

Inter-Institutional Trust and Multi-Agency Networks in Anti-Corruption Efforts in Public Administration in Kenya

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Abstract: This article specifically strives to explicate broader interests and a rather growing phenomenon in the public sector management, namely, the role of inter-institutional trust in enhancing multi-agency approaches to implementation of cross-cutting policy programs. The main objective is to explore the correlation between variables of trust and the integration of anti-corruption efforts in governmental organizations. It is argued that ethics and ethical decision-making processes are matters of bureaucratic-personalities, which, innately commands trust in and between relevant institutions, the personnel, and among stakeholders to be effected. Thus, the paper explores the extent to which implementation processes appended on multi-agency approaches could be a function of administrative trust in public administration with relevance to anti-corruption strategies. Drawing on a qualitative study of the subnational public administration in Kenya, administrative trust was mapped from the general referents of trust—reliability, confidence, integrity, transparency, performance, etc.—to discern efforts of mainstreaming anti-corruption initiatives in governmental institutions. It was found that challenges, mainly low personnel commitment and organizational responsibility on integrity, dysfunctionalities of institutional capacities, and organizational communication that are oftentimes critical to institutionalization and coordination of anti-corruption strategies correlated to problems of trust with multi-agency networks for anti-corruption reforms in Kenya. In fact, non-performance, lack of personal integrity, organizational enclaves, and inter-institutional hostilities characteristic in the implementation processes in public administration were indicative of administrative trust deficits.

Keywords: anti-corruption reforms; informal-governance; corruption; collaborative governance

Introduction

In the 21st century, the world of public policy and administration has increasingly become a moving target: intricate, uncertain, and complex yet also paradoxically imprinted by equally new innovative systems and organizational management structures. This has certainly led to continuous integration of different organizational forms of management geared towards cultivating effective inter-agency approaches or cultivating internal and external partnerships to cope with the wicked problems tied to the dynamism and the unchanging turbulence in contemporary governance environments.¹ With the advent of new modes of governance,

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namely, hierarchy, markets and networks, and sustainable development paradigms in public administration as a field of practice, the science of management—mainly in forms of agencification—has drifted more towards enhancing collaborative and cooperation systems between public entities, on one hand, and between these entities, their stakeholders and the citizenry, on the other hand.² All the same, these interactions have also come with unique tensions and conflicts between governmental institutions.³ Thus, discerning implementation deficits relating to processes of institutionalization in the contexts of multi-agency or networked public administration can partly include looking into levels of administrative trust between concerned partners.⁴

Indeed, deepening mechanisms for public accountability, particularly, anti-corruption efforts as commonly witnessed in the management of most governmental affairs today, have experienced growth in the creation of specialized institutions, devolution (multi-level governance) and stakeholder-consultations. Nonetheless, these efforts have also innately suffered problematics of coordination, alternatively reducing the formalities of multi-sector arrangements to a charade.⁵ In consequence, public managers have often taken advantage of this leeway to engage in informal processes of governance, which have strengthened inter-agency collaborations by soothing constraints posed by jurisdictional tug-of-wars, limited resources, legislative overlaps, bounded-rationality, and capacity to increase the performance of their agencies. Yet, conceptually a multi- or inter-agency approach remains elusive. Generally, other terms such as inter-organizational cooperation, collaborative public management, collaborative implementation, networked governance and public-private partnership, among others, have been used to describe a multi-agency approach in public administration.⁶ However, Eugene Bardach does simply describe a multi-agency approach as “any joint activity by two or more agencies working together that is intended to increase public value by their working together rather than separately.”⁷

In Africa, as in the most contexts of public policy and administration the world over, a multi-agency approach has become central in the pursuit of effective health-care delivery systems, crime prevention, administrative justice, customs services, agricultural services, and traffic management, etc. However, these approaches are seemingly also pursued in collectivist organizational environments largely characterized with different forms of trust deficit.⁸ Nonetheless, the utility of a multi-agency approach has been founded on the rationale that “complex policies are more effectively put into practice if agencies cooperate a lot, whereas less difficult tasks are handled just as well without interorganizational cooperation.”⁹ Much as they also require apposite rational-systems to be effective, oftentimes multi-agency collaborations are based on boundary-spanning skills of managers and sustained by their personal networks, thus, the term “informal governance.”¹⁰ Brinton Milward and Keith Provin contend that collaborative networks “do not have a hierarchical chain of command but which rely on trust and reciprocity as the levers of collaboration makes the tasks of managers much different from those in organizations.”¹¹

Therefore, common unprecedented efforts towards building institutional capacity of public bureaucracies, as well as upgrading the capacity of public personnel have been founded on inter-agency collaborative strategies. The main objective is to create managers and environments for enhancing inter-institutional cooperation. Informal governance efforts have

likewise been characterized by initiatives to enhance cultural transformation in public organizations to generally align them to collaborative systems. This is anticipated to come with creating appropriate norms and practices. However, despite these developments, the foci of research in public policy and administration in Africa have done little to discern trust as central human or cultural repertoires for effective collaborative governance.¹² In most instances, these studies have vividly neglected the role of inter-institutional trust in the internalization and implementation of accountability policy programs, particularly, anti-corruption in public administration.¹³

