

FACTORS AFFECTING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENT EXPENDITURE BUDGET MANAGEMENT IN THE CASE OF ETHIOPIA'S MINISTRY OF FINANCE

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ABSTRACT

Budget is an important component in county government planning and decision making. A budget system that functions well is important to develop sustainable fiscal policies and economic growth. In developing countries, budgetary institutions are in their infancy and are mainly used as tools for legalistic controls and micromanagement. The general objective of the study was to evaluate factors that affect the effectiveness of budget management in the ministry of finance of Ethiopia. To conduct the study both primary and secondary data were used. Primary data were collected from MOF staffs using questionnaire and interviews. SPSS 23 versions were used to analyze the collected data. The findings show that budget experts' staff competency has strong impact on the budget management, there is a problem with MOF salary scale to attracts and retains qualified and experienced experts. Government budget laws and regulations have significant effect on the government budget management; MOF has weaknesses in updating and revising the budget laws and regulations. Regarding the applications of IFMIS the Ministry prepares and executes the budget using IFMIS; however, it has still a room for the improvement of personnel knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of IFMIS. MOF should provide trainings on the government budget management, and government accounting system to the public accounts standing committees of the legislative organs.

Key words: Government budget, laws and regulations, IFMIS, staff competency and SPSS

1. Introduction

Budgeting is a crucial part of county government planning and decision-making. Budgets and budgeting systems are used significantly by almost each organization, irrespective of size, structure, or area, to achieve strategic goals. (Oketa, 2013). A government budget is a declaration of a detailed program for the mobilization and utilization of estimated resources in the course of the budgetary exercise during a given period of time or in a well-defined period of time; it is a record of a government's revenues and expenditures.. It is the most significant economic policy instrument available to the government. In Ethiopia's public sector, the major sources of funds are national income and borrowing, which is subject to conditions such as borrowing exclusively to support growth (Rotich & Ngahu, 2015).

Budgets, according to Anwar (2007), are the vehicles through which a government's objectives, political commitments, and action plans are translated into actions. A well-functioning budget system is necessary for the development of long-term fiscal policy and economic development. In industrialized countries, budgetary organizations have traditionally played a significant role in a steady shift toward responsive, responsible, and accountable public government. The use of the

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budget as a tool for strategic management and citizen empowerment, as well as a comprehensive budget that includes all government operations, a results-based chain demonstrating their performance, and transparency of the budget process are all seen as essential aspects of a reform to counteract the perceived limitations of budgetary organizations. A budget is a numerical statement of management's projected plan of action for a specific period of time, and it helps coordinate what needs to be done to put the plan into effect. (Horngren et al, 2003). A budget can include both financial and non-financial parts of the plan, and it acts as a roadmap for the organization to follow in the future. It is a necessary instrument for the smooth running of any organization (Gachithi, 2015). It necessitates functioning efficiently and providing high-quality service, both of which necessitate spending. A budget is a quantitative statement of management's suggested plan of action for a specific time period that aids in organizing what has to be done to put the plan into action. A credible budget has small deviations in contrast to actual outcomes, is comprehensive in coverage, and is cost-effective in terms of cash availability (Deng & Peng, 2011). A credible budget also includes realistic predictions and long-term spending plans, and the legislature oversees the process effectively (Conteh, 2016).

Budgeting is described as a legislative act defining and approving particular types and quantities of expenditures and taxation, as well as a valuation of receipts and expenditures, or a public balance sheet (Tyer and Willand 1997).

Many institutions are finding it difficult to implement their budgets since they are obligated to create accurate forecasts for the implementation of certain programs or development projects based on economic indicators. Some requirements may go unnoticed during budget proposals, or the cost estimate may change dramatically.

2. Statement of the Problem

Around the world, there is a growing focus on enhancing the quality of public financial management, with several nations achieving significant and noteworthy successes in this area (ACCA, 2013).

According to Gideon (2015), a well-functioning budget system is critical for developing longterm fiscal policy and economic development. Poor budgeting procedures and budgetary choices exacerbate economic challenges in many countries. In practice, budgets are rarely effectively managed. Budgets are rarely managed successfully in practice. This can be for sound reasons, such as changes in policy in reaction to changing economic situations, or for bad reasons, such as mismanagement, poor budgeting, illegal spending, inefficiency, or fraud (Nebraska, 2015).

