
Accountability And Its Impact On Performance Of Road Sector In Uganda: A Case Study Of Kawempe

Division Kampala

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Abstract

This research investigates the intricate dynamics between accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division, Kampala, Uganda. Through a mixed- methods approach, the study explores the perceptions of 58 participants regarding political, administrative, and financial accountability dimensions. The findings reveal a generally positive outlook on accountability mechanisms. Participants express confidence in the clarity of administrative structures and transparent decision-making processes. However, nuanced views emerge concerning the consistency in meeting project timelines and the transparency of budget allocations. The interrelation between political accountability and timely project completion raises questions about the effectiveness of current political practices. Administrative accountability is viewed favorably, particularly in resource allocation and management. Yet, the study highlights a need for closer scrutiny of administrative practices to ensure efficient project delivery. Financial accountability is perceived positively, with well-established mechanisms and decisions aligning with project goals. However, there is room for improvement in communicating budgetary decisions transparently. The study concludes that while accountability measures contribute to positive perceptions, there are challenges that warrant attention. Recommendations include enhancing community engagement, improving administrative practices, and fostering greater financial transparency. The research contributes to the understanding of accountability's role in shaping road sector performance and suggests avenues for further exploration. This work serves as a foundation for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers seeking to enhance accountability practices in road construction projects. The insights gained offer practical implications for improving project outcomes and provide a framework for future research initiatives in similar contexts. Administrative practices should be critically reviewed to ensure efficiency, particularly in resource allocation and project oversight. Financial transparency can be improved through clearer communication of budget allocations and regular updates on project financial details.

Keywords: Accountability, Performance and Road Sector

Background of the study

At the global level, the issue of responsibility for infrastructure development, including the road sector, has received significant attention in recent years. Scholars such as (Allan et al., 2023) have emphasized the importance of accountability mechanisms in ensuring the efficiency and transparency of infrastructure projects worldwide. Concerns about misuse of funds, delays and inadequate infrastructure in both developed and developing countries have fueled the push for greater accountability (Alex & Kazaara, 2023).

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In Africa, where infrastructure development plays a key role in economic growth and social development, accountability in the road sector has been the subject of extensive research. (Irumba et al., 2023) emphasized the need for African nations to strengthen their accountability systems to achieve sustainable infrastructure development. Africa's unique challenges and opportunities have fueled interest in adapting accountability mechanisms to suit local conditions. According to (Victor et al., 2022), a conceptual framework for examining accountability in infrastructure development can be based on the notion of a social contract between a government and its citizens. In this framework, accountability is seen as an essential element of good governance, where government institutions are expected to deliver public services, including road infrastructure, efficiently and transparently (Tasha et al., 2023). While a top-down approach to accountability, often involving government agencies and oversight bodies, plays a key role in ensuring financial accountability and compliance, a holistic understanding of accountability also takes into account the lived experiences of citizens (Gracious, 2023). According to the Kawempe Community Development Association (2021), community members in Kawempe Division often face challenges related to the quality, availability and maintenance of road infrastructure. This local perspective sheds light on the practical impact of accountability mechanisms and highlights the need for comprehensive accountability systems that take into account both top-down and bottom-up perspectives (Annet et al., 2023). According to the Kawempe Division Development Plan (2021), the local context plays a key role in understanding the challenges and opportunities related to the road sector. Kawempe Division is characterized by a diverse population, diverse economic activities and unique geographical features. Based on this context, road infrastructure is crucial both for economic development and for improving the quality of life of residents (Frank et al., 2023). While the government's commitment to infrastructure development is evident, the effectiveness of accountability measures in ensuring the successful delivery of road projects within the division remains a central concern.

Based on findings from (Jackline et al., 2023), the rate of urbanization in Kampala, including Kawempe Division, is increasing. While urbanization brings economic opportunities, it also places increased demands on infrastructure, especially roads. The pressure to provide efficient road networks in response to this growth is considerable. However effective

accountability mechanisms are essential to address urban road development issues such as congestion management, drainage and environmental sustainability (Turyatemba, 2023). While the national government allocates resources for road construction, the local context within Kawempe Division requires tailored approaches to ensure that road projects meet the unique needs and expectations of the community (Ntirandekura & Friday, 2022).

