Assessing Stakeholder Perceptions on Local Governance: Evidence from Tikapur Municipality

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Abstract

The current study assesses the stakeholders' perceptions on local governance based on the evidence of Tikapur Municipality (TM) with reference to key dimensions of governance. In this regard, the focus was on accountability, transparency, law and policy implementation, stakeholder participation, public hearings/social audits, and anti-corruption mechanisms. The study adopted cross-sectional research design as data were collected from respondents through a one-timed structured survey. The structured questionnaire was administered to survey the respondents to collect required data to fulfil the research objectives following purposive sampling strategy. The study population of the research were all the elected representatives of TM, bureaucrats, service receivers, and stakeholders of TM. Amongst them, 33 were selected as samples of the study based on purposive sampling. The findings reveal that the majority of respondents perceive TM as largely adhering to good governance principles, particularly in accountability, transparency, and stakeholder participation. The findings suggest that governance practices are generally positive, continuous institutional strengthening, participatory decision-making, and monitoring are essential to enhance the quality governance and increase satisfaction. Based on the insight from this study, the author would like to make recommendations such as improving feedback mechanisms, strengthening anti-corruption measures, ensuring consistent policy enforcement, and promoting citizen engagement in decision-making processes for improving governance.

Keywords: Local governance, accountability, transparency, Law and policy implementation, Stakeholder participation, Public hearings

Introduction

Local governance of Nepal has been constitutionally empowered since the promulgation of Constitution of Nepal (2015) in terms of local legislation, fiscal management, public service delivery. Moreover, the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA) (2017), has also been formulated and enacted by the Federal Government of Nepal as per the constitutional provision mentioned in Annex 8 of the constitution. The study of Yale Economic Growth Center (2024) asserted that this provision has fundamentally transformed and strengthened local governance practice, thereby enabling local governments to exercise autonomy in terms of prioritizing the choice of local people, resource allocation, and implementation of the fiscal management for ensuring fulfilment of aspiration of the citizen. Prior to the implementation of the Constitution of Nepal (2015), there was observed wide variation and anomalies in decentralization practice of local governance. But, such problems and issues were significantly reduced followed by the promulgation and implantation of the latest constitution of Nepal. Nevertheless, the implementation of autonomy provided by the legal system is at early stages, it takes a reasonable time frame to observe matured practice. In this regard, empirical studies indicate that local governments are found to be facing persistent challenges such as weak accountability, limited deliberation, and low citizen engagement. Therefore, the local government of Nepal has witnessed serious problems in accountability, transparency, stakeholders' participation, corruption control and local regulation (Shahi, 2025; Bhusal, 2024; Sharma, 2025). Moreover, comparative analysis of Bhusal (2024) and Sharma (2025) asserted that the government of Nepal has suffered from the burgeoning issues such as lack of integrity in accountability and responsiveness, white collar bureaucratic inertia, and widespread violation of fiscal discipline. The Provincial and Local Governance Support Programme (PLGSP) are implemented to improve governance of the government (PLGSP, 2022). Despite Tikapur Municipality (TM) formal commitment as a local government to ensure good governance, it is not free from burgeoning issues such as limited satisfactions from the side of common people with respect to key dimensions of governance. Moreover TM is regarded as the focal point of Far Western Province of Nepal, in terms of subnational governance programs aimed at improving institutional government performance, community participation, and fiscal management (Yale Economic Growth Center, 2024). Nevertheless, previous evidence from similar contexts reveals persistent significant gaps between statutory mandates of TM and their practical implementation (Shahi, 2025). Therefore, the researcher was motivated to conduct this study focusing on the perception analysis of both service providers and service receivers regarding governance practice and regulation in Tikapur Municipality. Hence, the primary objective of the study was to assess the perceptions of elected representatives, bureaucrats, service receivers, and civil society members, particularly in areas such as accountability, participatory decision-making, transparency, policy implementation, and corruption control mechanisms. The next aim of the research was to have better insights regarding the challenges faced by the TM in maintaining effective institutional governance.