Therefore, the present study strives to address this gap. It is founded on contention that “both trust and distrust can be considered to have certain functionalities and dysfunctions for interorganizational interactions in public administration.”¹⁴ It is indeed not rare that concepts of trust have been utilized as tools for performance measurement and evaluation of the effectiveness of anti-corruption authorities (ACAs) in developing contexts.¹⁵ So, further to exploring the influence of administrative trust in the mainstreaming of anti-corruption strategies in public administration, this article also seeks to generally illuminate an evidently growing multi-agency approach Africa with particular attention to Kenya. Actually, in Kenya multi-agency strategies have also been used by administrative executives to enhance implementation of cross-cutting policy programs within their mandates. As common in modern management public affairs, the centrality of trust in discerning implementation processes in the public sector in Kenya has been centered on the data that structuration and processes for creating viable organizational culture, mainly through capacity-building and training, correlate positively with the growth of institutional trust in public administration in African contexts. For example, while reporting on Cape Town Municipality Michelle Esau found that among others things, “organizational structuring and institutional capacity development are important for generating institutional trust.”¹⁶ Even so, institutional trust, inter-personnel trust and political trust are considerably composites of inter-institutional trust.¹⁷ In public management, inter-institutional trust between governmental enterprises is said to assist in resolving the complexity of wicked problems. This is by mainly enhancing coordination, networking and partnerships.¹⁸ In a study of coordination quality in the Norwegian Civil Service, for example, it was found that the “most important factors for understanding variations in coordination quality are coordination capacity, mutual trust and administrative level.”¹⁹ Administrative trust can also be instrumental in understanding reform outcomes and networks in the public sector.²⁰

To overcome potential analytical pitfalls tied to conceptual blurriness of inter-institutional trust, this discussion builds around Oomsels and Bouckaert’s concept of administrative trust. The duo argue that administrative trust is “a subjective evaluation made by boundary spanners regarding their intentional and behavioral suspension of vulnerability on the basis of expectations of a trustee organization in particular interorganizational interactions in public administration.”²¹ A focus on administrative trust underscores an illumination of trust-building strategies within multi-agency collaborations for implementation of policy programs in public administration. Still, trust-building strategies should not be viewed as the singular means for achieving effective operations of inter-agency relations but rather as just part of other critical strategies for strengthening a multi-agency approach in public administration. In other words, as Bouckaert contends, overabundance of trust may also become a problem especially to

the institutionalization of processes and gains made by informal governance processes.²² Indeed, given the complexity of administrative and political processes of public administration, referents of inter-institutional trust are multidimensional and potentially embody those of institutional trust, public trust, interpersonal trust and political trust.²³ But together, referents of trust influence administrative relations and implementation processes across different units in public administration.²⁴ That said, this article seeks to answer the following question: How can levels of trust between governmental and ACAs influence how administrators or state officials respond to anti-corruption strategies in the public sector?

Data collection focused on the microscopic components of trust. It mainly explored attitudes, opinions, and events between organizational actors in governmental institutions and the ACAs. The constructs of inter-institutional trust for this study were based on the performance or effectiveness of ACAs, levels of professionalism and transparency or internal accountability within ACAs, perceptions, attitudes and experiences on competence, institutional capacity, interactional justice, personal integrity, and procedural justice. Thus, the study also looked into the extent to which multi-agency partners, mainly public officials, trusted that ACAs have the capacity to undertake responsibilities independently and effectively.

A Framework of Inter-Institutional Trust and Anti-Corruption Efforts

The concept of trust is foremostly a social construct phenomenon that has become important in analyzing the functionality and the nature of public and private institutions.²⁵ Trust referents have generally been used to measure the performance of anti-corruption authorities (ACAs) in Asia and Africa.²⁶ A framework of analysis of inter-institutional trust is thus appended more on behavioral theories, mainly on the sociological and anthropological theories of bureaucracy, with a focus in part on boundary-spanning activities, skills, and bureaucratic personalities of administrative executives, as well as stakeholders both inside and outside public administration. In particular, a framework adopted for this task focuses on collaborative networks as boundary-spanning activities and processes, which are additionally functions of rational bureaucratic systems and rational cultural systems of public organizations and related stakeholders. The two dimensions of organizational rationality potentially allows organizations engaged in a multi-agency approach to develop capacities for information processing, identifying and creating teams who can skillfully process and match internal and external information relevant for organizational productivity.²⁷

According to Deborah Ancona and David Caldwell, team strategies in an organization can be categorized into informing, parading and probing: "Informing teams remain relatively isolated from their environment; parading teams have high levels of passive observation of the environment; and probing teams actively engage outsiders. Probing teams revise their knowledge of the environment through external contact, seek outside feedback on their ideas, and promote their teams' achievements within their organization."²⁸ In addition, these researchers identified four typologies of boundary-spanning activities: ambassador, task coordinator, scout, and guard. The ambassador activity provides access to the organization's power structures. The task coordinator "identifies how the person provides access to the workflow structure, and this was aimed at managing horizontal dependence. The activity termed scout concerned the acquisition of pertinent ideas and information. The final activity

designated as guard related to actions that were aimed at avoiding the release of information to external parties.”²⁹ For the effectiveness of boundary-spanning strategies, rational bureaucratic systems create justifiability in terms of providing legal legitimacy, unpacking legal complexities that may limit the leeway of actions. Similarly, rational cultural systems sustain and support collaborative networks, especially with regard to enhancing organizational communication and commitment, which are essential in retaining key actors within an inter-agency collaboration. Actually, legalistic flexibility and organizational culture as a leadership style are part of internal and external trusting building repertoires that can enhance institutional capacity and personnel commitments.