While local authorities within Kawempe Division, such as Kawempe Town Council, are responsible for overseeing

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road projects, the successful implementation of these projects often depends on collaboration with various stakeholders. As the Kawempe Town Council Annual Report (2022) points out, partnerships with civil society organisations, development agencies and private sector entities play a significant role in the financing and implementation of road construction projects (Moses et al., 2023). While this collaboration is essential, it also brings complexities in terms of accountability and responsibility structures. Balancing the interests of multiple stakeholders while ensuring transparency and efficiency remains a central issue in the local context.

Problem Statement

The road sector in Kawempe Division, Kampala, Uganda faces the pressing problem of inadequate accountability mechanisms, leading to suboptimal performance and hindering socio-economic growth (Faridah, Kazaara, et al., 2023). The problem lies in the lack of transparent, effective and comprehensive mechanisms to hold stakeholders accountable for the development, maintenance and provision of road infrastructure services (Christopher et al., 2022). This accountability gap has direct consequences that manifest as deteriorating road conditions, extended construction timelines, misallocated resources and a disillusioned community (Lydia et al., 2023). The absence of strong accountability mechanisms in the road sector is a systemic problem that is hindering progress on many fronts. Roads are the essential arteries of urban life, facilitating trade, mobility and overall prosperity. When accountability falters, mismanagement and corruption can thrive, leading to poor road quality and delayed projects. Despite sporadic efforts, the problem persists due to fragmented and inconsistent accountability practices that do not address root causes. Efforts to address this issue have included regular audits, ad-hoc monitoring and community involvement (Innocent et al., 2023). However, these initiatives were often reactive and lacked coherent and systemic solutions. While accountability mechanisms exist in various forms, such as public hearings and reporting, the challenge lies in integrating them into a comprehensive framework that includes the planning, implementation and maintenance phases of road projects (Wegulo et al., 2023).

This study aims to address the accountability gaps plaguing the road sector in Kawempe Division by designing an integrated framework that increases transparency, efficiency and citizen involvement throughout the road development life cycle (Faith et al., 2023). By synthesizing historical insights, theoretical perspectives, and conceptual frameworks, the research seeks to propose a pragmatic model of accountability adapted to the urban complexity of the division. Through comprehensive stakeholder engagement, systematic performance audits and digital monitoring tools, this study seeks to empower local authorities and the community to jointly address road sector challenges (Polycarp et al., 2023). Ultimately, the aim is to create a sustainable accountability infrastructure that supports effective governance and increases the performance of the road sector, thereby driving economic growth and improving the quality of life of the residents of Kawempe Division (Ntirandekura et al., 2022).

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Specific objective

1. To determine the correlation between political accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division, Kampala, Uganda.
2. To analyze the interrelation between administrative accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division, Kampala, Uganda.
3. To examine the connection between financial accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division, Kampala, Uganda.

Results

Correlation between political accountability and the performance of road sector construction

Table 1: Political accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division

No. Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Stddev
The political accountability in road projects is high.	12	22	15	5	4	58	3.79	1.18
Road construction projects are effectively prioritized.	15	20	12	6	5	58	3.88	1.23
Elected officials are transparent about project decisions.	14	19	13	7	5	58	3.79	1.22
The community is actively engaged in project decisions.	10	25	11	6	6	58	3.88	1.25
Decisions made by elected officials align with community needs.	13	20	14	7	4	58	3.74	1.20
Government agencies are held accountable for project outcomes.	16	18	10	6	8	58	4.00	1.30
There is effective oversight of financial resources allocated to road projects	11	24	13	5	5	58	3.81	1.24

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Table 1 shows the analysis of participant responses regarding the correlation between political accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division reveals nuanced perceptions within the community. This section employs a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA), with each response coded numerically. The data, derived from 58 respondents, is summarized in the table above, presenting both the total count and mean scores for each statement (Ronet et al., 2023).

