

The Impact of Management Competencies on Civil Service Performance

The Case of Addis Ababa and Adama City Administrations, Ethiopia

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Civil service performance remains a critical concern for public institutions. Managers with strong competencies tend to deliver higher-quality services to citizens. However, misapplication of management competencies often undermines performance outcomes. This study aims to analyse and compare the impact of management competencies on civil service performance across two urban administrations. A mixed-methods approach was employed, utilising structured and unstructured questionnaires, focus group discussions, and key informant interviews. Data were analysed using SPSS for both descriptive and inferential statistics. Results show that several key factors moderately influence civil service performance in both study areas. The coefficient of determination and Pearson correlation coefficients reveal statistically significant and positive relationships among these factors. While overall performance levels between the two cities – Addis Ababa and Adama – are similar, Addis Ababa demonstrates slightly stronger outcomes. Despite some progress, several challenges persist: lack of long-term strategic planning, limited support for employee innovation, insufficient stakeholder engagement, inadequate continuous learning, and underutilisation of modern technology. To enhance institutional performance and competitiveness, it is essential to strengthen the factors contributing to management competency development and align them with strategic priorities.

Keywords: civil service, management competency, performance evaluation

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Introduction

Background

In the 21st century, civil service institutions face increasing complexity and demand, requiring strong management competencies to deliver quality services effectively and efficiently.² As providers of essential public services, these institutions must recognise citizens as customers and focus on improving service delivery as a means to enhance economic and social development.

Managerial competencies – comprising knowledge, skills, attitudes, motivations, and values – are critical to improving performance in public service delivery.³ These competencies offer a competitive advantage for institutions and help align performance with institutional goals.⁴ Lawler (1994) identified four drivers of competency: the shift from mass to customer-focused services, globalisation, institutional competition, and the need for agile, flatter organisational structures –each reinforcing the value of competent management in the civil service.⁵

Competency management provides a structured framework for change and serves as a common language to align behaviour with institutional objectives.⁶ It encompasses three categories: general competencies (mandatory for all civil servants), managerial and leadership competencies (for department heads), and specific professional competencies (for technical roles).⁷

The benefits are broad: for employees, competencies define standards of excellence; for managers, they aid in employee development and feedback; and for institutions, they help articulate values and drive performance.⁸ Enhancing civil servant competency significantly impacts institutional effectiveness,⁹ and by extension, national development.¹⁰

Given this, continuous research is essential to understand and address the factors influencing civil service performance. Competent managers and employees are vital assets – strengthening their capabilities is key to improving institutional performance and contributing to broader economic growth.

² Civil Service Human Resources 2017.

³ DRAGANIDIS–MENTZAS 2006.

⁴ GAMARRA – GIROTTO – SEGUÍ–AMÓRTEGUI 2019.

⁵ NUNES–MARTINS–DUARTE 2007.

⁶ OP DE BEECK – HONDEGHEM 2010.

⁷ POBRIC 2021.

⁸ SINGIRIKONDA–DESAI 2020.

⁹ HARITS–BHAGYA 2022.

¹⁰ BHATTI et al. 2011.

Problem statement

Competency-based framework (CBF) has many benefits for civil service institutions. The flexibility of the framework and its simplicity are the key to its success. CBF is simple and easy to administer and was built for a business purpose.¹¹ However, management competencies implementation has been characterised poorly. It is not fully explained and understood by both managements and employees and it is difficult to practice. Its effectiveness and efficiency are also limited. It is highlighted that the integration with other human resource management systems is one of the main challenges faced by competency-based framework users.¹²

Consultants and practitioners agree that some organisations develop CBF but do not know how to implement them. According to Benayoune (2017), the lack of integration with other talent management systems and the lack of a simple process that addresses technology and infrastructure issues are the major problems. The challenges of implementing managers' competencies also change with the external business environment, so even when they feel settled into their role, it can all change very quickly. According to Blixt and Kirytopoulos (2017), the top challenges the managers face today include: communicating effectively with employees; confronting performance problems; making the right hiring decisions; managing conflicts within the team; retaining star employees in a competitive environment; being a constant source of motivation; and the need to bridge the skills gap. They also added that accountability, business alignment, scope and deliverables, change, and program orientation are the most important competencies of managers in civil service institutions.

Ethiopia has faced challenges in implementing management competencies in the country. Despite endowed with resources that can help bring about economic miracles for the country, poor management has contributed to the country's lowest economic and social indicators.¹³ According to Alemu and Lemma (2011), the inefficiencies and ineffective processes of organisational structure, management practices, outdated work processes, and procedures affected the governance system of the public sectors in Ethiopia. According to Chanyalew (2014), the competencies required to achieve the desired results, the sale of resources, the management of quality services, and the rapid provision of services posed the major challenges for the city administration of Addis Ababa. He also indicated that there are poor accountability, lack of transparency, poor customer satisfaction, and ill commitment of managers at all levels of the administration. The poor capacity and absence of skilled staff resulted in poor service delivery processes.