Budget implementation should be reviewed periodically to ensure programs are implemented effectively and identify financial variances. One of the challenges to users was that budgets were not reviewed once the budget was approved. The efficient budget process should have been administrated effectively in terms of initial planning, final approval, and subsequent monitoring

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of implementation (Weetman, 2006). There should be a division of responsibility for budget utilization, budget appropriation management rules and budget changes, different budget-related special concerns, and budget execution monitoring (Semachew, 2019). At the same time, budget execution encompasses both policy implementation activities and budget administration responsibilities.

Every citizen's life is influenced by the government budget, which has the biggest impact on people's well-being and potential. Budgetary institutions are still in their infancy in poor nations, and they are mostly utilized for legalistic restrictions and micromanagement. As a result, reforming these institutions is critical to enhancing public sector efficiency (Anwar, 2007). According to Schick (2002), as cited by Paul and Chung (2007), legislatures lack the skills to keep up with the increasing intricacy and complexity of modern budgets, especially when contrasted to executive agencies' deep understanding. In recent years, the growth of economic and social infrastructure has led to an increase in the government's current budget, natural and man-made disasters, and a reduction in government revenue that is incompatible with development needs. Furthermore, Ethiopia faces issues in terms of government expenditure budget use and value for money (MOFEC, 2018). Weak public service delivery, serious corruption issues, a large budget deficit, a lack of transparency, and inefficient budget use are just a few of the difficulties that emerging nations like Ethiopia face. The goal of this study was to identify the elements that influence budget management effectiveness.

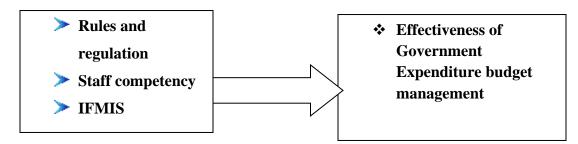
3. Literature review Concepts, Definition and procedures of budget

A budget, according to Jordaan (2007), as cited by Kojo and Enu (2014), is a measurable, planned course of action over a certain time period that includes estimated inputs and input costs, as well as accompanying outputs and output revenues. Fiscal rules deal with the substance of budget outcomes, whereas procedural rules deal with how budgeting chores are carried out. Every national government has budget processes in place that cover all of the phases of the annual cycle. The processes have become routines over time, and they are performed year after year with little or no variation. Budget procedures specify the responsibilities and connections of stakeholders in the process, as well as the manner in which certain tasks are completed, the information needed, and action dates. Budgeting practices help to alleviate the tensions and disputes that come with competing for limited resources (Allen, 2003).

The essential processes were defined by concepts that were acknowledged as good practice early in the development of budgeting. The most important principles were: i) comprehensiveness (all revenue and expenditures should be included in the budget); ii) accuracy (transactions should be accurately recorded in the budget); iii) annularity (each budget should span a single fiscal year); iv) authoritativeness (public funds should be spent as authorized by law); and v) transparency (the government should publish timely information on receipts and expenditures). Due process in

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budgeting is defined by the processes and concepts that underpin them. The word "due process" suggests that if the processes are properly followed, the results will be correct. The legality and effectiveness of budget choices are judged by the methods utilized, not by substantive goals or criteria, in the same way that a court's ruling is guided by due process. Whatever comes out of a budgeting process that follows the rules is correct. The allocations to spending units and the budget totals should be regarded as correct if, for example, the budget is complete and all bids for resources are presented in the proper sequence and verified by the relevant budget authority. The outcome is unimportant in the due process. More or less expenditure, balanced or unbalanced budgets, increasing or stable public debt loads, greater or lower taxes, or other budget outcomes are not priorities for it. What is important is that the steps are taken correctly. Due process in budgeting is akin to due process in litigation in this way. The resulting judgment must be accepted if due judicial process is followed. The same principle underlies the budgeting process.



Independent variables

dependent variables

Figure 1. Conceptual framework for expenditure budget and service delivery

4. General objective

To assess the factors affecting the effectiveness of expenditure budget management in the ministry of finance of federal Government of Ethiopia

4.1 Specific objectives

- 1. To evaluate the competency of budget experts in the of government budget management
- 2. To evaluate the effect of government laws and regulations on the expenditure budget management
- 3. To examine the application of integrated financial management information system in the budget management

4.2 Research questions



- 1. Does budget expert competency affects government budget management
- 2. What are the effects of government laws and regulation on the budget management
- 3. Does integrated financial management information system affects the budget management

5. Methodology

The research was carried out using a mixed research strategy, which included both quantitative and qualitative data. Employees of the Ministry of Finance made up the study population, and responses were chosen via multistage sampling. Primary data collection instruments questionnaire were developed through the use of scaled items measured on 1-5, to gather quantitative data, while qualitative data were gathered using interviews from the senior officials of ministry of finance and economic cooperation of Ethiopia. This method deals with the problems of the study from different point of view. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS 23 version. Secondary data were collected from internet sources, reports, published journals, magazines and books sources.