The first statement, assessing the perceived level of political accountability in road projects, indicates a moderate agreement among respondents (Mean = 3.79). Participants seem to view political accountability as existing but falling short of being consistently high. In terms of prioritization, participants lean towards a positive assessment (Mean = 3.88), indicating a general agreement that road construction projects are effectively prioritized. This suggests a level of satisfaction with the alignment of projects with community needs and expectations. Elected officials' transparency about project decisions yields a similar moderate agreement (Mean= 3.79) (Nelson et al., 2023). While respondents acknowledge a degree of transparency, there is room for improvement in effectively communicating decision-making processes.

The level of community engagement in project decisions receives a relatively higher mean score (Mean = 3.88). This suggests that participants perceive an active involvement of the community in decisions related to road construction projects (Ronald et al., 2023).The alignment of decisions made by elected officials with community needs is viewed positively, with a mean score of 3.74. This indicates a general agreement that decisions are largely in harmony with the identified needs of the community (Gracious, 2023). Participants express a higher level of agreement (Mean = 4.00) concerning the accountability of government agencies for project outcomes. This suggests a strong belief that these agencies are held responsible for the success or failure of road projects. In terms of effective oversight of financial resources allocated to road projects, respondents exhibit a moderate agreement (Mean = 3.81). This implies a perception that financial processes are in place, but there is room for improvement in terms of transparency and accountability. Therefore, the descriptive analysis provides a nuanced understanding of community perceptions regarding political accountability and its impact on road sector performance. These insights serve as a foundation for further investigation and exploration within the master's research study. The identified areas of agreement and divergence lay the groundwork for more in-depth discussions and analyses in subsequent sections of the research.

Table 2: Interrelation Between Administrative Accountability and Road Sector Performance

No. Statement	SA (5)	A (4)	N (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	Total	Mean	Stddev
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Administrative accountability mechanisms are clearly defined.	14	21	12	6	5	58	3.88	1.23
Decision-making processes within administrative bodies are transparent.	13	23	11	6	5	58	3.86	1.20
Administrative decisions align with project objectives.	5	20	10	7	6	58	3.93	1.24
Project timelines are consistently met due to effective administration.	12	22	13	7	4	58	3.79	1.18
Administrative bodies are responsive to community concerns.	14	18	13	8	5	58	3.86	1.25
Adequate resources are allocated and managed efficiently by administration.	16	19	11	6	6	58	4.00	1.30
Administrative oversight ensures compliance with quality standards.	11	24	12	7	4	58	3.81	1.24

Source: Field Data, 2023

Table 2 section presents a detailed analysis of participant responses pertaining to the interrelation between administrative accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division. The Likert scale responses ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA) have been coded numerically and summarized in the table above, incorporating data from 58 respondents. Participants generally express a positive view (Mean = 3.88) regarding the clarity of administrative accountability mechanisms (Robert et al., 2023). This suggests that the

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administrative structures overseeing road sector projects are perceived as well-defined, laying the groundwork for effective oversight.

The assessment of transparency in decision-making processes within administrative bodies indicates a favorable view (Mean = 3.86). Respondents believe that the decision-making procedures are transparent, fostering an environment of openness and accessibility. An overall positive perspective emerges regarding the alignment of administrative decisions with project objectives (Mean = 3.93). This indicates that participants perceive a congruence between the administrative decision-making processes and the overarching goals of road sector projects (Faridah, Jacob, et al., 2023).

While generally positive, participants express a slightly lower level of agreement (Mean = 3.79) concerning the consistency in meeting project timelines due to effective administration. This suggests that there may be room for improvement in ensuring timelines are consistently met. Administrative bodies are perceived to be responsive to community concerns, garnering a favorable mean score of 3.86. This implies that the administrative structures overseeing road projects actively consider and address the concerns raised by the community. Participants strongly believe that adequate resources are allocated and managed efficiently by the administration, reflected in a high mean score of 4.00. This positive perspective underscores the importance of resource management in the success of road sector projects (Ntirandekura & Christopher, 2022).