Thus, if appositely matched, bureaucratic and cultural rationalities can induce trustful relationships among stakeholders, including between governmental departments and ACAs. In this way, administrative executives are viewed as boundary spanners who, by mediating between different actors, engage in interpersonal roles in their positions as leaders, figureheads, liaisons etc. Likewise, they play informational roles (i.e. as monitors, disseminators and spokespersons etc.) and decisional roles (i.e. as disturbance handlers, resource allocators, priority setters and entrepreneurs, etc.).³⁰ This can be used to explain why anti-corruption strategies may be variedly implemented across public institutions and the degree of commitment by other interested parties. So, trust in general and inter-institutional trust in particular can be understood within an interface between organizational culture and structure. The synergies between rational bureaucratic systems and rational cultural systems as determinants of administrative trust in analyzing the efficacy of mainstreaming anti-corruption strategies across the public sector is explored below.

Administrational Trust as Functions of Rational Bureaucratic Systems

Administrational trust enlists structural relationships, designs of organizations, and degrees of compliance with existing public service values; considered here especially as they pertain to different roles and authorities in the implementation of anti-corruption strategies. The instrumental imperatives refer to the legal-rational structures and bureaucratic processes or responsibilities, which define positions and rules, e.g. who shall or can do what and how various tasks should or can be allocated and executed. As seen by Mark Suchman, structural characteristics of an organization become the marker of organizational form and locates that particular organization within a larger institutional ecology. This alternatively assists with determining organizational competitors or partners from which to draw support.³¹ This support may come in forms of alliances for capacity building, resources, and technical training.

Institutions are seen as tools in the hands of administrative executives, who can manipulate them for the sake of achieving particular goals or objectives. This involves initiatives by managers and administrative executives to influence organizational values, vision and norms. Managers therefore score high on rationality, which subsequently may enable them to engage in structural-instrumental legitimating initiatives that can improve internal and external environments of organizational communication (i.e. boundary spanning actions). Institutional relationships are bound by jurisdictional responsibilities between public organizations and ACAs. These are relevant as pertain to determinants of identifying partnerships preferences and networking options that are deemed to assist in achieving organizational goals and objectives.

Thus, with regard to organizational communication as a composite of building inter-institutional trust, for example, these functional roles may enhance Benne and Sheats' (1948) task roles that relate to: information and data seeking efforts; providing information and data; initiation and clarification of ideas, proposals, and plans; coordination of groups; orientation of groups towards achieving organizational goals and; establishing outside contacts for partners or groups. These ultimately predetermine support of participation of all groups involved and their members, encouraging compromise, harmonizing strategies and perspectives, and reducing of tensions within or outside member organizations. Therefore, the logic of action is that of consequences, where leaders weigh their actions on instrumental outcomes. This means that building of inter-institutional trust by ACAs or partners in the public and/or private sectors depends on instrumental capacities, nature of leadership, unambiguity of objectives, and resources.

Administrational Trust as Function of Rational Cultural Systems

Rational cultural systems are in large part composites of prevailing organizational culture. This enlists informal norms, values, and processes or even non-informal processes that characterize the interface between formal and informal composites of administration. In this case, rational cultural refers to composites of organizational, which closely matches with rational bureaucratic composites such as: bureaucratic personalities openness to learning from experiences and others; performance orientation and team building attitudes and; value for integrity and innovations, etc. Organizational culture in this respect is considered as a strategy that can be pursued to improve organizational commitment and productivity. It is thus important for organizational management and performance of collaborative public management. Rational cultural perspective underscores the human relations approach and points to the cultural roles where decision-making processes are attached to individuals' backgrounds and identities, past experiences, values, motivations and preferences. Philip Selznick states that on top of instrumental structures, formal organizations often develop informal norms and values and acquire institutional features. These norms may result in problems with organizational responsibility on ethics and commitment.³²

In public administration, and particularly with relevance to anti-corruption reforms, rational cultural systems can also (and in most cases) come from the nature of the existing political-administrative designs, norms and practices, as well as socio-economic structures, which ultimately become institutionalized organizations.³³ Therefore, a cultural perspective emphasizes "internal aspects of institutionalized organizations, historical legacies and established traditions but which also look at external institutionalized environments and prevailing beliefs regarding what constitutes relevant problems and good solutions."³⁴ The logic of action is that of appropriateness—where appropriate behaviors do not call for rational deliberations but focus rather on what is most likely to be applicable, tried in the past or drawn from previous experiences.³⁵ So, when acting in public situations, "a person acts in accordance with his or her experience of what has worked well in the past, or upon what feels fair, reasonable and acceptable in the environment the person works within."³⁶ The logic of appropriate in this case may also entail behaviors that are largely drawn on dominant norms and values, which are taken for granted and have been perpetually practiced or rationalized by

administrators. Cultural imperatives also mean that issues of integrity and efforts to enforce them in bureaucratic contexts have more to do with administrative personalities than rules. Therefore, the following hypotheses can be drawn.