6. Results and Discussions

6.1 pilot study

A pilot test was conducted to determine the appropriateness and importance of the instrument's questions. A content validity test was performed to determine the scope of the instrument's coverage, universe representativeness, specificity, and clarity of the issue under investigation. Three academics and four practitioners were given the instrument and were given the task of thoroughly evaluating each item. The draft was also handed to 20 professionals from the Ministry of Finance, who were given the opportunity to evaluate it.

6.2 Reliability Test

To assess reliability analysis for the factors affecting expenditure budget management in the Ministry of Finance, the researcher employed cronbach's alpha (α). Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used measure of internal consistency (reliability). The scale employed in the study has a cronbach's alpha (α) of 0.7702, which is significantly higher than 70%. The scale with a coefficient alpha more than 0.70 is acceptable, indicating that the questionnaire has a high level of internal consistency and reliability. As a result, the alpha level was deemed credible enough to continue with the data analysis.

7. Response Rate

According to the findings of the field survey, 76 out of 93 questionnaires distributed to Ministry of Finance experts and lower-level managers were returned, representing an 82 percent response rate.

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7.1 Demographic information of respondents

The following graph depicts information about specialists at the Ministry of Finance's age, experience, and educational background.

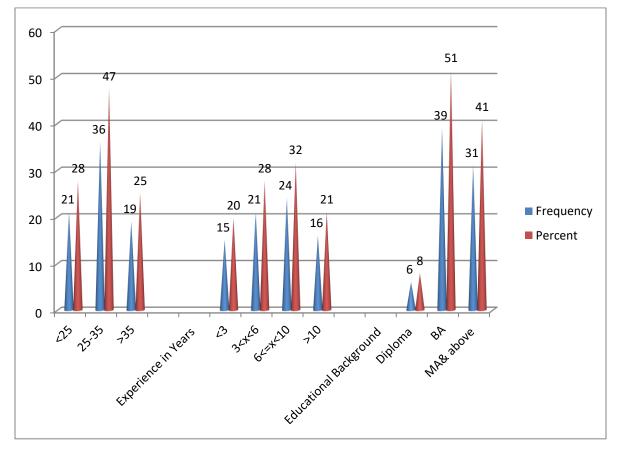


Figure 1. Demographic characteristics of experts

From the above figure the 21(28%) of the respondents are below 25 years old, 36(47%) are 25 to 35 years where as 19(25%) are above 35 years old hence, majority of the respondents are at working age which helps the ministry to achieve its vision. Regarding the working experience of the experts 15(20%) has less than three years, 21(28%), ranges three to six years, 24(32%) has six to ten years and 16(21%) has above ten years therefore, majority 61(81%) has above three years working experience which is an opportunity for the ministry to implement the budget rules and regulation properly. Regarding the educational background 6(8%) are diploma holders, 39(51%) are first degree holders and 31(41%) are MA/MSC and above therefore, majority

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70(92%) of the respondents are BA and above which is adequate educational background to implement the rules, regulations and new technologies in the sector.

Competency of budget experts in government budget management

Table 1

						Resp	onse	s				То	tal
N	Statements	SD		DA		Ν		Α		SA			
N Statements 0		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	The ministry has an effective system of staff recruitment and selection procedure to ensure the best applicants are selected for the job		4	14	18	10	13	25	33	24	32	76	100
2	The budget experts working in the ministry have the requisite qualification and experience to perform their duties in the management of budget	1	1	5	7	17	22	40	53	13	17	76	5100
3	The ministry has put in place a training and development policy and arranges trainings programs to enhance budget experts skills to ensure effective budget management	1	1	6	8	13	17	34	45	22	29	76	100
4	The ministry has put in place performance and merit base staffs promotion directive	6	8	7	9	13	17	29	38	21	28	76	100
5	The ministry salary scale attracts and retains qualified and experienced experts	7	9	13	17	15	20	31	41	10	13	76	100
	Total F	18		45		68		159		90		380	100
	Total percentage of the 5 statements%	5		12		18		42		23			100



Source: Author 2020

From table 1 above the summary of five statements rose to measure the competency of budget experts in the management of government budget. The results showed that 43% respondents agree and 23% of the total respondents strongly agreed respectively. These comprise 66% of the total participants of the study which was an indicator that the budget experts' staff competency has strong impact on the budget management of the ministry. An evaluation of the statements of the variable competency of budget experts in the ministry based on the mean and standard deviation summarized in table 2 below.