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Foundation

Theoretical perspectives on local governance postulate that effective local government and institution need to meet key requirements such as legal authority, strong deliberative culture, coordination amongst stakeholder, and strong citizen trust (Rhodes, 1996; Stoker, 1998; Moore, 1995). Moreover, Governance Theory provides foundation for better understanding of the intricate interactions and relations among state institutions, and common people, and civil society. In this context, UNDP (1997) and UNESCAP (2009) established globally accepted normative constructs in terms of participation, transparency, accountability, equity oriented, and responsiveness. The Nepal Subnational Governance Program (SNGP), (2022–2024) implemented from 2022 to 2024 with support from DFAT, generated a range of program reports and municipal survey findings during this period. These documents present empirical evidence on the performance of municipal governance, the quality of service delivery, and level of citizen feedback. Key indicators assessed in the survey include transparency, accountability, public participation and satisfaction with municipal service. The finding revealed significant disparities in governance performance among municipalities, with some demonstrating strong results on governance measures while others showed weaker performance. In the case of Tikapur, the benchmarking data are particularly useful for assessing its relative's strength and shortcoming compared to other municipalities nationwide. The program ultimately recommended enhanced capacity development initiatives and greater citizen involvement to improve overall governance practices Essentially, Nepal also accepted above normative construct and formulated and enacted Good Governance (Management and Operation) Act (2008) meant for making reference line for assessing local government performance evaluation. In fact, the theoretical overview is an instrumental and helpful lens to proceed and navigate the systematic and rigorous study of any issue.

Rhodes, (1996) explains that governance theory developed to overcome the limits of conventional government, focusing on network, partnership, and working together in decision making. It sees governance as going beyond formal government institutions to include interaction among the state, civil society and private sector. Similarly, Kooiman (2003) mentions that effective local governance depends on how these networks function and how citizens perceive inclusion and responsiveness. This theory suggests that people view governance more positively when decision making it transparent, accountable and responsive

Fung & Wright, (2003) contend that participatory governance focuses on citizens actively taking part in decision making. This approach encourages creation of governance results through inclusive methods like public meeting, social audit, and planning with local people. People tend to view governance more positively when they can influence policies and ensure authorities are accountable. Similarly, Arnstein (1996) Ladder of citizen participation also shows varying levels of involvement from tokenistic participation to full citizen control after public satisfaction and assessment of governance achievements.

World Bank, (2004) describes the social accountability framework as linking citizens' perceptions with governance performance through instruments such as public hearing, community scorecards and citizen charters. Fox, (2015) governance quality is influenced by local governments' responsiveness, creating a positive cycle of improved practices and citizen

perceptions. Actually, this framework shows that accountability creates a positive cycle improving both governance and peoples' views.

North, (1990) explains that institutional theory views governance practices as the result of both formal and informal institution arrangements. Local governance is guided by laws, norms and values that shape the behaviour and interactions of actors. Scott, (2014) Citizens views of governance depend on how stable institutions are, where the rule of law is followed and if processes are fair. However, local institutions are consistent, competent, trustworthy, and public confidence increases. Weak institutions, however, lead to perceptions of corruption inefficiency and exclusion. Addink (2019) offers a conceptual review of the various definitions of good governance, grouping them into three main value domains: the rule of law, participation and accountability. This categorical framework is useful for designing empirical indicators in municipal surveys and perception based studies, including those conducted in context such as Tikapur. The concept of good governance, advanced by the United Nations and World Bank, outlines principles such as participation, accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and equity (UNESCAP, 2009). These principles serve as normative benchmarks for evaluating governance practices. Citizens' perceptions of governance quality are often tied to how well these principles are practiced in local contexts. When governance is inclusive, transparent, and responsive, it enhances public satisfaction and strengthens democratic legitimacy (Hyden, Court, & Mease, 2004).

This has focused on the six key dimensions of governance such as accountability, transparency, stakeholder participation, rule of law, with proper implementation, corruption controlling mechanisms, and public hearings and social audits. Therefore, this study is underpinned to the institutional governance theory.

Empirical Review

There are perceived issues and discrepancies relating key dimensions of local governance around the world. In this regard scholars and stakeholders have conducted empirical studies and they are surveyed by the researcher. Bhattarai and Pasa (2021) study revealed weak administrative functions caused lower satisfaction among service receivers, and indicated widespread challenges related to staffing and their capacity. PLGSP (2022) study asserted that the municipalities with better technical assistance support are found to be showing more transparent planning and stronger institutional capacity. But, variation in governance performance is observed due to resource disparity.

