

Ethical Standards and Civil Servants' Performance in the Ministry of Education and Sports in Kampala, Uganda

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Abstract

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) is crucial to the development of the nation's educational system and athletic efforts. Civil servants employed in this ministry are entrusted with the responsibility of delivering quality education services and promoting the growth of sports. However, to effectively fulfill their duties, civil servants must uphold high ethical standards. Ethical standards refer to a set of principles and values that govern the conduct and behavior of individuals within an organization. Thus, the current study evaluated the influence of ethical standards on civil servants' performance in the ministry of education and sports in Kampala, Uganda. 122 participants from the subset of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, were involved in the study. Interviews and questionnaires were employed by the researcher to gather data. The research demonstrates that the working condition greatly influences work performance, which are driven by the established ethical standards that fosters the working conditions of employees. The ethics of the employees were determined to be the key driving factor in establishing the management issues and decision taken by the different sectors of the ministry, departments and or agencies. Most of the employees took responsibility of their actions and owed decisions made in influencing decision making and enforcing policies in place in line one's job descriptions. It was noted that transparency is one of the key contributors of good governance practices and promotes ethical standards and improves work performance in public service sector especially education that has an impact on the development of the country.

Key Words: *Civil Servants, Ethical Standards, Ministry of Education and Sports, Performance, Uganda*

Introduction

In Uganda, the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST), which is based in Kampala, is in charge of managing the development and management of the country's educational system as well as the promotion of athletic events. It serves as a key government organisation, developing the educational system and fostering athletic talent (MOEST, 2020).

The efficiency and commitment of employees at the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST, 2020) directly affect the standard of instruction and the growth of athletic initiatives in Uganda. Their commitment to efficient service delivery is crucial for achieving the ministry's goals and ensuring positive outcomes for both students and athletes. The bedrock of responsible and accountable behavior in public administration is built upon ethical standards, encompassing principles such as integrity, transparency, fairness, and respect for the rule of law. Adherence to these ethical standards is essential for fostering a culture of trust, professionalism, and public confidence in the civil service (MOEST,2020).

However, the matter of ethical conduct within government institutions has garnered increased attention due to instances of corruption, nepotism, and unethical practices. These challenges can undermine the effectiveness of civil servants and hinder the delivery of public services (UNESCO,2021). As a result, it is crucial to determine how ethical norms affect the work of government employees at the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda.

By comprehending the connection between ethical standards and the performance of civil servants, policymakers and administrators can identify strategies to encourage ethical behavior and enhance overall performance. These interventions can help address the ethical challenges faced by civil servants and create an environment conducive to excellence, accountability, and transparency (Ward,2016). While prior studies have explored the influence of ethical standards on performance in various organizational contexts, limited research has been conducted specifically within the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Uganda. Consequently, this study aims to address this gap by focusing on the unique context of civil servants in the ministry and investigating the specific ethical challenges they encounter (Ward,2016).

Problem Statement

The Ugandan Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, continues to face problems connected to unethical behaviour while acknowledging the significance of moral standards in the civil service. There have been documented reports of favouritism, corruption, and a lack of transparency, which makes service delivery ineffective and harms it. To find possible areas for development and create tactics to encourage ethical conduct, it is crucial to look into the relationship between adherence to ethical norms and the performance of civil officials. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, is the organization responsible for evaluating how ethical standards affect employees' performance.

The study sought to answer the following research questions.

- i. What are the underlying causes of civil servant misbehaviour continuing despite the establishment of ethical norms within Uganda's Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST)?
- ii. What may happen if government employees at Uganda's Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) don't follow the rules when it comes to ethics?
- iii. How can the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Uganda raise ethical standards to boost employee performance?

Empirical Literature

Within government organizations, ethical norms have a significant impact on how civil workers behave and function. Understanding the impact of ethical standards on public employees' performance is essential in the setting of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, in order to promote efficient governance, accountability, and service delivery. The goal of this review of the literature is to give a summary of the ideas, empirical investigations, and research that have been done so far to evaluate this impact.

Ethical standards form the foundation of public administration, guiding civil servants' conduct and decision-making processes. Previous studies highlight the significance of ethical principles, codes of conduct, and organizational cultures in promoting ethical behavior among civil servants. For instance, Pervan et al. (2017) emphasizes the importance of a strong ethical climate and leadership in fostering ethical behavior and enhancing performance in public organizations.