The Multi-Agency Approach and Anti-Corruption Strategies in Kenya

Efforts against corruption call for collaborative networks to increase the effectiveness of anti-corruption programs in public administration. This is evident in the establishment of specialized institutions and bodies, mainly, the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) and National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Committee (NACCSC), respectively. There are also hosts of legal frameworks, which both directly and indirectly deal with corruption such as Anti-Corruption and Economic Crimes Act (2003), the Bribery Act (2016), Public Officer Ethics Act (POEA, 2003), and Leadership and Integrity Act (2012), among others. Based on the recognition that enforcement of these legislations is cross-cutting and mostly likely requires a multi-sector approach to be effective, NACCSC and EACC have engaged broad-based stakeholder networks. Within EACC, the Partnerships, Coalitions and Interventions unit is assigned among other duties:

[H]andling critical areas of interface with other Government Agencies. Forging Partnerships and Coalitions and creating linkages with other organizations and institutions involved in the fight against corruption. Organizing forums for informed debate and discussion on critical issues [and] Training integrity and quality assurance officers in the public and private sectors.³⁷

In its Strategic Plan 2013–2018, EACC recognizes that partnerships and coalitions with its stakeholder organizations are crucial in the control and coordination of anti-corruption strategies. This has produced the creation of trans-boundary coordination networks, partnerships, and shared performance targets (e.g. the Performance Contracting framework) across public organizations. These networks indeed form the variety of new coordination practices designed by government and non-governmental organizations to tackle accountability challenges. As such, EACC and partners such as the Commission for Administrative Justice (CAJ) underscore the need to expand their partnership base to deepen their already existing collaboration.³⁸

For example, in 2015 EACC entered into a Memorandum of Understanding with three institutions: the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), the Nairobi City County Government, and the Association of Professional Societies in East Africa.³⁹ However, more importantly, through a network operationalized as the Kenya Leadership and Integrity Forum (KLIF), EACC and other institutions (e.g. CAJ, Ministries, Departments, Authorities, Courts, etc.) cooperate within an “accountability web” that descriptively aims “to maintain order and coordination between individuals, social systems [as a collective of institutions] create a multitude of standards to which individuals and groups are answerable, and to which these entities are judged and sanctioned.”⁴⁰ This accountability web enables external horizontal coordination in regard to specific investigations and penalties that may emerge in the implementation of Public Service Integrity Programs (PSIP) strategies. Whether criminal, administrative or otherwise, the horizontal linkages of this accountability web are intended to coordinate action on all forms of wrongdoing experienced in public management. As a component of the ongoing Civil Service

Reform Programmes (CSRPs) reforms, integration of anti-corruption strategies into political-administrative structures is embedded in the PSIP framework. PSIP was essentially grounded on the realization that successful public sector reforms come with behavioral change on the side of administrators and state-officials.

Therefore, administrators and politicians should be trained on integrity matters to be held accountable for maladministration. In the process, ethical frameworks and compliance due processes in governmental institutions/agencies were established through the initiation of PSIP requirements, mainly, performance contracting (PC). More specifically, PC was meant to narrow down PSIP provisions to departmental levels to foster internal accountability and address the poorly coordinated accountability mechanisms in the public sector. As a performance indicator, PC entails the following strategies for mainstreaming of anti-corruption strategies in governmental institutions: (a) development of anti-corruption policies—this entails among others a statement recognizing corruption as a risk and a possibility in the organization, a statement confirming that it is a responsibility of the management and subordinate staffs to address corruption, a summary of possible corrupt practices that act as a guide for administrators, and creation of corrupt prevention committee; (b) operationalizing corruption prevention committees (CPCs) to coordinate anti-corruption strategies in the organization, spearhead corruption campaigns within their jurisdictions, review, monitor and evaluate the impact of anti-corruption strategies, and submit periodical reports on status of corruption in the organization; (c) development of the corruption prevention plan (CPP), which includes developing risk management strategies, identifying key functional areas of the organization, and identifying responses to risk areas; (d) development of code of conduct according to POEA (2003)—all governmental institutions are required to develop specific codes of conduct as ethical guidelines for their employees; (e) integrity training—integrity assurance officers (IAOs) should provide technical support to management on implementation of anti-corruption strategies and also conduct sensitization workshops for departments (trainings are done in collaboration with EACC and the relevant ministry as directed in PSIP).

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC) defines KLIF as “a national integrity system set up to coordinate a unified sector based strategy for preventing and combating corruption by forging alliances and partnerships with sectors across the Kenyan society.”⁴¹ The Forum has fourteen member organizations drawn from both the public and private sectors, including the judiciary, professional associations, civil society, and other MDAs. Thus far KLIF has proven to be useful. For example, under its aegis EACC coordinated and rolled out a five-year multi-sector integrity strategy dubbed the Kenya Integrity Plan. It is also through collaboration with the KLIF secretariat that EACC has been able to organize and execute public sensitization programs, such as the commemoration of International Anti-Corruption Day in different counties. The control dimension of this network was further commended in a joint press statement from EACC and the Kenya Revenue Association (KRA) released on 15 January 2015, which reported intelligence information about incidences of smuggling at the Port of Mombasa that led to coordinated action in the confiscation of smuggled goods. According to the statement, EACC and KRA officials intercepted a container carrying 17,600 50kg bags of sugar amounting to approximately KSh56 million (or US\$560,000). The contents of the container

were disguised as hardware materials, shoes, furniture, utensils, etc. bound for a neighboring East African country.⁴²

In addition, the Integrated Public Complaints Referral Mechanism (IPCRM), as an anti-corruption network was formed in 2013 as a multi-agency management of corruption comprising six organizational partners. Membership of this network includes EACC, CAJ, Transparency International (TI-Kenya as the only non-governmental organization partner), the Kenya National Commission on Human Rights, the National Cohesion and Integrated Commission and the National Anti-Corruption Campaign Steering Committee. According to the EACC website,

IPCRM under the tag line *Sema! Piga Ripoti* is a multi-agency initiative whose main purpose is to strengthen partnerships between the state oversight institutions in the handling, management and disposals of received complaints/reports as well as feeding back to the public lodging complaints. This is facilitated through joint receipt of complaints on corruption, human rights violations, mal-administration, hate-speech and discrimination and refers the same through an e-system.

