



Abstract

DISCIPLINING GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

This study examines the promotion of governance in the African Continent. It compares the Country Policy Institutional Assessment (CPIA) of the World Bank to the African Peer Review Mechanism (APRM) of the African Union. These governance assessments represent differing conceptualizations of governance, particularly reflected in their content and approach. This study therefore aimed to critically examine the manner in which the CPIA and APRM discipline governance standards on the African continent. The study answered the following principal research questions: how do the content, process and outcome of the CPIA and APRM support or challenge the good governance agenda; its relation to aid, and what does this mean in the context of power relations of the World Bank and the African Union? As the research focused particularly on governance conceptualization, it focused within the CPIA on Cluster D: Public Sector Management and Institutions and within the APRM on Theme A: Democracy and Political Governance. The research methodically grounded the discourse and praxis on good governance by relying on the analytical framework provided through governmentality theory and the application of this framework to development policies through the concept of developmentality.

In order to answer the research question, the study probed five supporting sub-questions. The first sub-question asked: how are governance standards given shape in the content and design of CPIA and APRM? The main aim of the question was to describe the ways in which the content and design of the CPIA and APRM promote the adoption of governance standards in African countries. The analysis showed that governance standards are given shape in the content and design of the CPIA and APRM. The CPIA content comprises discursive frames on good governance that reflect the norm that (good) governance is central to sustainable development and to aid effectiveness. As such, CPIA is designed as a form of indirect rule of the World Bank over aid recipients. This comprises a productive power as the World Bank generates knowledge on the performance of the aid recipient and uses the Bank's performance-based allocation system as a discursive practice to incentivise proper conduct. Similarly, the APRM content comprises African discursive frames on good governance that considers a more political operationalization of governance and incorporates African standards as reference. However, the APRM is designed as a form of counter rule against external influences on the African development agenda. This design reflects a form of resistance as it uses similar language, frames, methods and discursive spaces as that of the donors to present a counter approach and method to promoting governance.

An investigation of the application of CPIA and APRM assessments through a case study of Ethiopia deepened the investigation. The second research question hence asked: how have CPIA and APRM assessment processes been conducted in Ethiopia? While the first question set forth the design of the assessment processes, this question focused on their empirical application by describing and analysing the processes whereby the CPIA and APRM assessments have been undertaken in Ethiopia.

The analysis informed that CPIA is a technology of surveillance of the World Bank that assessed adherence to the good governance norm and generated knowledge on the conduct of Ethiopia. The CPIA monitored the conduct of Ethiopia by assessing its adherence and deviance to governance standards regarding public sector management and institutions. Furthermore, the knowledge generated from the assessment formally informed development finance allocation provided by the International Development Association of the World Bank. The analysis of the application of the APRM assessment in Ethiopia showed that the process monitored Ethiopia's adherence to African governance norms and generated knowledge on its policies and practices. However, the Ethiopian government controlled the assessment process and dismissed the findings of the report in regards to the theme Democracy and Political Governance. Therefore, the analysis concluded that the inter- and intra-discipline mechanisms of the APRM were rather weak.

The third research question departed from this assessment and asked: how have CPIA and APRM applications influenced the promotion of related governance standards in Ethiopia? This question broadly probed the outcomes of the assessment process and more in detail how the assessment has promoted its governance standards. In relation to the CPIA, the analysis showed that the translation of the Bank's knowledge to power over the aid recipient was ineffective as the Bank did not make the appropriate link between norm, performance and punishment/reward. In particular, the analysis showed that the CPIA is only one factor determining Bank development allocations and a multitude of internal and external factors informed the final country allocation. As a result of this, the CPIA process did not discipline the government to adhere to its policy standards. Similarly, the outcomes in the case of the APRM were also limited and did not discipline Ethiopia to adhere to its governance standards. Inter and intra-state disciplining of government was weak as the horizontal peer pressures were limited in persuading the government to accept the governance standards and vertical societal pressures were limited due to the restrictive state structures.

The fourth research question focused on the salient observations from the case study of Ethiopia and replicated this to three secondary case study analyses of Rwanda, Nigeria and Ghana. In particular, the fourth question focused its analysis on: similar or different dynamics influencing the application of the CPIA and APRM in Rwanda, Ghana and Nigeria? In relation to the CPIA, the analysis explained that (similar to the case of Ethiopia) the translation of knowledge to power over the aid recipients was ineffective as the Bank did not make the appropriate link between norm, performance and punishment/reward. The case studies furthermore showed that dynamics regarding the ability to effectively absorb development finance and the relative level of economic development and national income also influenced these aid allocation processes of the World Bank. In relation to the APRM, the analysis showed that the process (similar to the case of Ethiopia) did not discipline Ghana, Nigeria and Rwanda to adhere to its policy standards due to weak inter and intra disciplining mechanisms. Inter-state disciplining was weak as the peer review process primarily functioned to give internal and external political legitimacy to the review process and outcomes. Intra-state disciplining was weak as the APRM domestic processes operated within the confines of established state-society engagements and did not alter these by mandating a participatory approach and a monitoring role for non-state actors.

Building on these insights, the fifth research question focused the analysis on: what strategic considerations inform the functions the CPIA and APRM perform for the World Bank and the African Union? The analysis zoomed in on the strategic considerations of the World Bank and the

African Union that influenced the application of the CPIA and APRM, and aimed to provide a more comprehensive understanding of their functions and operation. The analysis showed that the CPIA functioned formally to increase aid effectiveness but informally operated as a tool of the Bank to increase its geopolitical influence in aid recipients. In the case of the APRM, the analysis suggested that while the APRM formally functioned to strengthen governance in the content, it informally supported member states' wishes to increase their political legitimacy. This disjuncture between the discourse and practice of the Bank on the one hand and the African Union, on the other hand could be explained by understanding these assessments as instruments that serve to normalize and legitimize existing dynamics, structures and practices that govern the power relations between these actors.

The overall findings of the research suggest that while the content of the CPIA and APRM support the good governance agenda, the processes and outcomes are actually in disjunction to this discourse and does not influence aid allocation processes. The findings of this study suggest that this is because the processes and outcomes of the CPIA and APRM are used as instruments of the World Bank and the African Union to normalize, legitimize and reproduce development structures that govern the power dynamics between the West and the Bank on the one hand, and the African Union and its member states on the other hand. By relying on the developmentality framework it is possible to view this parody as being logically connected.