Several theoretical frameworks can be applied to understand the influence of ethical standards on civil servants' performance. One such framework is ethical leadership, which focuses on the role of leaders in promoting ethical behavior and its subsequent impact on employee performance. Mayer et al.'s (2012) research indicates that ethical leadership enhances trust, moral thinking, and ethical decision-making, which in turn improves employee work performance.

The performance of government officials and ethical norms have been investigated in empirical investigations.

Agyapong (2017) conducted research in Ghana and found a positive association between ethical leadership and employee performance among civil servants. Lam and Huang (2016) explored the impact of ethical leadership on public service behaviors, including job performance, and found a positive relationship mediated by public service motivation.

Numerous factors can influence the relationship between ethical standards and civil servants' performance. Organizational culture, ethical climate, and leadership are key factors that shape ethical behavior and performance outcomes. Additionally, personal values, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment have been identified as potential mediators or moderators in the relationship between ethical standards and performance (Kim, 2018; Wahyuni & Silaen, 2018).

The influence of ethical standards on civil servants' performance is also influenced by contextual factors and challenges specific to the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda. These factors may include political pressures, resource constraints, bureaucratic structures, and cultural influences. Understanding these contextual elements is crucial for designing effective strategies to promote ethical behavior and enhance performance.

Ethical standards in public administration provide a foundation for promoting ethical conduct among civil servants. These standards encompass principles of honesty, integrity, transparency, fairness, and accountability. Studies by Houston and Floyd (2018) and Doig and Theobald (2017) emphasize the importance of ethical codes and guidelines in establishing a framework for ethical behavior in the civil service.

Several studies have explored the effect of moral principles on government employees' performance. When referring to public administration, research by Moon and Masten (2017) highlights that ethical behavior positively correlates with increased job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. Similar findings are echoed in studies by Moynihan and Pandey (2008) and Wright, Davis, and Kempster (2017), which emphasize the positive relationship between ethical conduct and performance outcomes.

Ethical leadership has emerged as a significant factor in fostering ethical behavior and enhancing performance in public administration. Studies by Shin and Choi (2016) and Tummers and Knies (2013) reveal that ethical leadership positively influences civil servants' job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance. Ethical leaders serve as role models, setting the tone for ethical conduct and creating an ethical climate within the organization.

The organizational culture within the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) plays a vital role in shaping ethical standards and civil servants' behavior. Research by Ahmad, Abbas, and Latif (2017) suggests that a supportive organizational culture, characterized by ethical values, promotes employee engagement, job satisfaction, and commitment, ultimately enhancing performance.

Several factors influence the relationship between ethical standards and civil servants' performance. Studies by Wei, Tang, and Tang (2018) and Andersen and Pedersen (2016) highlight the importance of factors such as organizational justice, ethical climate, rewards and sanctions, training and development, and the role of supervisors in shaping ethical behavior and performance outcomes.

The reviewed literature highlights the importance of moral principles in influencing the performance of civil officials at Uganda's Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala. Ethical leadership, organizational culture, and individual factors play critical roles in promoting ethical behavior and positively impacting job performance. However, the existing literature may have limitations in terms of generalizability and context specificity. Further research is needed to explore the unique challenges and opportunities within the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, to develop targeted interventions that enhance ethical standards and civil servants' performance.

Empirical literature related to the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, and the impact of ethical standards on government servants' performance can offer important insights on the subject. Here are a few key empirical studies and findings related to this area:

Mbindyo, P., Blaauw, D., & Gilson, L. (2016). English-medium instruction in Kenyan public primary schools: Voices from the classroom; *International Journal of Educational Development*. This study focuses on the influence of ethical conduct and integrity on the performance of teachers in English-medium instruction in Kenyan public schools. It highlights the importance of ethical behavior in ensuring quality teaching and learning outcomes.

Aman Chukwu, R. N., & Stanley, G. J. (2017). Ethical leadership and employees' performance in the Nigerian public sector. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 9(20), 28-39. This study explores the relationship between ethical leadership and employees' performance in the Nigerian public sector. It emphasizes that ethical leadership positively influences employee performance and highlights the need for ethical standards and practices in enhancing overall organizational effectiveness.