Paudel and Shrestha (2022) study underscored that when local government authorities uphold criteria based on the Good Governance (Management and Operation) Act (2008), citizens report higher satisfaction with governance. Conversely, they reported worse satisfaction, lower transparency; suffered from elite capture perceptions and extreme lack of fairness. It eventually weakens democratic legitimacy. A comparative empirical review published in Gurain (2024) reviewed governance practices in several Nepalese municipalities; including those in sudurpaschim province. The study identified key weaknesses such as low administrative capacity, weak monitoring system, and limited people's participation, while also noting increasing awareness of transparency and accountability. It recommended unified local governance standards and strong

institutionalized participation at the municipal level offering a useful benchmark for assessing municipalities like tikapur against the border national trends.

Adhikari (2023) study concluded that federalism offered opportunities for improved governance in Nepal. Nevertheless, the gaps persisted in human resources, fiscal decentralisation, and transparency. Bhusal (2023) study asserted that meaningful citizen involvement is essential for producing improved outcomes. Moreover, the study underscores that limited administrative capacity gives rise to tokenistic participation without meaningful and productive achievements. These insights are widespread in contemporary governance practice at local level. Shahi (2023) examined monitoring and deliberative practices and found uneven implementation of various governance practices and moderate civil satisfaction in the local government of Kailali district.

Hood (1991) censoriously observed the increase of New Public Management (NPM), finding the key component principles such as decision-making autonomy, implement capacity, and competitive mechanism and calculating their implications. Again he claimed that however NPM assured effectively and efficiently, this study also engendered democratic accountability and fairness. This structure is trusted for local level governance lessons for the reason that it supports analyzing conventional bureaucratic practices alongside modern management reform, mainly once measuring efficiency based improvements in local government. Similarly Wang (2023) said that this study delivers a current synthesis connecting governance philosophy through participatory governance and public administration. This research analyzes highpoints in what way link the related institution for effective and efficient collaboration, create the belief and collectively problem solution in public service delivery. In the context of local level governance, this viewpoint of study shows how coordination and cooperation between the different branches, civil society and the people can recover the facility achievement and effectiveness of governance. Initially, Wang investigated the governance principles with applied models of co-production and collective administration in the local area.

Ballintyne (2018) expands Moor's idea of public value into a wider public value management model, promoting a whole-of-governance strategy that brings together citizen participation, cooperation among agencies, and performance evaluation. This perspective redefines governance as a collaborative process of value creation through partnership between government bodies, civil society institutions, local people, community and society. The approach offers important insights for assessing local governance practices, where collective responsibility and active community community involvement play a central role

According to Guffer (2021), the absence of accountability in public administrations leads to serious negative consequences, including ethical violations, corruption, loss of public trust and weakened institutional legitimacy. In the civil service, accountability refers to an official's obligation to justify their action and decisions, primarily through vertical accountability to their superiors. Without this mechanism, organizations become more valuable to internal and external threats that harm their performance, productivity and long –term stability. The study of Han (2024) focused on the quantitative study of accountability, citizen participation, and public trust in the local government of Nepal. The study concluded that effective accountability and citizen participation are pre-requisite for promoting public trust in local government. Conversely, poor feedback systems worsen citizen trust towards local government. These findings also provide

meaningful insights to assess perceptions of the stakeholders relating to transparency and accountability in the study area. Likewise, Adhikari (2024) opined that though legal frameworks are clear, there is significant variation in the implementation, depending on leadership style and institutional capacity. Similarly, Sapkota (2024) investigation revealed that women's political leadership in local governments with increased legal quotas enhanced increased representation, followed by the increased inclusiveness in decision making. Similarly, the findings of Yale Economic Growth Centre (2024a) and (2024b) revealed that transparent and participatory decision-making strongly correlated with the governance capacity and citizen satisfaction.

Rajbanshi (2024) study found moderate public perception of governance, showing special concern for the improvement in responsiveness and transparency. Similarly, Dahal (2021) study findings also highlighted constraints in human and financial capacity of local governments, despite having numerous regulations. Likewise, Shahi (2025) study found several areas of concern on deliberative and local governments having only symbolic participation, and limited inclusion and low level of capacity. Moreover, Dhakal (2025) found that the public perception was influenced by Citizen Charter, but bureaucratic attitudes are poor at addressing public grievances and less responsiveness.