Based on the theoretical and empirical literature review presented, certain research gaps have been observed among the researchers. The literature shows that there are many ways in which countries can reform their civil service and ensure professionalism

¹¹ BENAYOUNE 2017.

¹² BLIXT-KIRYTOPOULOS 2017.

¹³ DIBABA 2015.

in the civil service sector. However, these measures and efforts are dissimilar in different countries as well as in different institutions of a country. Thus, without examining the local context, drawing conclusions on the civil service performance in the civil service institutions based on research outputs conducted somewhere else may lead to wrong decisions in the context of Ethiopia.

Therefore, it is necessary to conduct a study that evaluates and implements the objectives related to the civil service performance of institutions, identifying the management competencies that influence the current gaps in the service delivery performance. The institutions require the assessment of their competency in relation with management competencies clusters (setting direction, engaging people, and delivering results) that include ten management competencies which all contribute to the civil service performance of the institutions. These variables are basically expected to solve the practical problems of the institutions. Since the problems are clearly defined, the aims and questions of this study are explicitly and clearly stated and likely lead to problem solving outcomes of the institutions. Thus, the above statements guide the study in building up the following basic research questions.

Basic Research Questions:

1. What are the levels of the civil service performance of each study area?
2. What are the most influencing factors on civil service performance of the two study areas?
3. What are the challenges in implementing management competencies in civil service institutions?

General and specific objectives

The general objective of this study is to assess and compare the effect of management competencies on civil service performance of the two study areas. The specific objectives are the following:

- determine and compare the levels of the civil service performance of each study area
- describe the relationships between and among the variables of each city administration
- determine the extent to which the independent variables predict the dependent variable
- identify the most influencing factors on civil service performance of the two study area, and
- pinpoint the challenges hindering the performance of the civil service institutions

Significance and policy implications of the study

Given that individuals spend a significant portion of their lives at work, understanding and developing management competencies is essential for improving the performance and productivity of civil service institutions.¹⁴ In Ethiopia, the government has introduced various strategies, policies, and plans to guide the development of the civil service. A central goal is to enhance service delivery and drive sustainable economic growth through competent management.

However, despite these efforts, the effective implementation of management competencies remains limited. Many civil service institutions have not adequately focused on aligning managerial roles with competency-based frameworks, and the overall level of managerial competency is still unclear. In today's competitive civil service environment, it is vital to evaluate how management responds to its responsibilities and how competencies influence institutional outcomes.

This study is significant because it identifies the key management competencies that have the greatest impact on the performance of civil service institutions. The findings offer practical insights both for institutional leaders and employees. For management, the results highlight areas needing improvement and provide direction for achieving institutional goals. For employees, understanding how their performance and motivation relate to specific competencies enhances their engagement and accountability, contributing to a more empowered civil service.

Furthermore, the study contributes valuable knowledge for policymakers, particularly by providing evidence-based insights drawn from specific local contexts. These findings can guide the development and refinement of policies aimed at strengthening institutional capacity through targeted competency development.

Academics and other stakeholders will also benefit from the study's outcomes, as they offer a foundation for designing more effective competency frameworks that align with the goals of efficient, responsive, and high-performing public service institutions.

Literature review

Definitions and concepts

The term "civil service" commonly refers to the core, permanent administrative structure of government, comprising officials working in ministries, departments, and agencies. Civil service reform is typically pursued as part of broader government decentralisation efforts, aimed not at reform for its own sake, but to improve service delivery, enhance resource management, and achieve broader developmental goals. As one of the government's key instruments for fulfilling its responsibilities, the civil service must

¹⁴ BENAYOUNE 2017.

adapt to a decentralised environment in order to remain effective, equitable, and efficient. Reform, therefore, involves restructuring rules and incentives to build a more capable, committed, and performance-driven public workforce.

Management, though defined variously by scholars, is broadly understood as the collective set of activities that determine objectives, formulate plans and policies, mobilise and allocate resources, organise operations, lead and motivate personnel, supervise performance, and strive to ensure prosperity for both employees and the public.

Competency refers to the observable and measurable combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and personal attributes that enhance employee performance and support organisational success.¹⁵ Competency management has become increasingly important in both public and private sectors. It supports key human resource functions such as talent acquisition, development, succession planning, training needs assessment, and performance management.¹⁶

Integrating competencies across all HR processes – recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and workforce planning – adds precision and coherence to talent management. This integration enables organisations to align workforce capabilities with strategic goals, creating a unified and effective talent management system.