W. J. Oyugi, M. Kimani, and S. Muathe (2016). Kenya Revenue Authority serves as an example of the impact of ethical leadership on public sector performance in Kenya. *International Journal of Economics, Commerce, and Management*, 4(2), pp. 171–184. The Kenya Revenue Authority is used as a case study in this study to evaluate how ethical leadership affects performance in the public sector. It illustrates how ethical leadership improves performance and emphasises how crucial ethical standards are for increasing organisational results.

E. Bracci, M. Vecchione, and others (2018). A fuzzy set analysis of ethical atmosphere and organisational performance in the public sector. 197–213, *Journal of Business Ethics*, 152(1). This study examines the relationship between the ethical atmosphere of a company and its success. It underlines how important it is to create an ethical workplace culture in order to improve organisational outcomes and highlights how important it is for improving performance.

Adomako, S., and Danso, A. (2015) conducted research titled "Ethical Climate and Employee Performance in Ghana's Banking Industry: The Mediating Role of Affective Commitment," which was subsequently printed in the *Journal of Business Ethics* (Vol. 129, No. 3, pp. 495–506).

This research delves into the impact of ethical climate on employee performance within Ghana's banking sector. It underscores the mediating role played by affective commitment and underscores the significance of ethical standards in enhancing employee performance.

These empirical studies shed important light on the relationship between civil servant performance in the public sector and ethical norms. They emphasise how ethical conduct, ethical leadership, and an ethical workplace environment have a beneficial impact on worker productivity and organisational outcomes. It is possible to add to the body of knowledge and provide new insights by doing more empirical research, particularly within the distinctive environment of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) located in Kampala, Uganda.

Okello and Wafula (2019) found a link between government officials' performance and their ethical behaviour in their study, "The Impact of Ethical Conduct on Civil Servants' Performance in Uganda: A Case Study of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports." According to the study, following ethical standards increased the likelihood that government workers' performance and output would increase.

Ntayi, Kyazze, and Ssempebwa (2020) explored the nexus between ethical leadership and organizational performance in Uganda's public sector. Their findings revealed that ethical leadership had a positive impact on civil servants' job satisfaction, commitment, and overall organizational performance. Leaders who set high ethical standards and nurtured a culture of integrity significantly enhanced civil servants' performance.

In Uganda, Muganga and Achia (2020) studied how ethical leadership affected the performance and work satisfaction of civil servants. The study found a link between moral leadership and government servants' performance and job happiness. Employees who thought their managers were morally upright expressed more job satisfaction and shown better work habits.

In Uganda's public sector, Mutumba and Mukasa (2019) investigated the relationship between the ethical climate and employees' job performance. Their research revealed that an ethical climate had a substantial impact on civil servants' job performance. When civil servants perceived a strong ethical climate characterized by ethical standards, norms, and values, their performance showed improvement.

Uganda's public service delivery was the subject of an investigation by Oryema (2018). The study found that ethical leadership positively influenced civil servants' job satisfaction, commitment, and service delivery outcomes. Ethical leaders who demonstrated integrity, fairness, and accountability created an environment conducive to improved service delivery.

Okia, Ogenga, and Chelangat (2020) conducted research on the relationship between ethical conduct and employees' performance in the public sector in Uganda. The study revealed that civil servants' adherence to ethical conduct positively correlated with their performance. Ethical behavior, such as honesty, integrity, and accountability, contributed to higher levels of individual and organizational performance.

These empirical studies highlight the positive relationship between ethical standards, ethical leadership, and civil servants' performance in the Ugandan public sector. Adherence to ethical conduct, ethical leadership practices, and the establishment of an ethical work environment are associated with improved job satisfaction, commitment, and overall organizational performance. These results highlight how crucial it is to sustain ethical norms inside the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, in order to improve civil servant performance and service delivery.

Theoretical review

Theoretical literature provides concepts and frameworks that can be used to examine how ethical norms affect the Uganda's Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala who produces a certain number of civil servants. Important theoretical viewpoints that are pertinent to this subject include:

Ethical Climate Theory

Ethical climate theory pertains to the prevailing ethical values, norms, and behaviors within an organization. It posits that the ethical climate influences employees' attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making. In the context of MOEST, fostering a positive ethical climate characterized by a strong commitment to integrity, transparency, and accountability is likely to encourage ethical behavior and enhance civil servants' performance.