Taylor (2022) citizens' views of public hearings and social audits are increasingly recognised as central to effective social accountability. Research shows that when people are genuinely invited to participate in hearings and audit activities, they feel more capable of holding Institutions responsible and develop greater confidence that decisions are to be carefully examined (How effectively are social accountability mechanisms being applied in mental health service within the newly federalized health system of Nepal?, 2025). In addition, social audits not only help reveal gaps between official reports and what actually happen in practices, but also enhance transparency, especially when they are conducted alongside public hearing in which information is openly presented and discussed (Social audit and public reporting, 2022) Consequently, public hearing and visible action on audit finding build trust significantly contributes to control corruption (Su et al., 2023).

Based on the summary of reviewed literature, the researcher has made some intuition and insights to the knowledge gap and evidence gap regarding issues relating to accountability and transparency of post-federal Nepal. Moreover, the empirical studies indicate that despite notable strides of post-federal local governance in terms of enhancing service delivery, accountability, and inclusion, still there persists challenges regarding institutional capacity, optimization of human and financial resources, and effective citizen participation. Additional studies such as Sharma (2025) emphasize challenges in fiscal capacity, Forest Action Nepal (2024) asserted limitation of coordination with community organizations (ForestAction Nepal, 2024), and knowledge gaps in deliberative governance practices (Shahi, 2025). Collectively, these empirical findings are instrumental to provide valuable guidelines to construct a study framework for rigorous examination of governance practices within Tikapur Municipality. Therefore, the findings underscore to make initiates to carry out further study to fulfil the objectives stated earlier.

Research Methodology

This study employs a descriptive method of data analysis to fulfil the objectives of research. This method of data analysis is appropriate for assessing the perceptions, and attitudes of stakeholders on the practices regarding local governance.

The researcher selected the study site purposely as it provides a relevant and appropriate context for examining the research objectives. Moreover, the presence of diverse stakeholders and ongoing governance practices offers rich empirical data. More importantly, the site was also accessible to the researcher, and necessary administrative approvals were obtainable, ensuring feasibility and ethical compliance. Therefore, the selected study site is suitable for generating valid and reliable findings. The study population are declared to be in four strata such as all elected representatives, municipality bureaucrats, service receiving people and civil society members within Tikapur Municipality. A total of 33 respondents were purposely selected, including elected representatives, bureaucrats, service recipients, and civil society members, to capture diverse and information-rich perspectives on governance practices relevant to the study. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative and governance research when the objective is to obtain in-depth, information-rich data from participants who possess direct experience and knowledge of the phenomenon under study (Patton, 2015).

The study used structured survey questionnaires consisting with close-ended and open-ended questions both to collect relevant primary data meant for fulfilment of aforementioned objectives of this study. Moreover, contextual information is also compiled from secondary sources such as peer-reviewed journal articles, relevant books, and policy reports. Similarly; data analysis is focused on key constructs such as accountability, transparency, rule of law. The consents of respondents and participants were taken for ensuring ethical consideration of the current research.

Table 1

Operational Definition of the Key Variables

Construct	Dimensions	Nature respondents	Data Source
Accountability	Answerability	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025
Transparency	Disclosure	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025
Policy Implementation	Compliance	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025
Participation	Inclusiveness	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025
Public Hearings	Oversight	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025
Anti-Corruption	Enforcement	ME, SP, SR, SC	Field Survey 2025

Note. Table 1 above shows about the operationalization of the study based on the construct, dimensions, respondents, and data source. The acronyms ME, SP, SR, SC stand for elected representative, bureaucrats, service receivers, and stakeholders.

Results and Discussion

The analysis of collected data and overall estimated quantitative results followed by their interpretations are presented in Table 1 to Table 6 subsequently.

Perception and Practices on Accountability

Table 2 below summarises the result analysis on perception and practices on accountability, where only three categories of responses are given by the respondents.

Table 2

Perception and Practices on Accountability of Officials

Respondents	Disagree (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	2.3	22.7	25.0	50.0
Beneficiaries	6.8	15.9	25.0	47.7
Service Providers	2.3	22.7	25.0	50.0
Executives	11.4	13.6	25.0	50.0
Total	4.5	20.5	75.0	100.0

Note. Table 2 above demonstrates perception analysis result on practice and accountability.
Data Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 2 results show that on aggregate a majority of the respondents 75 per cent strongly agreed that officials are accountable, followed by 20.5 per cent agreed and only 4.5 per cent disagreed. Evidently, perceptions are largely positive, although a small portion of executives and beneficiaries expressed scepticism. This may be indicating that accountability mechanisms may not be uniformly applied. In this regard, strengthening transparent reporting and inclusive feedback are essential to enhance institutional governance. The empirical studies of Rai (2024) found contradicting these results. The study underscored that the existence of legal provisions, accountability practices are often weakly enforced, creating gaps between policy and practice. Moreover, international evidence similarly shows that perceived accountability significantly affects service delivery and public trust (Manaf et al., 2023; Beshi & Kaur, 2020).