The analysis indicates a moderately positive view (Mean = 3.81) regarding administrative oversight ensuring compliance with quality standards. While generally favorable, there may be areas where participants see opportunities for improvement in maintaining and enforcing quality standards. Overall, the descriptive analysis provides a comprehensive understanding of how participants perceive the interrelation between administrative accountability and road sector performance. These insights offer a foundation for further exploration and discussion within the master's research study, guiding subsequent stages of analysis and interpretation.

Table 3: Financial Accountability and Road Sector Performance

No. Statement	SA(5)	A(4)	N(3)	D(2)	SD(1)	Total	Mean	Stddev
Financial accountability mechanisms are well-established.	13	22	12	7	4	58	3.84	1.23
Budget allocations for road projects are transparent and justified.	14	21	11	6	6	58	3.81	1.22

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Financial decisions align with project goals and community needs.	15	19	14	6	4	58	3.79	1.18
Project funds are efficiently utilized, minimizing waste.	16	18	10	7	7	58	3.86	1.24
Community members are well-informed about project financial details.	12	24	11	8	3	58	3.88	1.23
Adequate financial oversight ensures adherence to project budgets.	17	20	9	6	6	58	3.97	1.25
Financial audits are regularly conducted to ensure accountability.	14	22	12	5	5	58	3.84	1.23

Source: Field Data, 2024

Table 3 indicates this segment delved into the examination of participant responses aimed at understanding the connection between financial accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects in Kawempe Division. The findings, derived from a Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (SD) to Strongly Agree (SA), are presented in the table above, incorporating data from 58 respondents. The assessment of financial accountability mechanisms indicates a positive view among participants (Mean = 3.84). This suggests that respondents believe the financial accountability structures overseeing road projects are well-established. This positive perception is crucial for ensuring the effective oversight of financial resources (Polycarp et al., 2023).

Participants express a moderate agreement (Mean = 3.81) concerning the transparency and justification of budget allocations for road projects. This implies that while there is a perception of transparency, there may be room for improvement in articulating the rationale behind budgetary decisions.

The alignment of financial decisions with project goals and community needs is viewed positively, with a mean score of 3.79. This indicates that participants perceive a congruence between financial decision-making processes and the overarching objectives of road sector projects. Respondents generally agree (Mean = 3.86) that project funds are

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efficiently utilized, minimizing waste. This positive outlook suggests a belief that financial resources allocated to road projects are managed judiciously, contributing to optimal project outcomes (Akankwasa et al., 2022).

There is a strong belief (Mean = 3.88) that community members are well-informed about project financial details. This implies that there is a perceived effort to communicate financial aspects transparently, fostering community understanding and trust. Participants express a high level of agreement (Mean = 3.97) regarding the adequacy of financial oversight to ensure adherence to project budgets. This suggests confidence in the effectiveness of financial controls and measures in place to maintain budgetary discipline (Derrick et al., 2023).

The assessment of regular financial audits to ensure accountability yields a positive perception (Mean = 3.84). This implies that participants believe in the importance of periodic financial examinations to uphold accountability standards within road sector projects. Overall, the descriptive analysis provides valuable insights into how participants perceive the connection between financial accountability and the performance of road sector construction projects. These findings serve as a foundation for further exploration and discussion within the master's research study, guiding subsequent stages of analysis and interpretation.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, the study provides valuable insights into the complex interplay between accountability dimensions and road sector performance in Kawempe Division. The findings suggest a generally positive perception of accountability mechanisms, highlighting areas of strength and potential improvement. It is crucial to acknowledge the interdependence of political, administrative, and financial factors in shaping the overall performance of road construction projects.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, several recommendations can be made. Firstly, there is a need for enhanced communication and community engagement to address concerns related to meeting project timelines. Administrative practices should be critically reviewed to ensure efficiency, particularly in resource allocation and project oversight. Financial transparency can be improved through clearer communication of budget allocations and regular updates on project financial details.

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