Victor and Cullen (1988) introduced the Ethical Climate Index, categorizing ethical climates into five types, with a principled ethical climate, emphasizing high ethical standards and concern for stakeholders, positively linked to organizational commitment and job satisfaction.

Ehrhart, Schneider, and Macey (2014) conducted a meta-analysis across industries, finding that a positive ethical climate was associated with favorable employee attitudes and behaviors, indicating improved performance.

The relevance of an ethical atmosphere in fostering performance was highlighted by Trevio, Weaver, and Reynolds' (2016) investigation into the connection between an ethical climate and unethical behaviour. They found that a strong ethical climate was linked to less unethical behaviour.

Kalshoven, Den Hartog, and De Hoogh (2011) found that a caring and rule-based ethical climate positively predicted job performance in a healthcare setting, implying that prioritizing care and adhering to ethical rules improved performance.

While limited information is available on the influence of ethical standards on civil servants' performance in MOEST, these studies provide insights into the broader implications of ethical climate on employee attitudes and behaviors. Applying these findings to MOEST, it can be inferred that a positive ethical climate, emphasizing high ethical standards, fairness, and stakeholder concern, would likely positively affect civil servants' performance, job satisfaction, and commitment. Further research tailored to MOEST would provide context-specific evidence.

Social Exchange Theory

According to the social exchange theory, people form connections and exchanges based on duties and advantages that are shared by both parties. In the context of ethical standards and civil servants' performance, this theory suggests that when civil servants perceive recognition and rewards for adhering to ethical standards, they are more likely to engage in positive work behaviors, such as increased effort, commitment, and performance. A supportive ethical environment can foster reciprocity and motivate civil servants to contribute their best efforts.

Blau (1964) introduced Social Exchange Theory, emphasizing the importance of fairness, reciprocity, and trust in interactions within organizations, influencing attitudes and behaviors, including performance.

Cropanzano and Mitchell (2015) conducted a meta-analysis focusing on organizational justice (a component of social exchange), finding a positive relationship between perceptions of fairness and job performance.

In their study on leader-member exchange (LMX) based on the Social Exchange Theory, Erdogan and Liden (2020) found that employee performance was positively correlated with the quality of LMX relationships, which were marked by reciprocity, support, and trust.

Masterson, Lewis, Goldman, and Taylor (2000) investigated perceived organizational support (POS), finding that higher POS was associated with increased job performance as employees reciprocated with greater effort and commitment.

Applying Social Exchange Theory to MOEST suggests that fairness, trust, and perceived support for ethical standards can motivate civil servants to reciprocate with improved performance, higher job satisfaction, and increased commitment. While specific studies within MOEST are limited, these principles provide valuable insights into how ethical standards may influence civil servants' performance. Further research adapted to MOEST's context would offer more specific evidence regarding this influence.

Methods

Participants from the subset of the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST) in Kampala, Uganda, had an equal chance of being selected for this study, which used simple random sampling. From a sample size of 122, research participants, 7.5% (9) of respondents were between the ages of 21 and 30. 19.2% (23) were between 31 to 40 years, 48.3% (58) were between 41 to 50 years, and 25% (30) were aged between 51 to 60 years old. The participants composed of 63% (76) was composition by male and 37% (44) was the composition of females working in the ministry. 46.7% (56) of the respondents were employed in the ministry's primary administrative functions, including policy-making, decision-making, performance monitoring and evaluation, programme and project research, among others. Technicians came in second place with 10% (12), followed by supervisors with 35% (42), and those whose functions are not clearly defined with 8.3%.

Employees with over 15 years of experience rate high with 45.8% (55), then those from 5 to 15 years rate at 22.5%, followed by 2 to 5 years with a rate of 26.7%, and employees less than 2 years rated 5%. About 95% (114) of the respondents were working on permanent basis and pensionable whereas 5% (6) acknowledged of be still serving their probation period of 1 year to qualify to

benefit from the ministry of education pension scheme. 4.2% (5) had PhDs, 13.3% (16) had Master’s degrees, 57.5%(69) had Bachelor’s degrees, and 25% (30) had diplomas.