Conceptual framework

The Lithuanian Civil Service Competency Model (CSCM) is structured into three core groups of competencies:¹⁷ General competencies – essential for all civil servants, regardless of field or position; Managerial and leadership competencies – required for department heads and their deputies, focusing on institutional management and leadership responsibilities; and Specific and professional competencies – role-specific skills determined by the nature of both general and specialised functions.

According to Civil Service Human Resources (2017), the Civil Service Competency Framework supports both the Civil Service Reform Plan and the performance management system. It outlines the values and behaviours expected from civil servants – placing honesty, integrity, impartiality, and objectivity at the core of civil service practice. Despite the diversity of roles within the civil service, the framework provides a unified approach to professional conduct and performance. The framework groups competencies into three behavioural clusters: setting direction, engaging people and delivering results.

Each competency includes practical definitions along with examples of effective and ineffective behaviours at various levels. While not exhaustive, these behavioural indicators offer a consistent guide to expectations across roles.

¹⁵ ROBERTS–HARDER–LINDNER 2022.

¹⁶ DRAGANIDIS–MENTZAS 2006.

¹⁷ POBRIC 2021.

This study uses a competency model developed on the basis of several established frameworks, including: The UK Civil Service Competency Framework;¹⁸ Civil Service Competency Framework 2012–2017: Senior Civil Service (SMS 1 / Level 6); The Lithuanian CSCM;¹⁹ and The Competency Model by Rekašienė and Sudnickas (2014).

The adapted model for this study organises competencies into three independent clusters – Strategic, People, and Performance – which collectively comprise ten key management competencies, as illustrated in Figure 1.

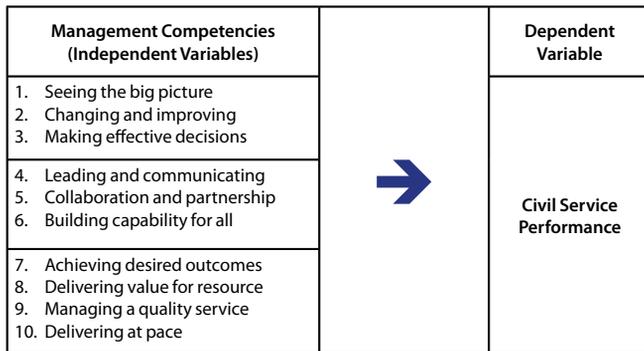


Figure 1: Ten key management competencies

Source: compiled by the author based on Civil Service Human Resources 2017; Civil Service Competency Framework 2012–2017: Senior Civil Service (SMS 1 / Level 6) by Grade – SMS 1, (UK, 2012); POBRIC 2021; REKAŠIENĖ–SUDNICKAS 2014

Study methodology

Calculation of the study population and sample size

Managements, experts and employees of each city administration were the total population of the two study areas. These administrations were taken in considering the similarities of their level of services, characteristics and functions in providing services to the citizens. These similarities help to compare the performance of the civil service of the two study areas. Study population constitutes managers, experts and employees of the two study areas of which the respondents were selected randomly. Many statistical books discuss methods for estimating sample size. There are several software programmes available to help with sample size calculation. The sample of this study is calculated by using the Taro Yamane formula²⁰ with 95% confidence level. Since the study focuses on two study areas, the sample size of each population is calculated

¹⁸ Civil Service Human Resources 2017.

¹⁹ POBRIC 2021.

²⁰ YAMANE 1967.

proportionally. Accordingly, Addis Ababa City Administration has a population of 2,900 from which 355 respondents were taken as a sample. Adama City Administration has a population of 2,480 from which 340 respondents were taken as a sample. The samples were taken randomly from each city administration. Totally, 695 respondents were selected from the two study areas.

Study design

The research design is intended to provide an appropriate framework for the study. A very significant decision in research design process is the choice to be made regarding the research approach since it determines how relevant information for a study will be. The choice of appropriate design largely relies on the type of the research questions that the study intends to deal with. It is also a procedural plan, structure and strategy of investigation; so it is concerned to obtain answers to the basic research questions.²¹ Since the study deals with the assessments of factors influencing current good governance, it uses a descriptive research approach. As Kothari (2004) articulates, the major purpose of descriptive research is a description of the state of affairs as it exists at present.

Mixed research design is the most appropriate for this study. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected, both has their own distinctive character and philosophical foundation that make them suitable for the study. The quantitative research approach involves generating data in quantitative form which can be subjected to formal, rigorous quantitative analysis. It is specific, well-structured, and is tested for their validity and reliability. On the other hand, qualitative data will be collected. Qualitative data collection is exploratory; it involves in-depth analysis. Its collection methods mainly focus on gaining insights, reasoning, and motivations; hence, they go deeper in research.

