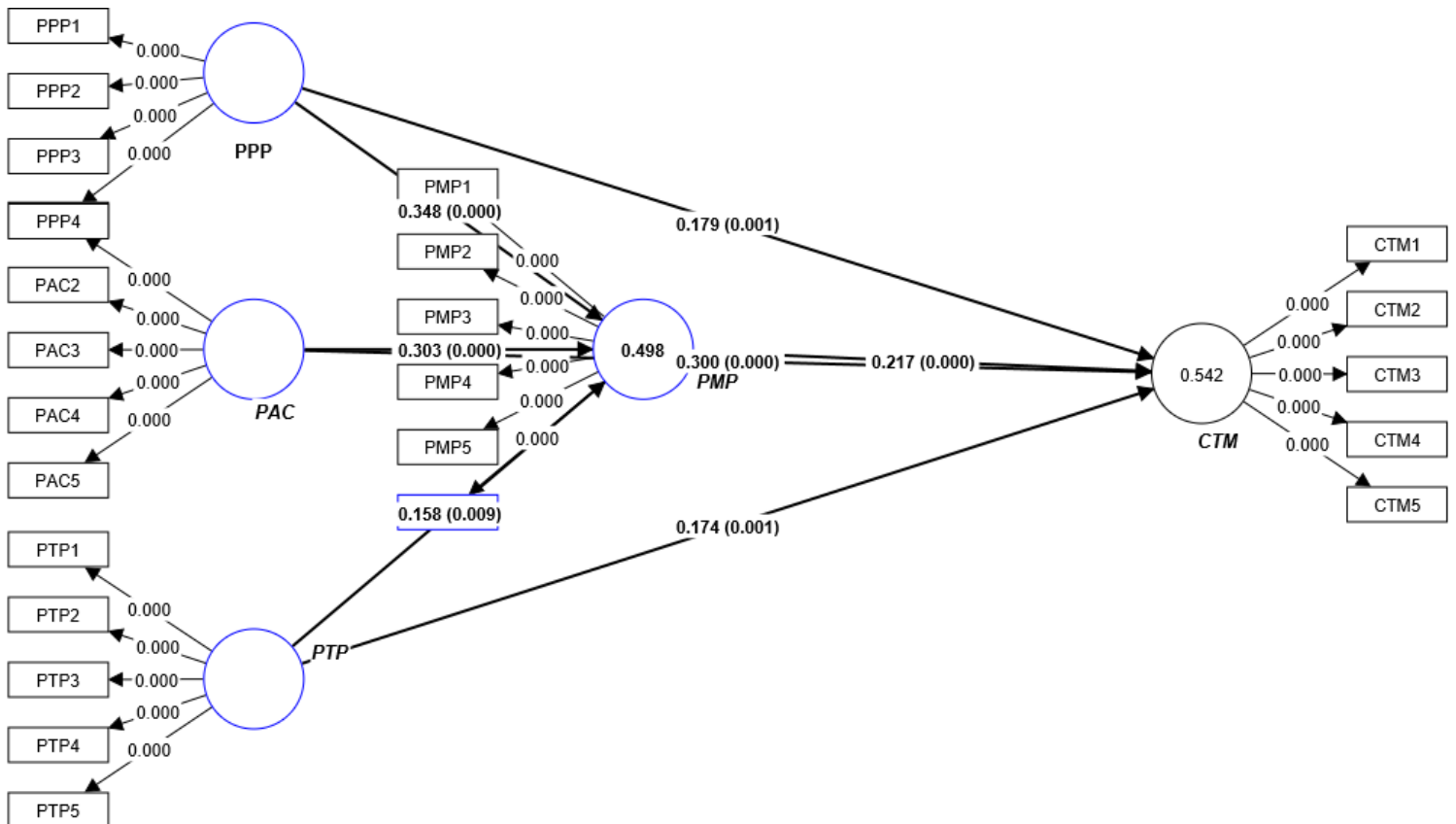


Figure 3

Structural model.