Following positive outcomes in 2014 CAJ reported that it had "received 151 complaints through IPCRM, a double increment from the previous reporting period when the Commission received 73 complaints."⁴³

IPCRM is intended to ensure coordinated information-sharing and, through this collaboration, to build an inclusive approach to tackling corruption amongst stakeholders. This is of importance in overcoming negative compliance, encouraging whistleblowing, and curbing the culture of corruption in the public sector. Indeed, collaboration across governmental institutions affirms both the structural and moral legitimacy of anti-corruption strategies in ways that are essential for the implementation of organizational programs. Thus, PSIP is not entirely conducted with a principal-agent framework but within a collaborative system under the stewardship of administrative executives. In this regard, the County Public Service Boards and accounting officers/chief executive officers should oversee compliance to PSIP strategies in collaboration with EACC and other relevant oversight commissions. This means that despite formal obligations, building trustful relationships between EACC, governmental institutions, and non-governmental organizations essentially influences effective mainstreaming of anti-corruption strategies in the environment of public administration.

Data and Methods

The study draws on documentary analysis of audited reports, newspaper or media reports and primary data collected from public officials in Migori, Nairobi, and Kisumu county governments. Primary data from fieldwork carried out between January 2014 and May 2016 included interviews with Heads of Departments (HODs), county administrators, chief and executive officers in Kisumu and Migori counties of Kenya, as well as with the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), TI-Kenya and the Commission for Administrative Justice (CAJ) staff in Kisumu and Nairobi offices. Data collection included administration of interview questionnaires, face-to-face interviews, referral sampling, and informal conversations. Interviews lasted for at least an hour. A total of twenty-eight respondents participated in the face-to-face interviews while forty-five others filled the administered questionnaires. This

brings to a total of seventy-three respondents who participated in this study. A majority were aged mid-thirties to late-fifties and the older group comprised the majority of senior administrators and executives. Referral sampling was key in identifying and accessing heads of units and departments as well as relevant administrators deemed by their colleagues as more knowledgeable on anti-corruption strategies in their departments, ministries, and units. Those interviewed in Nairobi county included senior staff of EACC, CAJ, and TI-Kenya.

Data analysis involved data condensation, coding, and explanation building.⁴⁴ Data condensation involves writing summaries of interviews, especially in situations where in-depth interviewees did not allow for voice-recording.⁴⁵ These summaries were written up thematically during the data collection process. These themes related to specific dimensions and referents of trust, for example performance, capacity, and awareness of EACC's anti-corruption strategies, political interference, and the nature of interactions between EACC personnel and administrators.

Data Analysis and Discussion

Internalization and Institutionalization of Multi-Agency Frameworks

It is one issue for an organization to ensure that ethical responsibilities are practiced, and another to enhance commitment towards such responsibilities across the collaborative complex. The latter will also require training and motivational strategies to create compliance to both organizational responsibilities to ethics and commitment to collaborative requirements. At the core of these two dimensions, organizations must not only enhance institutionalization but internalization of policy programs (e.g. anti-corruption strategies), as well as pursue legitimation strategies for inter-agency collaboration. Together, institutionalization and internalization are central to development of Philip Selznick's "corporate conscience," which alternatively drives levels of organizational commitment and integrity.

Thus, to test structural efficacies as a tool for building trust by EACC or measure trust as a composite of different multi-agency approaches, this study explored levels of administrators' internalization of different multi-agency platforms and the very policy programs of anti-corruption strategies. Being the most prominent in mainstreaming of anti-corruption strategies in public administration, levels of internalization and institutionalization of PSIP framework were underscored in governmental institutions. It was assumed that levels of internalization and institutionalization determine standards for discerning and measuring institutional and personnel capacities. The two—institutionalization and internalization of both policy-programs and multi-agency systems—were found to be essential in evaluating public official's understanding and interpretations of obligations of EACC in enforcing implementation of PSIP framework. In addition, referents of administrative trust (mainly confidence, openness, and transparency) were utilized in discerning levels of inter-institutional trust between EACC, MDAs (ministries, departments, and authorities) and other stakeholders. This presumably assists processes of internalization and institutionalization of PSIP requirements. Administrators' knowledge of what EACC does, what it should do, and how it goes about carrying out its tasks were used to illustrate whether administrators understood and perceived EACC as a trustworthy overseer and partner in anti-corruption efforts in public administration.