Data collection tools

Data collection tools (questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions) were used to gather the required data. For the quantitative data, a well-structured questionnaire was used with close-ended, numerical questions, and open-ended non-numerical questions to gather the data from the respondents. The primary data were collected mainly from first hand sources through these data collection instruments. The close-ended quantitative method was organised using the Likert five-scale format considered on a 1–5 points scale, where ‘1’ represents the lowest level of agreement or high disagreement, whereas ‘5’ represents the highest level of agreement or high agreement. The points of the scale indicate the degree of agreement level of the respondents.

²¹ KUMAR 2011.

For the qualitative data, semi-structured questionnaire was used to gather the data through interviews from top level managements of the institutions; and through focus group discussions from a mixture of customers, employees, experts and middle level managements of the institutions. The secondary data were collected from the offices' quarterly and yearly performance reports; and research findings of various scholars on the topic under investigation. The importance of collecting and considering quantitative and qualitative, as well as primary and secondary data, was to triangulate and supplement the diverse data from different sources, which in turn was used to ensure the reliability of the research findings.

Data analysis method

After the completion of the data collection process, data screening, coding, entering and analysing were made to check the consistency and validity of the collected data with different tools. Both quantitative and qualitative data were used for the analysis. The quantitative data were analysed through both descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS software version 25 (Statistical Package for Social Science). Descriptive statistics (frequency distribution, percentile, minimum, maximum, mean and standard deviation) were used to examine the general level of the determinant factors.

The aggregate mean value of the responses on all the determinant factors that describes above the cut-off point of 2.5 is acceptable. According to Sugath Yalgama, Nicholas Chileshe and Tony M (2016), the result below 2.49 shows disagreement or unacceptable, in between 2.50 and 3.34 shows average agreement which is acceptable, and the result in between 3.35 and 5.00 shows high agreement which is more acceptable to the level of performance of civil service of the institution. Table 1 describes the level of agreement in civil service performance.

Table 1: Standard levels of decisions

Low (Disagreement)	Average (Agreement)	High (More agreement)
< 2.49	2.50 – 3.34	3.35 – 5.00
< 49.9%	50% – 66.9%	≤ 67%

Source: compiled by the author based on YALEGAMA–CHILESHE–MA 2016

Inferential statistics (reliability test, correlation coefficient test, and regression analysis) is also used to consider the consistency, relationships and the extent of the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Qualitative data are also used for triangulation and discussion analysis, basically to identify the major problems that institutions face in terms of civil service performance when practicing management competencies.

Ethical considerations

All the participants (data collectors and respondents) were briefed on the purpose and benefit of the study. The consent was obtained orally in advance from each participant. At the same time, the data collectors told the respondents the ethical prerequisites of the questionnaire and discussions; the aim of the questionnaire, and where and how the researcher is going to present the results. The data collectors clearly stated that they place great emphasis on complying with the rules regarding the respondents' anonymity. Respondents were assured that any information concerning them would never be used by any individual or institution in any way identifying their personal identity. After explaining the ethical issues and getting an informed consent from the respondents, the data collectors collected the data.

Results and discussions

Background information of the respondents

The background information of the respondents is important in giving professional responses to each question. The information includes sex, age and educational qualification of the respondents. Positions and service years in the institution were also identified. As can be seen in Table 2, 47.8% of the respondents from Addis Ababa were female, and 52.2% male, while 36.5% were female and 63.5% male from the Adama City Administration. In both areas, the data indicates that most of the respondents were male. According to sex analysis, the gap is relatively high in the sample size of the respondents of the Adama City Administration.

Table 2: Gender, age and educational level of the respondents

Items	Options	Addis Ababa City Administration		Adama City Administration	
		Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)	Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)
Sex	Female	133	47.8	103	36.5
	Male	145	52.2	179	63.5
	Total	278	100	282	100
Age (in year)	18–22	5	1.8	19	6.7
	23–28	82	29.5	121	42.9
	29–32	93	33.5	55	19.5
	> 32	98	35.3	87	30.9
	Total	278	100	282	100

Items	Options	Addis Ababa City Administration		Adama City Administration	
		Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)	Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)
Education level	< Diploma	11	4	14	5
	Diploma	25	9	113	40.1
	1 st Degree	156	56.1	78	27.7
	2 nd Degree	80	28.8	79	24.8
	PhD Degree	6	2.2	7	2.5
	Total	278	100	282	100

Source: compiled by the author

The information gathered on the age of respondents showed that in Addis Ababa City Administration, 35.3% of the employees are aged above 32 years, while in Adama City Administration it is 30.9%. This shows that most employees belong to the younger generation, who need capacity building in order to serve citizens. On the other hand, the gathered information on educational levels shows that in both areas, most of the respondents have educational level of above diploma, and most of them were first degree holders. This shows that the respondents have the right qualification in giving the right responses.