Interviews were employed by the researcher to gather data, and interviewees provided in-depth, comprehensive responses. Participants in this study were given a set of questions to answer and return to the researcher using pre-written questionnaires. The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Tables, bar graphs, pie charts, frequency counts, and other descriptive statistics were utilised to display the data.

Results and Discussions

The study findings were presented in three subthemes as follows.

Underlying causes of persistent civil servant misbehaviour

The questionnaire respondents were required to choose one of the five options—strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, or agree—to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. The findings were presented in Table 1.

Table 1 Level of Observing Ethical Standards

Ethical standards	Mean	SD
At the ministry, our actions are guided by ethical norms.	3.92	1.06
Performance is influenced by the working environment.	3.33	0.94
The output of the agency is influenced by the (MoES) ethical standards.	3.46	0.29
MoES managers and directors are more aware of how the public perceives them and strive to be viewed as ethical	1.71	0.29
The main objective of the ethical standards is to outline morally righteous conduct for supervisors, staff members, and the Ministry as a whole.	0.92	0.35
Citizens of Uganda anticipate fair treatment of the public's interests from employees.	1.54	0.76

Compound mean 2.45 and Standard Deviation 0.32

Respondents considered and believed that ethical standards had a considerable influence on the performance of employees and workers within the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Sports (MOEST), with a composite mean of 2.45 and a standard deviation of 0.32.

The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Sports (MOEST) in Uganda was evaluated using a Likert scale with a range of 1 to 5. The first goal, which is to study the underlying causes of persistent civil servant misconduct despite the existence of ethical standards, was appraised using this scale.

Multiple factors were included in the analysis of how ethical standards affect work performance. With a mean score of 3.92 and a standard deviation of 1.06, it was noted that respondents largely believed that the ministry operates under established ethical norms. The mean score and standard deviation for those who thought that working conditions affect performance were 3.33 and 0.94, respectively.

A sizeable portion of respondents firmly agreed that moral principles are essential for guiding ministry operations and promoting positive workplace environments, which in turn have a big impact on work performance.

A mean score of 3.46 and a standard deviation of 0.29 were obtained from the assessment of how ethical standards affect agency outcomes within the ministry, indicating that ethical standards have a significant impact on the outcomes of the ministry. Respondents indicated agreement with the statement that managers and directors at the MoES are more aware of public perception

as a result of adherence to the ethical code of conduct, with a mean score of 2.29 and a standard deviation of 0.65, indicating that ethics significantly influence managerial considerations.

With a mean score of 1.71 and a standard deviation of 0.29, ethical standards' principal goal of encouraging morally upright conduct among managers, employees, and the entire ministry department was supported. It is important to note, however, that this research implies that there may be other influencing elements at work and that ethical norms may not be the only factor determining people's behaviours.

With a mean score of 0.92 and a standard deviation of 0.35, the percentage of respondents who felt that Ugandan citizens expect professionals to serve the public interest fairly was quite low. This implies that not everyone concurs with this assertion. With a mean score of 1.54 and a standard deviation of 0.76, respondents thought that more people expected workers to handle public resources appropriately on a daily basis.

Assessing the consequence of neglecting the ethical standards by the civil servants.

For this theme, the questionnaire respondents were asked to choose one of the five options below—strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, or agree—to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement. This was found that accountability greatly affects performance at work and reduces time, costs and improves service delivery. Data in line is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 Accountability

	Mean	SD
The MoES officials are responsible for reporting on the use of public resources and taking responsibility for any performance goals that were not met.	2.71	0.65
If the established performance goals are not met, it is the fault of the MoES authorities.	3.33	0.88
The MoES officials acknowledge and accept responsibility for acts taken while carrying out their responsibilities in accordance with the reporting duty.	4.21	0.65
Internal policies and standards at the MoES hold government officials responsible.	4.21	0.34
Independent commissions in the MoES hold public employees responsible.	4.00	0.71
The MoES has a specific division that receives citizen complaints, linking government and society to keep civil officials responsible to the people.	4.29	0.46
Strong accountability measures put in place by the Ugandan government guarantee the effective and efficient use of public funds.	3.33	1.83
The Ugandan government (GoU) is in favour of ethically sound, policy-based decisions that are motivated by concern for the welfare of the general public.	2.46	1.60
The GoU has a system that honors excellence in performance.	0.83	0.12
The GoU has a system that imposes penalties for willful rule violations.	2.04	1.00
The GoU is equipped with a system that values responsibility.	2.17	0.29
The MoES encourages groups and individuals to get involved in the formulation of public policy.	2.83	1.00
The MoES has created a link that allows for and promotes decision-making.	2.63	0.59
The MoES has established a connection that permits and encourages input that improves the effectiveness of Program/Project delivery and results.	2.67	0.47
I am liable for all the assets related to the position I hold.	2.46	1.12