Results indicated that levels of internalization (i.e. individual skills, knowledge, learning, and experiences) matched with levels of engagement between EACC and governmental institutions, most especially with regard to communication and implementation of anti-corruption strategies. Senior administrators engaged in different probing and ambassadorial boundary-spanning activities, whereas, depending on their institutional roles, middle-level and other lower cadre administrators were mostly engaged parading activities towards EACC and related multi-agency activities. As such, HODs were more knowledgeable than the junior staff but hardly internalized or were motivated to implement PSIP strategies. The knowledge of multi-agency structures was also evident among the non-governmental executives as was described by a TI-Kenya executive:

We have also managed to partner with the commissions, public officers, and like for the commissions, we have come together under the umbrella we are calling IPCRM, meaning Integrated Public Complaints and Referral Mechanism. Within that umbrella, we are the only non-governmental organization. So we play an oversight role in what they do, not only in observing of the code but also in undertaking their work.⁴⁶

Therefore, besides demonstrating existing leadership styles that were mostly found to range from Rensis Likert's exploitative or autocratic to benevolent and rarely consultative management patterns, varied levels of internalization of policy programs and partnerships structures across the bureaucratic scalar-chain can explain the varied levels of mainstreaming anti-corruption in governmental organizations across the public sector. Indeed, depending on management patterns that, alternatively, also corresponded to patterns of bureaucratic personalities, some departments and authorities reportedly performed better than others when it came to institutionalization of performance contracting (PC) requirements. This was especially so with regard to developing of specific codes of conduct.

Moreover, on levels of internalization as administrative consciousness, Public Service Integrity Program (PISP) strategies, IPCRM, and related multi-agency systems were understood by administrators contingent on the levels of enforcement and commitment of leadership both at the national and county levels. Inter-personal relationships and trust between departmental/ministerial units also played a role in institutionalization, communication, and coordination processes. Further to this, personal motivations were critical when it came to institutionalization and even knowledge-transfer of different multi-agency platforms within governmental institutions. Arguably, this explained the ineffectiveness of PSIP requirements across departments and ministries. For example, in a report to determine the extent to which PC requirements were mainstreamed into administrative systems at the county levels, EACC personnel observed that "there are institutional loopholes that can be exploited by somebody who has a corrupt motive. [And these] loopholes differ from one institution to the other [...]"⁴⁷

This may also mean that levels of organizational performance of anti-corruption authorities (ACA) in enforcing public integrity potentially corresponds to institutional contexts of anti-corruption strategies in hosting public sector departments. That said, views from county administrators on levels of implementation of anti-corruption strategies were further solicited to measure the performance of EACC in relation to their organizations' administrative realities. County administrators correlated issues of administrative distrust to lack of confidence and low

capacity of EACC to intervene in the ineffective implementation of anti-corruption strategies by county governments. A senior administrator, for example, stated that:

In the performance contract there are strategies for eradicating corruption and there are things that people have to do. One, we have to form anti-corruption committee, which we have formed. Two, we must have quarterly reports in a prescribed format. Three, now with this committee, we have to see ways of coming up with strategies, which to me, I don't see any strategies coming up.⁴⁸

This may mean either that there are weak organizational linkages in different multi-agency platforms or that institutionalization of PSIP as point for engagement in these platforms by governmental institutions remains too loose to elicit consciousness and responsibilities to commit to multi-agency networks. In addition, the information demonstrates that despite trainings and capacity-building initiatives towards realization of PSIP framework, there were still institutionalization deficits in the implementation of anti-corruption strategies that, in large part, could have been potentially resolved through building trustful relationships or by adopting other forms of bureaucratic structures to enhance personal innovations towards implementation of PSIP framework in public administration. Cultivating personal innovations on integrity matters could arguably, in the long run, translate into institutional remedies by fostering effective inter-organizational communication, knowledge exchange, and translation of anti-corruption mechanisms needed for an effective multi-agency system. It also came out that institutionalization deficits could have emanated from EACC's low capacity to deal with and monitor governmental organizations on one hand, and on the other hand from the design of multi-agency networks (mainly PSIP) and membership complexities that largely depend on individual relationships and other related internal dynamics such as quality of leadership in particular organizations. As such, building of administrative trustful relationships between EACC, governmental institutions, and other partners in Kenya may be constrained by capacity issues and commitment (either by institutional or individual actors) to mainstream and implement anti-corruption strategies.

Integrity, Inter-Personnel Relations and Effectiveness of Multi-Agency Networks

It is a requirement for any applicant seeking employment as a member of a county committee or a regulatory authority in the public sector to secure clearance from the Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission (EACC), the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), and the police. In this way, self-regulation has been presumably broadened to include compliance with the Public Service Integrity Programs (PSIP) framework. Administrators of all regulatory authorities were obliged to abide by this code to avoid blacklisting by any of the Kenya Leadership and Integrity Forum (KLIF) members. This is to ostensibly bolster controls of maladministration in governmental organizations through KLIF. Furthermore, evidence of organizational commitment to greater coordination could be found in a press statement released by EACC on 19 February 2016:

We are aware that [the] state of corruption in [the] country is not good as confirmed by our own research surveys and Transparency International Annual Corruption Perception Index [...] the recently adopted Multi-Agency Team approach, which is about collaboration, coordination and cooperation with other agencies, will be utilized more effectively.⁴⁹

However, this study found that the effectiveness of multi-agency networks was constrained by deficits in public ethics and integrity among partner organizations, especially in governmental institutions. That is, key partners in anti-corruption efforts were confronted by problems of moral legitimacy and severed personnel administrative relations that seemed to hinder innovative activities that could potentially promote ethical relations and practices. By appending analysis of these findings also on an evaluation of executive personal integrity and ethical culture within government and EACC, it was established that an ethical climate influenced levels of organizational commitment and communication with multi-agency networks. In fact, jurisdictional contestations were said to correlate, in part, with levels of personnel integrity and the prevailing ethical climate in particular MDAs and EACC. Actually, some EACC personnel were reportedly corrupt and could have been involved in networks found in county-governments. For example, while commenting on the functionality of CPCs, a member stated that despite occasional CPC meetings there were only rare cases of corruption successfully brought to conclusion. Most importantly, EACC personnel frequently in attendance at corruption prevention committee (CPC) meetings was partly to blame as she attempted to solicit bribes in exchange for not reporting cases to EACC:

The first time we met, we were to discuss how we use the performance contract to implement CPC [but nothing could be discussed]. Even the corruption officer [present] now turned [out] to be the most corrupt one because on any corruption issue we settled on, she was negotiating her take instead of now dealing with actual corruption.⁵⁰

Such sentiments are likely to create or compound problems of administrative trust in the form of low levels of transparency and confidence in EACC's capacity and low levels of organizational commitment towards participating in multi-agency accountability networks such as PSIP framework. Again, it could be indicative of inherent challenges with administrative norms needed to promote ethical culture within EACC and in turn within MDAs. For instance, it was found that county governments have neither developed codes of conduct as required in performance contracting nor committed to enforce compliance to other forms of accountability programs. Indeed, it was stated that despite the existence of anti-corruption strategies in some departments, there were relational problems between EACC's organizational design and the structure of county governments. There were also negative attitudes among both EACC and MDA personnel. In consequence, there was reportedly ineffective transfer and translation of codes of conduct and knowledge on existing multi-agency networks in governmental organizations.

The Ethics and Anti-Corruption Commission's (EACC) problematic organizational design and subsequent loose organizational relationship with county governments and other oversight institutions in general could be attributed to the organizational ambiguities of both entities and to overlaps found in anti-corruption legislation. Therefore, an EACC official contended that when measuring the performance of EACC in the enforcement of anti-corruption efforts in public organizations,

I think you have to look at the legal framework and look at the laws as they are. Are they adequate? Because sometimes you may look at an institution and you may say that these guys are not working and you don't even know the legal framework in which they are operating. You don't expect me to do what the law does not allow me to do.⁵¹

To this extent, inter-institutional trust between EACC and governmental institutions in Kenyan public administration were seemingly rationally-bureaucratically predetermined hence eliciting limited leeway of action against corruption. More generally, evaluation of inter-institutional trust seemed to also involve other dimensions such as political environments and even the general problems of management in contemporary public administration in Kenya.

Problems of integrity in ACAs, however, are hardly a unique phenomenon in developing countries. In the case of Mexico, Díaz-Cayeros and his colleagues stated that “[t]he more entrenched the problem [of corruption], the less reliable government institutions can become, and the problem may well infest the very institutions that are tasked with enforcing the laws, as it has done in many countries.”⁵² Although, much as our study also tends to describe this situation in the case of EACC, it contends that administrative distrust emanating from such situations becomes part of organizational dysfunctions towards enhancing public ethics. Subsequently, the problematic of trust towards EACC resonates with that of governmental institutions. Most county administrators interviewed linked their lack of confidence and institutional trust in EACC to the methods and processes of handling corruption, both internal and external to its ranks. In fact, CAJ investigations and reports by the Auditor General (as member to IPCRM and KLIF) were reportedly countered by EACC executives. Leadership style within the EACC were reportedly inclined towards bureaucratic autocracy, ostensibly, to discourage internal cooperation by EACC personnel with external investigators. For instance, in February 2015 the CEO of CAJ while commenting before a concerned Parliamentary Committee that was conducting an inquiry into accusations of corruption in the EACC stated that:

It has been impossible to penetrate the [...] EACC [...] adding that EACC officials had been threatened with unspecified repercussions should they share any information with the Ombudsman. The Ombudsman launched investigations into the bribery allegations after it received an anonymous complaint against the EACC on May 18, 2014.⁵³

Thus, problems of internal organizational integrity can elicit pursuit of inward-looking strategies and closed systems within a multi-agency networks by member organizations. Indeed, based on potential fear of interrogation on their lack of internal transparency and accountability, EACC executives exploited weak legal mechanisms in their relationship with CAJ to frustrate investigations. At the end, multi-agency networks may become predominated by distrust that ultimately weakens the effectiveness of such networks against corruption in public administration. This may also mean that institutional collaborations under PSIP are largely based on rational bureaucratic obligations and unsurprisingly little is done to foster anti-corruption efforts in public administration. That is, the continuity of multi-agency membership by EACC, CAJ, TI-Kenya and other governmental institutions show that PSIP framework is rule-based and mostly evaluated on rational principles. This rule-based orientation inevitably reduces multi-agency networks to mere reform myths or symbols as common in public accountability, subsequently bringing little change in the status of an ethical climate in public administration. The continued collaborative efforts as could be seen in KLIF are more likely to remain a mere club inhabited by a cohort of executives, whereby knowledge exchange largely remains at particular levels in organizational hierarchies. This could explain low awareness of KLIF among junior administrators. Indeed, knowledge translation and institutionalization of KLIF programs reportedly faced challenges at the street-level of implementation phase of anti-

corruption strategies. In other words, even though a multi-agency network can benefit implementation of policy programs in public administration it requires unique capabilities and high levels of commitment, which in reality are often rare in public organizations. To this extent, administrative trust as a key composite of informal governance is but one among other strategies for sustaining a multi-agency network. It is thus limited to scopes set by boundary spanners and only as good as these players within a particular collaborative network. Yet, if appropriately designed and matched with administrative realities, a multi-agency approach can elicit bottom-up processes of change and ownership of policy programs, including anti-corruption strategies in the public sector.