Table 3: Position and work experience of the respondents

Items	Options	Addis Ababa City Administration		Adama City Administration	
		Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)	Frequency (persons)	Percent (%)
Position in the institution	Employee	65	23.4	39	13.8
	Expert	65	44.6	168	59.6
	Beginner manager	44	15.8	49	17.4
	Middle level manager	41	14.7	25	8.9
	Top level manager	4	1.4	1	.4
	Total	278	100	282	100
Work experience in the institution in years	< 2 years	21	7.6	26	9.2
	2–5 years	78	28.1	120	42.6
	5–10 years	124	44.6	67	23.8
	> 10 years	65	19.8	69	24.5
	Total	278	100.0	282	100.0

Source: compiled by the author

Table 3 describes that most of the respondents have a position of expert and above in case of the two study areas. This shows that the respondents are able to provide reliable

data on the management competencies of their institutions. Information regarding the length of employment at the institution showed that the majority of the respondents have been working there for more than two years. This also shows that the respondents have the right qualification in giving the right responses.

The overall responses of the respondents

In this section, we presented in detail the assessment of the manager's competencies from the citizens' perspective. The perception of the respondents in the assessment process was used as an instrument for identifying the factors determining the differences in civil service performance between the two areas examined.

The comparison of respondents' responses of the two study areas

Table 4: Comparison of the overall mean values of the responses

Determinant variables	Addis Ababa City Administration	Adama City Administration
Seeing the big picture	2.9487	2.5213
Changing and improving	3.1160	2.8041
Making effective decisions	3.2365	2.7837
Leading and communicating	3.1538	3.0665
Collaboration and partnership	3.3543	3.1170
Building capacity for all	3.2896	3.1534
Achieving desired outcomes	3.2131	3.0044
Delivering value for business	3.2293	2.9938
Managing quality services	3.1493	2.9832
Delivering at pace	3.1178	2.9574
Average mean value	3.1808	2.9385

Source: compiled by the author

As can be observed from Table 4, the mean value of all the responses of the items of the determinant factors of Addis Ababa City Administration shows 3.1808, while 2.9385 for Adama City Administration. Figure 2 also shows the differences among the determinant factors of the two City Administrations. The results describe that, on average, the determinant factors contribute to the average level of performance in management competencies of the institutions. Thus, relatively, the city administration of Addis Ababa performs better in terms of factors determining management competencies than the city administration in Adama.

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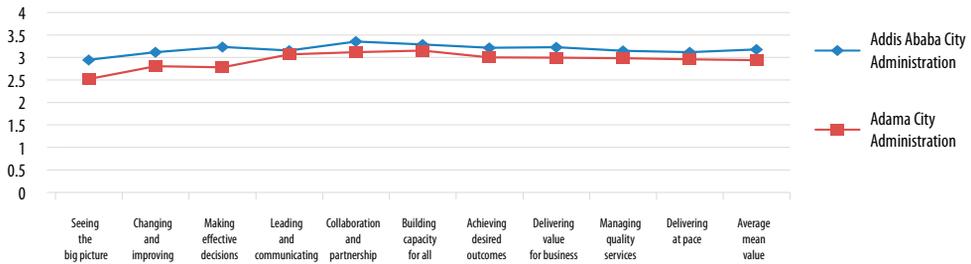


Figure 2: Comparison of the mean values

Source: compiled by the author

Reliability test

Table 5 describes the reliability of the construct items that are evaluated using Cronbach's coefficient alpha. The average result of the reliability test of the variables is 0.8317 for Addis Ababa City Administration and 0.8103 for Adama City Administration which exceeds the minimum acceptable cut-off point in both study areas. Since the value of Cronbach's alphas for the two study areas are above 0.70 for all scale variables, the data collected from respondents was reliable and consistent with the scale. In simple terms, the result is confirmed by the reliability and consistency of the questionnaire. Therefore, the data gathered in terms of the items of the determinant factors can be used for regression analysis.

Table 5: Reliability analysis of the determinant factors

Determinant variables	No. of items	Cronbach's alpha	
		Addis Ababa City Administration	Adama City Administration
Seeing the big picture	4	.860	.862
Changing and improving	4	.796	.783
Making effective decisions	4	.821	.730
Leading and communicating	4	.886	.867
Collaboration and partnership	4	.837	.828
Building capacity for all	4	.815	.797
Achieving desired outcomes	4	.803	.690
Delivering value for business	4	.820	.809
Managing quality services	4	.831	.880
Delivering at pace	4	.850	.830
Civil service performance	3	.830	.837
Average mean value		.8317	.8103

Source: compiled by the author

The relationships between and among the variables of the two study areas

The main purpose of the Pearson correlation analysis was to determine the degree of correlation between the determinant variables and the dependent variable. Therefore, in this section, the associations are tested based on the Pearson correlation results which are summarised in Table 6. Table 6 describes the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable; and among the independent variables. The result shows that the existing practices of the determinant factors have different association levels which describe moderate, substantial and very substantial association between and among the variables. All show positive correlations and are statistically significant at the 0.01 level. This implies that an increase in determinant variables will bring an increment in management competencies.