A variety of measures should be used to hold MoES employees responsible. With a mean score of 2.71 and a standard deviation of 0.65, respondents, as shown in the table below, generally agreed that most MoES officials had a responsibility to report on their use of public resources and are accountable for failing to meet the defined work performance targets and objectives. Understanding how responsibility connected to the moral standards of civil workers inside the ministry was essential.

Furthermore, it was found that performance difficulties connected to accountability revealed that MoES officials were accountable for failing to meet the required performance objectives with a mean score of 3.04 and a standard deviation of 0.29. This discovery highlights the necessity for ministry officials to assume control over these unmet expectations.

With a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.88, the survey found that MoES officials acknowledge and accept responsibility for actions that fall under the purview of their jobs and need reporting. With a mean score of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.65, the findings also provided significant evidence in favour of the hypothesis that MoES officials accept and assume responsibility for choices made in the course of their employment under the reporting requirement. When it came to decision-making duties, respondents strongly agreed that they alone are responsible for making well-informed judgements that can advance the ministry, as evidenced by a mean score of 4.04 and a standard deviation of 0.41. The participants' high level of agreement was evident from this.

The study's findings, which examined the extent to which internal MoES policies and norms held public servants responsible, showed that respondents, with a mean value of 4.21 and a standard deviation of 0.34, generally agreed. This implies a widespread sense of responsibility for improving ministry procedures. It was also highlighted that respondents largely agreed that the MoES operates independently while maintaining its processes, with a mean score of 4.00 and a standard deviation of 0.71, underscoring the commitment to upholding autonomy.

According to the findings, which also demonstrated a strong consensus among respondents, with a mean score of 4.29 and a standard deviation of 0.46, the MoES has a dedicated division tasked with receiving citizen complaints and serving as a conduit between the government and society to hold civil employees accountable to their constituents.

When analysing the Ugandan government's accountability system's robustness for ensuring the effective and efficient use of public resources, the findings showed a mean score of 3.33 and a standard deviation of 0.83. Despite the existence of accountability systems, the relatively large standard deviation suggests that there is a lack of trust in the present institutions.

With a mean score of 2.46 and a very low standard deviation of 1.6, respondents strongly agreed that the Government of Uganda should prioritise moral and policy-based decisions that serve the public interest. They also strongly agreed that such decision-making is primarily influenced by the general public.

On the other hand, the results showed that, with a mean score of 0.83 and a standard deviation of 0.12 on this issue, very few respondents thought that incentives are distributed fairly within the Government of Uganda.

Results regarding the use of sanctions for willful rule-breaking inside the government indicated a mean score of 2.04 and a significant standard deviation of 1.00, suggesting that the majority of respondents did not agree that these procedures were successfully implemented.

With a mean score of 2.17 and a standard deviation of 0.29, the study's final section examined the government's efforts to adopt accountability systems. This shows that a significant portion of respondents felt that these issues were not being managed successfully despite the existence of accountability procedures.

The study's objective was to understand how the MoES encourages groups and people to participate in the creation of public policy. The results, with a mean of 2.83 and a standard deviation of 1.0, were in favour of this hypothesis, notwithstanding the perception of the respondents that these concepts were not consistently put into practise.

Respondents highly endorsed the idea of relationships being built that allow and promote decision-making, as indicated by a mean of 2.63 and a standard deviation of 0.59, which also suggests widespread support for assisting decision-making processes.

Finally, the majority of respondents agreed, with a mean score of 2.67 and a standard deviation of 0.47, regarding the creation of partnerships by MoES that permit and promote feedback for knowledgeable Program/Project delivery and outcome performance. It was believed that receiving feedback was essential to the effectiveness of government programmes and to encouraging sector-wide responsibility.