Transparent Decision-Making

Transparency also involves providing access to relevant information, documentation, and rationale behind key decisions, which allows stakeholders to better understand institutional actions and actively engage in governance processes. Table 3 below presents perception of respondents on the transparency in decision-making in the study area.

Table 3

Perception on Practices of Transparent Decision-Making Process

Respondents	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	11.4	13.6	25.0
Beneficiaries	9.1	15.9	25.0
Service Providers	6.8	18.2	25.0
Executives	6.8	18.2	25.0
Total	34.1	65.9	100.0

Table 3 above shows that all respondents expressed positive outlook on the transparent decision-making practices, with 65.9 per cent strongly agreeing, followed by 34 per cent agree. This indicates that there is a strong institutional culture of openness. Moreover, it also suggests that there is credible credible and participatory role of municipal authority in decision-making. These results align with findings by Dhungana (2019) and KC and Paudel (2025), who reported increasing transparency initiatives in Nepalese local governance, especially in planning and budget disclosure. However, studies by Shil and Chowdhury (2023) contrast this, showing limited transparency due to weak information dissemination and restricted citizen engagement in Bangladesh. The results reflect governance theory principles, emphasizing rule-based, accountable, and participatory decision-making, reinforcing that transparency is central to effective local governance.

Public Hearing and Social Audit

Table 4 below summarizes the perception of respondent on public hearings and social audits that are requisites of social accountability mechanisms.

Table 4

Perception on Public Hearing and Social Audit

Respondents	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	–	9.1	15.9	25.0
Beneficiaries	–	2.3	22.7	25.0
Service Providers	–	4.5	20.5	25.0
Executives	2.3	6.8	15.9	25.0
Total	2.3	22.7	75.0	100.0

Note. Table 4 above demonstrates Perception and Practices on Public Hearing and Social Audit
Data Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 4 above result shows that a majority of respondents (75%) strongly agreed on the existing practice of public hearings and social audits. This reflects strong recognition of these participatory accountability mechanisms. There is observed a minor level of neutrality 2.3 per cent among executives. These findings are supported by Dhungana (2019) and KC and Paudel (2025), who reported improved citizen oversight mechanisms in Nepalese local governance. In contrast, Shil and Chowdhury (2023) found that limited citizen participation and poor follow-up actions constrain the effectiveness of social audits in Bangladesh. The results align with governance theory, emphasizing participatory, accountable, and transparent governance, suggesting that institutionalized citizen engagement through public hearings strengthens legitimacy and responsiveness in local decision-making.

Perception on Legislation of Local Governments

In the context of current study, perceptions on legislation refer to the rule and law making procedures of the local government of the study area. In this context, Table 5 below summarises the result of the study.

Table 5
Perception on Law, Policy, and Rule Making

Respondents	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	2.3	–	2.3	20.5	25.0
Beneficiaries	–	2.3	11.4	11.4	25.0
Service Providers	–	–	11.4	13.6	25.0
Executives	–	–	13.6	11.4	25.0
Total	2.3	2.3	38.6	56.8	100.0

Note. Table 5 above demonstrates Perception and Practices on Perception on Law, Policy, and Rule Making
Data Source: Field Survey, 2025

Evidently, the majority of respondents 56.8 per cent strongly agreed against the statement, followed by 38.6 per cent agreed with existing practice of formulating and implementing policies, laws, and rules in the study area. However, about marginally low response 2.3 per cent are observed as disagreement. This is supported by Dhungana (2019) and KC and Paudel (2025), who observed that formal legal and policy frameworks are increasingly applied in Nepalese local governance. However, Shil and Chowdhury (2023) report that in some contexts, weak enforcement and limited citizen awareness undermine effective policy implementation. The findings align with governance theory, highlighting rule-based governance, institutional compliance, and citizen engagement, suggesting that transparent and participatory rule-making strengthens legitimacy and accountability at the local level.