Table 6: Pearson correlation between independent variables and the dependent variable of Addis Ababa City Administration

Correlations											
	SBP	CAI	MED	LAC	CAP	BCA	ADO	DVB	MQS	DAP	CSP
Seeing the big picture	1	.692**	.619**	.616**	.477**	.461**	.471**	.515**	.567**	.768**	.713**
Changing and improving	.692**	1	.631**	.553**	.491**	.480**	.389**	.486**	.540**	.586**	.658**
Making effective decisions	.619**	.631**	1	.696**	.545**	.575**	.545**	.575**	.587**	.637**	.617**
Leading and communicating	.616**	.553**	.696**	1	.591**	.534**	.529**	.618**	.574**	.635**	.614**
Collaboration and partnership	.477**	.491**	.545**	.591**	1	.549**	.478**	.564**	.484**	.524**	.515**
Building capacity for all	.461**	.480**	.575**	.534**	.549**	1	.611**	.655**	.536**	.555**	.506**
Achieving desired outcomes	.471**	.389**	.545**	.529**	.478**	.611**	1	.766**	.629**	.616**	.587**
Delivering value for business	.515**	.486**	.575**	.618**	.564**	.655**	.766**	1	.717**	.638**	.639**
Managing quality services	.567**	.540**	.587**	.574**	.484**	.536**	.629**	.717**	1	.695**	.679**
Delivering at pace	.768**	.586**	.637**	.635**	.524**	.555**	.616**	.638**	.695**	1	.788**
Civil service performance	.713**	.658**	.617**	.614**	.515**	.506**	.587**	.639**	.679**	.788**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: compiled by the author

Table 7 describes the correlation between the independent variables and the dependent variable; and among the independent variables. The result shows that the existing practices of the determinant factors have different association levels which describe low, moderate and substantial association between and among the variables. But all have positive relationships and statistically significant at 0.01 level. This implies that an increase in determinant variables will bring an increment in management competencies.

Table 7: Pearson correlation analysis between independent variables and the dependent variable of Adama City Administration

Correlations											
Determinant variables	SBP	CAI	MED	LAC	CAP	BCA	ADO	DVB	MQS	DAP	CSP
Seeing the big picture	1	.583**	.569**	.406**	.303**	.268**	.391**	.404**	.428**	.405**	.338**
Changing and improving	.583**	1	.686**	.430**	.415**	.337**	.356**	.341**	.306**	.265**	.257**
Making effective decisions	.569**	.686**	1	.513**	.408**	.376**	.367**	.349**	.344**	.314**	.296**
Leading and communicating	.406**	.430**	.513**	1	.494**	.479**	.496**	.526**	.515**	.501**	.420**
Collaboration and partnership	.303**	.415**	.408**	.494**	1	.584**	.462**	.468**	.432**	.353**	.380**
Building capacity for all	.268**	.337**	.376**	.479**	.584**	1	.583**	.484**	.390**	.367**	.412**
Achieving desired outcomes	.391**	.356**	.367**	.496**	.462**	.583**	1	.649**	.467**	.446**	.465**
Delivering value for business	.404**	.341**	.349**	.526**	.468**	.484**	.649**	1	.665**	.645**	.514**
Managing quality services	.428**	.306**	.344**	.515**	.432**	.390**	.467**	.665**	1	.880**	.784**
Delivering at pace	.405**	.265**	.314**	.501**	.353**	.367**	.446**	.645**	.880**	1	.730**
Civil service performance	.338**	.257**	.296**	.420**	.380**	.412**	.465**	.514**	.784**	.730**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: compiled by the author

The Pearson correlation coefficient between independent variables and dependent variable of the two study areas describes different association. In case of Addis Ababa City Administration, all the determinant factors have moderate and above association. In case of Adama city Administration, the determinant factors have low, moderate, substantial and very substantial association with the dependent variable. This shows that the relative association of the independent variables with the dependent variables of Addis Ababa City Administration has better association than Adama City Administration.

The extent of the impact of individual general determining factors on management competencies

Regression analysis is a systematic method that is used to investigate the effect of one or more independent variables on a dependent variable. It is a reliable method of identifying which variables have impact on the dependent variable. The process of performing a regression allows to confidently determine which factors matter most, which factors can be ignored, and how these factors influence each other. Thus, this multiple regression is used in order to investigate the effect of each and overall bundle of determinant factors on the dependent variable.

Coefficient of determination

The coefficient of determination (denoted by adjusted R^2) is a key output of regression analysis. It is interpreted as the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable that is predictable from the independent variables. The coefficient of determination is the square of the correlation (r) between predicted variable and actual variable; thus, it ranges from 0 to 1. An R^2 between 0 and 1 indicates the extent to which the dependent variable is predictable. The Durbin–Watson statistic will always have a value between 0 and 4. A value of 2.0 indicates that there is no autocorrelation detected in the sample. Values from 0 to less than 2 indicate positive autocorrelation and values from 2 to 4 indicate negative autocorrelation.