Staff competency Mean and Standard deviation analysis

Table 2

	Statements	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The ministry has an effective system of staff	76	3.6974	1.2118
	recruitment and selection procedure to ensure			
	the best applicants are selected for the job			
2	The budget experts working in the ministry	76	3.7763	0.85788
	have the requisite qualification and experience			
	to perform their duties in the management of			
	budget			
3	The ministry has put in place a training and	76	3.9211	0.94887
	development policy and arranges trainings			
	programs to enhance budget experts skills to			
	ensure effective budget management			
4	The ministry has put in place performance and	76	3.6842	1.20234
	merit base staffs promotion directive			
5	The ministry salary scale attracts and retains	76	2.4737	0.88655
	qualified and experienced experts			

Source: Author 2020

From table 2 above Further analysis was conducted using mean scores and standard deviation on the link between competency of budget experts and effectiveness of budget management ranged between **3.9211** and **2.4737** with the statement the ministry has put in place a training and development policy and arranges trainings programs to enhance budget experts skills to ensure effective budget management contributing highest mean (**mean score 3.9211, SD 0.94887**) while The ministry salary scale attracts and retains qualified and experienced experts the lowest mean (**mean score 2.4737, SD 0.88655**). This result revealed that the ministry of finance and

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economic cooperation has put in place a training and development policy and arranges trainings programs to enhance budget experts' skills to ensure effective budget management however, there is still a problem with ministry salary scale to attracts and retains qualified and experienced experts. The findings are in line with findings of Musyoka (2017), who from his research concluded that budget staff competency has impact on the effectiveness of budget management.

The impact of government laws and regulations on the budget management process

Table 3

						Res	pons	es				То	tal
No	Statements	SD DA N		N	Α			SA					
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	Government top management understands and supports the importance of effective budget management in accordance with the law	2	3	6	8	10	13	41	54	17	22	76	100
2	The staffs involving in budget process understand the PFM Regulations relating to county government budgeting	3	4	13	17	13	17	32	42	15	20	76	100
3	The ministry manages the budget according to the constitution and the supporting regulations	2	3	6	8	16	21	32	42	20	26	76	100
4	The heads of line ministries are held accountable uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws discovered by the office of General auditors	5	7	44	58	13	17	13	17	1	1	76	100
5	The PFM regulation and directives are regularly reviewed and revised	4	5	22	29	10	13	31	41	8	10	76	100
	TotalF	16		91		62		149		61		380	100

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Total percentage of the 5	statements	% 5	24	16	39	16	

Source: Author 2020

From table 3 above, a summary of the five statements that were administered to measure the impact of government laws and regulations on the budget management process and their responses were tabulated. The findings indicated that 39% and 16% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. These comprises of 55% of all the respondents who participated in the study were a strong indicator of government laws and regulations on the budget management in the ministry of finance and economic cooperation.

Government Laws and regulations Mean and Standard deviation analysis

	Statements	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Government top management understands and supports the importance of effective budget management in accordance with the law	76	3.8553	0.94804
2	The staffs involving in budget process understand the PFM Regulations relating to county government budgeting	76	3.5658	1.11158 56
3	The ministry manages the budget according to the constitution and the supporting regulations	76	3.8158	1.00280
4	The heads of line ministries are held accountable uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws discovered by the office of General auditors	76	2.4868	0.90175
5	The PFM regulation and directives are regularly reviewed and revised	76	3.2105	1.12328

Table 4

Source: Author 2020

From table 4 above further analyses was conducted using mean scores and standard deviation on the link between government laws and regulations Mean and Standard deviation analysis and effectiveness of budget management ranged between **3.8553** and **2.4868** 'government top management understands and supports the importance of effective budget management in accordance with the law' on the budget management process the highest mean and standard deviation of (**3.8553, 0.94804.** while 'the heads of line ministries are held accountable uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws discovered by the office of general auditors' the lowest score (**2.4868, 0.90175**). This implied that for the effectiveness of budget management to be achieved the government top management should understand and support the budget management and the

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heads of line ministries should be held accountable uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws discovered by the office of general auditors. To triangulate the result an interview were held with senior officials about the effect of budget laws and regulations on the effectiveness of budget management the interview participants confirmed that budget laws and regulations are very important factors in the budget management process, however, there are weakness in revising and updating the budget laws and regulations regularly; Moreover, there are also weaknesses in arranging trainings to the public account committees of the legislators to improve their critical thinking.