Conclusion

Being the approach prevalent in contemporary governance and a key strategy in implementation of policy programs in modern public administration, multi-agency networks should be appended on effective inter-relationships between concerned actors. At the center of strengthening and building these relationships are elements of mutual trust. It has been demonstrated that administrative trust can empower both individual actors and existing organizational linkages by eliciting confidence, transparency, reliability, and positive responses towards building multi-agency networks in policy programs in public administration. The relationship between administrative trust and the efficacy of a multi-agency approach has been tested with regard to the integration of anti-corruption strategies in public administration in Kenya. Alternatively, prevalence of distrustful relationships can perpetuate rigid forms of rational bureaucratic systems leading to pathological problems such as jurisdictional struggles, lack of employee maturity in the internalization of relevant policy programs, and lack of institutionalization of both the policies and multi-agency structures themselves within the operations of member organizations. As an informal composite of governance, inter-institutional trust is key in development of rational cultural inclinations of organizational culture, most especially when it comes to implementation of policies that cut-across agencies, departments, and directorates in public administration.

At the same time, however, inter-institutional trust is largely a function of structural-cultural synergies of administration, including institutional-historical factors and political environments.⁵⁴ It is indeed demonstrated that the design of the Public Service Integrity Programs (PSIP) framework could be adequate if appositely designed to embed anti-corruption strategies in public administration in Kenya. This article, however, shows that institutional arrangements may be not adequate—despite their appropriateness—for anti-corruption policies to be effectively implemented. Instead, bureaucratic efforts need to be accompanied by pursuit of strategies that can perhaps enhance organizational culture and ethics to build personal integrity, inter-organizational communication, commitment, and coordination. Herein, inter-institutional trust is shown to be an integral part of such efforts. Besides enhancing interpersonal relationships across the board, it can generally create solutions to problems arising from red tape, bureaucratic autonomy or organizational enclaves, and organizational politics. It can as well improve coordination and promote individual innovations needed for an efficient and effective public administration.

Furthermore, the predominance of corrupt behaviors is more likely to systematically degrade institutional capacities of oversight and governmental institutions even if both are engaged in multi-agency networks. Within such administrative environments, however, a few committed and innovative administrative executives can overcome bureaucratic constraints and institutional-cultural challenges by creating trustful relationships that can enhance organizational communication and commitment for implementation of anti-corruption strategies. However, multi-agency networks can rarely survive within distrustful organizational environments as they are commonly temporal and unsustainable under institutionalization deficits. That is, multi-agency networks' overreliance on existing leadership styles and culture make them short-lived unsustainable strategies. This does not rule out the fact that such partnerships potentially sooth implementation processes, enhance performance, and produce unexpected changes in administrative situations where such developments may have seemed quite unlikely. Trust building in public service for collaborative governance should prioritize implementation of multifaceted strategies directed at empowering organizational maturity of personnel and learning capabilities inside and outside public administration.

Notes

- 1 See, e.g. Farazmand 2009.
- 2 O'Leary and Vij 2012.
- 3 Christensen and Lægreid 2011; Onyango 2019a.
- 4 La Porte & Metlay 1996; O'Toole, 1997.
- 5 Bouckaert et al. 2016.
- 6 O'Leary & Vij 2012; Obosi 2017; Onyango 2018a.
- 7 Bardach 1998, p. 8.
- 8 Onyango 2017, pp. 360-64; Onyango, 2019b.
- 9 Martin 2007, p. 629.
- 10 Bardach 1998; Onyango 2019a.
- 11 Milward and Provan 2006, p. 6.
- 12 Oomsels and Bouckaert 2014.
- 13 Onyango 2019a.
- 14 Oomsels and Bouckaert 2014.
- 15 Jamil et al. 2016.
- 16 Esau 2016, p. 686.
- 17 Onyango, 2019a.
- 18 Bardach 1998.
- 19 Christensen and Lægreid 2019, p. 1.
- 20 O'Toole 1997.
- 21 Oomsels and Bouckaert 2014, p. 577.
- 22 Bouckaert 2012.
- 23 La Porte and Metlay 1996
- 24 Nyhan 2000; Onyango 2019a.

- 25 Dietz et al.,2010; Askvik et al. 2011.
- 26 Meagher 2004; Johnston 2005.
- 27 Ancona and Caldwell 1992.
- 28 Ancona and Caldwell 1992, p. 5.
- 29 Steven Curnin 2016, p. 2.
- 30 Mintzberg 1973.
- 31 Suchman 1995.
- 32 Selznick 1957.
- 33 March and Simon 1963.
- 34 Christensen et al. 2007, p. 3.
- 35 Christensen et al. 2007.
- 36 Christensen et al. 2007, p. 3.
- 37 EACC 2013a, p. 29.
- 38 CAJ 2014a.
- 39 EACC 2015.
- 40 Gelfand, et al. 2004, p. 137.
- 41 EACC 2015, p. 67.
- 42 EACC 2015.
- 43 CAJ 2014b, p. 24.
- 44 Spencer et al. 1994; Yin, 2014.
- 45 Miles et al. 2014.
- 46 Interview with author, 13 January 2015.
- 47 Interview with author, 12 March 2015
- 48 Interview with author, 10 February 2015.
- 49 EACC 2016a, p. 2.
- 50 Interview with author, 10 February 2015.
- 51 Interview with author, 08 July 2015.
- 52 Moene and Søreide, 2016, p. 2.
- 53 *Business Daily*, 19 February 2015.
- 54 Onyango, 2019a.

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