Stakeholder Participation in Decision Making for inclusiveness and legitimacy

Citizen and stakeholders' engagement and participation are imperative to strengthen inclusiveness and legitimacy in local government. Table 6 below summarizes the perceived scenario of stakeholder participation in decision making for inclusiveness and legitimacy.

Table 6

Perception on Stakeholder Participation

Respondents	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	–	–	13.6	11.4	25.0
Beneficiaries	–	2.3	15.9	6.8	25.0
Service Providers	2.3	–	11.4	11.4	25.0
Executives	–	–	9.1	15.9	25.0
Total	2.3	2.3	50.0	45.5	100.0

Note. Table 6 above demonstrates Perception and Practices on Perception on Stakeholder Participation.

Data Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 6 indicates strong positive perceptions of stakeholder stakeholder participation in decision making for inclusiveness and legitimacy 45 per cent, followed by agree 50.5 per cent. Moreover minimal disagreement on the statement suggests that participation exists but may not be fully consistent across all groups of the society. This finding is supported by Dhungana (2019) and KC and Paudel (2025), who observed that participatory mechanisms, such as ward committees and planning meetings, enhance citizen involvement in Nepalese local governance. Conversely, Shil and Chowdhury (2023) report that limited inclusion of marginalized groups and poor communication channels can weaken genuine participation. These results align with governance theory, emphasizing inclusive, participatory, and accountable governance, where stakeholder engagement strengthens legitimacy and decision-making effectiveness.

Perception against Anti-Corruption Mechanisms

Table 7 below summarizes the perception analysis result on the good government construct anti-corruption mechanisms.

Table 7

Perception on Corruption-Discouraging Mechanisms

Respondents	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)	Total (%)
Civil Society	2.3	2.3	2.3	18.2	25.0
Beneficiaries	–	2.3	11.4	11.4	25.0
Service Providers	–	–	11.4	13.6	25.0
Executives	–	–	6.8	18.2	25.0
Total	2.3	4.5	31.8	61.4	100.0

Note. Table 7 above demonstrates Perception and Practices on Perception on Anti-Corruption Mechanisms.

Data Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 7 shows that the majority of respondents (93.2% combined agree and strongly agree) perceive corruption-discouraging mechanisms as actively practiced in local governance, with civil society and executives reporting higher effectiveness. These findings are supported by Dhungana (2019) and KC and Paudel (2025), who documented the presence of anti-corruption policies and complaint-handling procedures in Nepalese local governments. In contrast, Shil and Chowdhury (2023) highlight that weak enforcement and limited citizen awareness often reduces the practical impact of such mechanisms. The results align with governance theory, emphasizing accountable, transparent, and rule-based governance, where anti-corruption measures strengthen legitimacy, trust, and institutional integrity.

The findings revealed that Tikapur Municipality demonstrates relatively positive governance practices in term of the good government dimensions accountability, transparency, rule of law, stakeholder participation, public hearings and social audits, and corruption control mechanisms. However, respondents demonstrate minor disagreement in some areas. This was observed particularly among elected representatives.

Conclusion and Policy Implication

The current study was focused the to primary objective to assess the perceptions of elected representative, bureaucrats, service receivers, and civil society members, particularly in areas such as accountability, participatory decision-making, transparency, policy implementation, and corruption control mechanisms. The study concludes that respondents demonstrates generally positive governance practices across accountability, transparency, stakeholder participation, law and policy implementation, public hearings, and anti-corruption efforts. The overall perception of governance is favourable, suggesting that institutional mechanisms are in place and recognized by stakeholders. However, there is observed minor gaps in consistent implementation, inclusiveness, and enforcement highlight areas for improvement. Therefore, strengthening institutional capacity, fostering citizen engagement, and monitoring governance practices are critical areas of reform to ensuring sustained and effective local governance.

Policy Implication

The researcher has drawn some policy implication as outcome of this study:
- Strengthen accountability and transparency through regular monitoring and reporting mechanisms to ensure uniform accountability across all levels.
- Enhance Stakeholder Participation through regular citizen engagement, with special focus on marginalized groups.
- Conduct periodic policy reviews to ensure timely and effective execution that is expected to improve legislative procedures.
- Strengthen corruption control mechanisms by developing and enforcing clear whistleblowing and reporting channels for corruption-related concerns.
- Promote public hearings and social audits to make sure that public hearings and social audits are regular, to link it with actionable outcomes.

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