As shown in Table 8, the overall bundle of determinant factors of Addis Ababa City Administration explains 70.2% ($R^2 = 0.702$) of the dependent variable. This implies that 70.2% of civil service performance in the institution clearly depends on the independent variables while the remaining 29.8% is determined by other unaccounted factors. This value indicates that there is 70.2% variation in dependent variable due to a one unit change in independent variables. The result of the Durbin–Watson value is 1.939 that is significant and approximate to 2. The F value is 66.266 at 0.000 significant level which shows that the model is good as its value is less than 0.05. The result $F = 66.266$ which is greater than 1, and $P < 0.01$ indicates that the combination of determinant factors have positive effect on civil service performance which is statistically significant and confident at 99%.

Table 8 also shows the overall bundle of determinant factors of Adama City Administration. As shown in the table, the overall bundle of determinant factors of Adama City Administration explains 63.5% ($R^2 = 0.635$) of the dependent variable. This implies that 63.5% of civil service performance in the institution clearly depends on the independent variables, while the remaining 36.5 % is determined by other unaccounted factors. This value indicates that there is almost 63.5% variation in dependent variable due to a one unit change in independent variables. The result of the Durbin–Watson value is 1.691 that is significant and approximate to 2. The F value is 49.922 at 0.000 significant level, which shows that the model is good as its value is less than 0.05. The result $F = 49.922$ which is greater than 1 and $P < 0.01$ indicates that the combination of determinant factors has positive effect on the dependent variable which is statistically significant and confident at 99%. The comparative analysis describes that the two study areas have almost similar characteristics in factors determining the civil service performance of their institutions.

Table 8: Comparison of model summary of the two study areas

Model summary								
City Administrations	Adjusted R square	Std. error of the estimate	Change statistics					Durbin-Watson
			R square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change	
Adama	.635	.45720	.648	49.922	10	271	.000	1.691
Addis Ababa	.702	.47239	.713	66.266	10	267	.000	1.939
a) Predictors: (Constant), DAP, CAI, BCA, LAC, SBP, CAP, ADO, MED, DVB, MQS								
b) Dependent variable: CSP								

Source: compiled by the author

Regression analysis

Table 9 shows the relative contribution of each independent variable by taking the beta value under the unstandardised coefficients. The higher the beta value, the strongest its contribution to the dependent variable.

Table 9: Multiple regression coefficient of Addis Ababa City Administration

Coefficients					
Determinant factors	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
(Constant)	.188	.162		1.165	.245
Seeing the big picture	.111	.059	.111	1.875	.062
Changing and improving	.258	.060	.215	4.277	.000
Making effective decisions	.004	.061	.003	.059	.953
Leading and communicating	.035	.054	.034	.642	.521
Collaboration and partnership	.023	.051	.020	.458	.647
Building capacity for all	.080	.055	-.069	1.448	.149
Achieving desired outcomes	.086	.062	.075	1.372	.171
Delivering value for business	.105	.068	.097	1.557	.121
Managing quality services	.130	.059	.118	2.194	.029
Delivering at pace	.395	.063	.391	6.295	.000
a) Dependent variable: Civil service performance					

Source: compiled by the author

Accordingly, delivering at pace (Beta = 0.395) makes the strongest contribution in explaining the dependent variable in which the result reveals that a one unit increase in delivering at pace would lead to a 0.395 unit increase in the level of civil service

performance, followed by changing and improving ($B = 0.258$) and managing quality services ($B = 0.130$) where both determinant factors have a statistically significant contribution ($\text{Sig.} < 0.05$) for the prediction of the dependent variable. On the other hand, all the seven independent variables have positive contributions but they do not have statistically insignificant contribution for the prediction of the dependent variable.

The equation of multiple regressions is built on the dependent variable and independent variables. The objective of using regression equation is to describe and predict the given variables more effectively based on their contribution to the dependent variable. The result of the regression model is shown below.

$$CSP = 0.118 + 0.111SBP + 0.258CAI + 0.004MED + 0.035LAC + 0.023CAP + 0.080BCA + 0.086ADO + 0.105DVP + 0.130MQS + 0.395DAP$$

These coefficients indicate the amount of change in the dependent variable due to changes in independent variables. All independent variables have positive contribution to the civil service performance. Although the contributions of each independent variable are different, most of the contributions of independent variables are insignificant at 95% confidence level.

Table 10 shows the relative contribution of each independent variable by taking the beta value under the unstandardised coefficients. The higher the beta value, the stronger its contribution to the dependent variable.