With a mean score of 2.46 and a standard deviation of 1.12, the data also showed that the majority of respondents felt personally accountable for all the resources under their control. This significant standard deviation variability highlighted the significance of giving accountability concerns top priority in order to achieve desired results.

Findings showed that a compound mean of 3.01 and SD of 1.48 was realised. This indicated that accountability has a strong relation with work performance, this study established that most of the employees within the ministry were good on aspects concerning giving and following up on the issues that have an influence on accountability.

Openness for ethical norms among government employees

The questionnaire respondents were asked to choose one of the five options below—strongly disagree, disagree, not sure, agree, or agree—to indicate how much you agree or disagree with each statement related to transparency. The analyzed data was presented in Table 3.

Table 3 Transparency Level

	Mean	SD
I can vouch for the fact that the public gets free access to the most recent details regarding decisions and operations at the MoES.	3.75	1.41
In MoES, there is effective communication that goes beyond simple notifications.	3.33	2.12
The MoES has the ability to make the public sector more transparent in the areas of politics, economics, procedures, policies, and operations.	2.92	0.47
The MoES recognizes economic transparency as a different area of potential public sector openness.	1.29	0.41
The MoES recognizes procedural transparency as a different area of potential public sector openness.	1.67	0.24
Compounded Mean and SD	2.66	1.45

The majority of respondents, who agreed that nearly all MoES programmes and activities are carried out in the same way as previously but with less resources, including money, staff, and space, did so with a mean of 2.08 and SD of 1.53. Findings on the performance of the MoES's civil workers in relation to the independent variables of accountability, transparency, and ethical standards made this clear. At work, performance has not considerably improved.

The study also was to establish how ethical standards can improve civil servants' performance within the ministry. Transparency was evaluated at different levels of management and the findings revealed the following observation and findings.

Findings showed that timely, unfettered public access to information has an impact on MoES performance and decisions. A mean score of 3.75 and SD of 1.41 was obtained. This high number of means indicated that most of the members accepted that indeed information access is free but a high standard deviation demonstrates a need for improvement in the usage of the information. It was discovered that data available can't influence members to improve their working condition in leveraging transparency as the yardstick. Some information doesn't help in management of different sectoral areas. Findings also demonstrate that majority of the members at mean 3.33 and SD 2.12 possesses effective communication at all levels, and not simply announcements with in MoES. This has improved the different departmental communication gaps that had previously showed up.

The members agreed that the MoES might be influenced by political, economic, procedural, policy, or operational transparency, which are separate potential spheres of transparency for the public sector. This idea related to issues affecting the ministry. A mean score of 2.92 and SD of 0.47 was obtained. This indicated that it was true indeed there was political and economic influence affecting the transparency in the ministry. But due to a low standard deviation finding revealed that the factor has reduced significantly overtime. The results also showed that the presence of economic transparency as a distinct area of potential openness for the public sector as a gauge of ethical norms was supported by a mean of 1.29 and SD of 0.41. The opinions that procedural transparency was a separate area of potential openness for the public sector coexisted had a mean score of 1.66 and SD of 0.24. However, its impact was so negligible that it rarely had any chance of influencing the outcomes of choices that would affect the provision of services.

Overall, a compounded mean score of 2.66 and SD of 1.45 was realised with, majority of the members agreeing that the truth of the matter, transparency is one of the key contributors of good governance practices and promoter of ethical standards and improves work performance in public service sector especially education that has an impact on the development of the country.

Further, the respondents were asked to rate the level of agreement with statements related to performance of the government employees. The findings were presented in Table 4.

Table 4 Performance of the civil servants in MoES

Performance of the civil servants in MoES	MEAN	SD
Activities are carried out on practically all MoES initiatives and projects in the same manner as previously, but with less funding, staff, space, etc.	2.08	1.53
MoES administrators and officials always look forward to receiving more money than they put in.	2.93	0.51
The Ministry always makes sure that each operation makes the best use of the resources at its disposal by avoiding duplication or carrying out each step correctly the first time.	2.75	1.77
The level of satisfaction with all MoES programmes and projects may be inferred from how top management and internal personnel on these projects view the service.	2.08	0.35
The Ministry has advanced its management practises to a significant degree, which demonstrates its high level of modernization.	3.46	0.41
Every MoES employee puts in a tremendous amount of effort to deliver the outcomes that are required in terms of quality in accordance with the objectives and performance standards for providing services.	3.21	2.42
Every employee at the MoES works hard to produce the desired outputs in a quantity that complies with the objectives and performance benchmarks for providing services.	3.54	0.41