Application of IFMIS in the budget management process

Table 5

		Responses						Total					
No	Statements		SD DA			Ν		Α		SA			
		Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
1	The Ministry of Finance prepares and executes the budget by using the IFMIS system	3	4	4	5	12	16	38	50	19	25	76	100
2	MOF IFMIS department, has adequate & Skilled team provides adequate technical support to enable effective use of IFMIS system in the line ministries	5	7	6	8	9	12	37	49	19	25	76	100
3	The MOF has put in place a policy that all staff to built capacity through trainings to enhance their IT skills	5	7	7	9	8	11	42	55	14	18	76	100
4	MOF allocates adequate budget to adopt financial management and information systems in budget formulation, execution and accounting	4	5	8	11	10	13	40	53	14	18	76	100
5	MOF has personnel with requisite knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of IFMIS	7	9	10	13	10	13	37	49	12	16	76	100
	Total F	24		35		49		194		78		380	

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Total percentage of the 5 s	tatamants 0			13	51	21	

Total percentage of the 5 statements	%	6	9	13	51	

Source: Author 2020

From table 5 above, a summary of the five statements that were administered to measure the impact the application of IFMIS in the budget process on the budget management process and their responses were tabulated. The findings indicated that 51% and 21% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed respectively. These comprises of 72% of all the respondents who participated in the study were a strong indicator of the application of integrated financial management information system on the budget management in the ministry of finance.

IFMIS Mean and Standard deviation analysis

Table 6

	Statements	Ν	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The Ministry of Finance prepares and executes the budget by using the IFMIS system	76	3.8684	0.98444
2	MOF IFMIS department, has adequate & Skilled team provides adequate technical support to enable effective use of IFMIS system in the line ministries	76	3.7763	1.11473
3	The MOF has put in place a policy that all staff should be capacity built through trainings to enhance their IT skills	76	3.6974	1.08345
4	MOF allocates adequate budget to adopt financial management and information systems in budget formulation, execution and accounting	76	3.6842	1.06095
5	MOF has personnel with requisite knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of IFMIS	76	3.4868	1.18314

Source: Author 2020

From table 6 above further analyses was conducted using mean scores and standard deviation on the link between integrated financial management information management Mean and Standard deviation analysis and effectiveness of budget management ranged between 3.8684 and 3.4868 'The Ministry of Finance prepares and executes the budget by using the IFMIS system' on the budget management process the highest mean and standard deviation of (3.8684, 0.98444). While 'MOF has personnel with requisite knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of IFMIS' the lowest score (3.4868, 1.18314). This implied that The Ministry of Finance Economic Cooperation prepares and executes the budget by using the IFMIS; however, it has still 58

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a room for improvement of personnel with requisite knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of IFMIS since the score according to the mean is moderate. These findings were similar with Chado (2015), who from his research concluded that FMIS improve budget planning and execution by providing timely and accurate data for budget management and decision making.

8. Conclusion and recommendation

8.1 Conclusions

Based on the findings the ministry of finance has adequate and experienced professionals who can properly understand and implement the budget rules and laws. The competency of budget experts has an impact on the effectiveness of budget management to this end the ministry has put in place a training and development policy and arranges trainings programs to enhance budget experts' skills to ensure effective budget management however, there is still a problem with ministry salary scale to attracts and retains qualified and experienced experts. Well articulated government laws and regulations have positive impact on the effectiveness of budget management in the ministry and the government top management understands and supports the budget management experts to achieve the ultimate goals of budget; however, there is a problem with the ministry to held accountable the heads of line ministries uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws discovered by the office of general auditors. The Ministry of Finance prepares and executes budget using the IFMIS; however, it has still a room for improvement of personnel with requisite knowledge & expertise for the effective implementation, operation, & maintenance of integrated financial management information system.

8.1 Recommendation

The ministry of finance should improve its salary scale to attract and retain competent staffs to achieve its predetermined objectives. The ministry should strictly hold accountable the heads of line ministries uniformly without any discrimination for the violation of budget laws and regulations based on the findings of general auditors. The ministry should arrange continuous training and development program to improve the personals' knowledge and skill for the effective implementation, operation and maintenance of integrated financial management information system. The ministry of finance and economic cooperation should provide trainings on the government budget management, public financial management and government accounting to the public accounts standing committees of the legislative organs.

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