Table 10: Multiple regression coefficient of Adama City Administration

Coefficients					
Determinant factors	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. error	Beta		
(Constant)	.820	.149		5.496	.000
Seeing the big picture	.022	.042	.026	.526	.599
Changing and improving	.003	.049	-.003	-.051	.959
Making effective decisions	.015	.052	.016	.286	.775
Leading and communicating	.042	.047	.045	.897	.370
Collaboration and partnership	.007	.046	.007	.145	.884
Building capacity for all	.098	.049	.101	2.005	.046
Achieving desired outcomes	.151	.055	.146	2.765	.006
Delivering value for business	.140	.054	.148	2.572	.011
Managing quality services	.547	.070	.630	7.781	.000
Delivering at pace	.187	.075	.194	2.481	.014

a) Dependent variable: Civil service performance

Source: compiled by the author

Accordingly, building capacity for all (Beta = 0.098), achieving desired outcome (Beta = 0.151), delivering values for business (Beta = 0.140), managing quality services (Beta = 0.547), and delivering at pace (Beta = 0.187). When we consider quality management services, they contribute most to explaining civil service performance, with a one-unit increase in managing quality services leading to a 0.547-unit increase in the level of the dependent variable. All these five determinant variables have a statistically significant contribution (Sig. < 0.05) for the prediction of the dependent variable. On the other hand, all the other five determinant factors have insignificant contribution to the dependent variable. All the independent variables have positive contributions to the dependent variables, but they do have different contributions at 95% confidence level.

The equation of multiple regressions is built on the dependent variable and independent variables. The result of the estimated regression model is also shown below.

$$CSP = 0.820 + 0.022SBP + 0.003CAI + 0.015MED + 0.042LAC + 0.007CAP + 0.098BCA + 0.151ADO + 0.140DVP + 0.547MQS + 0.187DAP$$

These coefficients indicate the amount of change in the dependent variable due to changes in independent variables. All independent variables have positive contribution to the civil service performance. But, relation with all independent variables, except making quality services, show insignificant contribution in determining the civil service performance.

Comparative analysis of regression analysis of the two study areas

The comparative analyses of the two study areas show that all determinant factors of the two study areas describe positive contributions in predicting the dependent variable. Though the contribution of the determinant factors of the Addis Ababa City Administration has a greater influence on the dependent variable than that of the Adama City Administration, the two institutions have almost similar characteristics in terms of the factors determining their civil service performance.

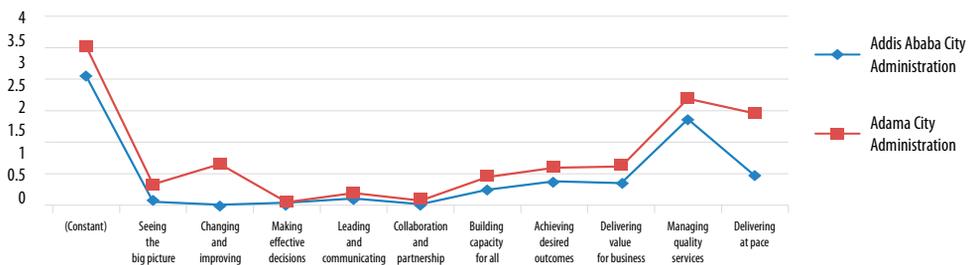


Figure 3: Comparison of the Beta values

Source: compiled by the author

Conclusions and recommendations

The findings indicate that the determinant factors influencing civil service performance have a moderate level of predictive power in both study areas. The average mean values from respondents suggest a generally acceptable perception of these factors in contributing to institutional performance. The coefficient of determination reveals that both Addis Ababa and Adama city administrations share similar characteristics regarding the variables affecting civil service performance. Furthermore, Pearson correlation results confirm statistically significant and positive relationships among the variables in both areas.

Although both administrations demonstrate moderate success in implementing these determinants, Addis Ababa shows slightly stronger contributions from individual factors, suggesting a performance gap between the two. While all identified factors positively influence civil service performance, their impact varies, and some factors are statistically less significant. Notably, “managing quality service” and “delivering at pace” emerged as significant predictors in both cities. Qualitative insights from interviews and focus group discussions further support these findings while also identifying areas of strength and limitation.

Despite overall progress, several challenges remain in the implementation of effective civil service performance strategies. Key limitations include: the absence of long-term strategic planning; bureaucratic resistance to change; limited support for employee innovation and improvement; minimal stakeholder and partner involvement in decision-making; weak recognition of the strategic value of competent personnel; gaps in talent management and development; lack of emphasis on continuous learning and self-assessment; inefficient resource utilisation relative to strategic goals; inadequate customer service management; and underuse of modern technology.

These challenges suggest a need for targeted interventions. Institutions should consolidate and build upon successful implementation practices while addressing these limitations through focused reforms. By doing so, civil service institutions can enhance their overall performance and meet the demands of a dynamic public service environment more effectively.

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