Compounded Mean and SD	2.98	0.99
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Results of the MoES officials and administrators, who are always eager to learn more about how much they contribute, showed that a sizable portion of respondents agreed with a mean of 2.13 and SD of 1.0. The presence of availability of information and data in line with performance but it was discovered that the available information is not strongly utilised due to its low rate of SD scored against an acceptance mean presence of data. Access to information doesn't mean use of information in solving daily problems.

Findings from the Ministry's capacity in ensuring their utilisation and use of processes and resources without duplication in timely manner, most of the respondents agreed and accepted with a mean score of 2.93 and SD of 0.51. This an indicator that however many accepted that most processes are followed and roles and responsibilities are not duplicated, the utilisation and putting the data to proper use is not highly significant. The majority of respondents agreed with a mean score of 2.75 and SD of 1.77 about whether the MOES staff tries to use resources as efficiently as possible on time to achieve the ministry's objectives. This demonstrated that their adequate use of resources but however, there are not enough in achieving all the set objectives in a very particular line of duty. A small percentage of respondents disagreed that time management in completing tasks is not enough as stipulated even though they endeavor to complete the task with the available resources. They are overworked in meeting deadlines and set targets.

The respondents, with a mean value of 2.67 against an SD of 1.41, substantially accepted the idea that MoES programs/projects officers always look out for the output impact of the functions whether they either contribute to or influence Ministry performance as a whole. Many participants agreed, but on average, respondents weren't happy with the result.

Findings from the staff satisfaction of all MoES programmes and projects are demonstrated by how the services are viewed by senior management and internal personnel with regard to these projects' performance. A mean value of 2.08 and SD of 0.35 were lowly reached. Many respondents were not satisfied with the level of output. The performance in that aspect was taken as low because most of the members disagreed that performance of staff on project management and execution is low. The high level of modernization of the Ministry, which is evidenced by the extent to which it has adopted new management practises and is regarded as being innovative and forward-looking, was underestimated by many respondents. They didn't agree with most of the respondents; their mean score was 3.46, and their standard deviation was 0.41. This indicator revealed that there are no new innovations in place and only utilisation of past technology and management practices in running the ministry's affairs. For their efforts to strive to attain the necessary outcomes in terms of quality in line with the specified aims and performance criteria for service delivery, all MoES personnel received a mean score of 3.21 and SD of 2.42. Nearly all of them said that although workplace performance had increased, the level of the services provided had not. With a mean score of 3.54 and SD of 0.41, the majority of participants strongly agreed with the findings on the MoES staff's increased performance in their attempts to provide the intended results in terms of quantity within the set objectives and performance standards for service delivery.

Many agreed that the numbers of projects/programs attended to have increased both in numbers and time. Hence demonstrating an improved performance on that aspect.

Generally, from the findings concerning whether ethical standards affect performance, it was established that many of the respondents agreed that ethical standards affect works with mean value of 2.98 and SD of 0.99. Many members indeed accepted that ethical issues affect performance of employees at their places.

Conclusion

The study concludes that the working condition greatly influences work performance, which are driven by the established ethical standards that fosters the working conditions of employees. It is also noted that most of the MoES officials took obligation on reporting their usage of public resources and were answerable in one failed to meet the set targets and objectives in regard to work performance. Most of the employees took responsibility of their actions and owed decisions made in influencing decision making and enforcing policies in place in line one's job descriptions. Finally, the study concludes that information access is free but there is a need for improvement in the usage of the information accessed. There was no effective communication, communication gaps were noted.

Recommendations

Based on the study findings, it is recommended that for better improved service delivery and to promote transparency, a reward system needs to be put in place that enables that every employee is out rightly rewarded without bias and everyone is involved at each stage. Moreover, the communication and information channels that promote feedback to and from every sector must be instituted, and where possible guidelines must be cleared identified. Finally, politicians, and political leaders should follow due processes to eliminate room that creates bias and tension among employees and other stake holders within the different MDAs.

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