

Stronger Institutions in Haiti:

Can Transparency and Accountability Make a Difference?



ABSTRACT

This study aims to inform the debate regarding transparency and accountability in Haiti's public institutions. The research focuses exclusively on the perceptions of local Haitians and how they believe that Haiti's development can be impacted by more or less transparency and accountability in its public affairs. Drawing on the findings from a prior study, a modified interview questionnaire, and other recent documentation, this article demonstrates that local Haitians want greater transparency and accountability measures; however, they have a negative perception about the ability and willingness of the local government to enforce these measures. In one case, for instance, results show that general perceptions are getting worse due to a lack of confidence in Haiti's leaders. In another case, results show that the current administration may benefit from a slightly higher degree of confidence than the Martelly-Lamothe's administration. By and large, the findings expose the complexity of implementing these practices in Haiti's institutions while revealing some sort of hesitation about how to move ahead.

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Introduction

For Haiti to subsist as a sovereign nation in the 21st century, it has to build stronger institutions that can deliver a better quality of life to its people. No one, or at least so it seems, wants to see recurrent military interventions or permanency of United Nations (UN) forces¹ in the streets of Haiti, however successful or controversial these practices are. No one wants to see constant flows of young men and women, braving unsafe borders and perilous seas in the quest of better living conditions, putting unwarranted pressures on the socioeconomic structures of unprepared hosts and causing lasting damages to their motherland as a result of a brain-drain². If Haiti does not want to be left farther behind by the community of nations, it needs to pick-up its own rug, however heavy and dirty it is, and sprint on.

From this point of view, transparency and accountability practices have shown to improve the performance of public institutions, although it seems that the correlations between these two concepts are still blurred³. In fact, the jury is still out on whether increased transparency translates necessarily to more accountability. Furthermore, these practices have no meaning in themselves if they are not enforced by public officials and the citizenry⁴. Nevertheless, social scientists can now pinpoint with a high degree of certainty, that, where lack of transparency and accountability abounds, corruption flourishes; and in a kingdom where corruption is king, poverty is the uncontested queen.

With this prospect in mind, this study aims to bring a fresh perspective to this otherwise long debate about finding a path to more transparent and accountable public institutions in Haiti.

Research Summary

This paper evaluates the perceptions of Haitians about whether transparency and accountability practices can strengthen their institutions as to have a positive impact on their lives. What makes

¹ The UN has been deploying peacekeeping missions in Haiti since 1993. The latest mission, MINUSTAH, left the country in October 2017; it has been replaced by another mission, MINUJUSTH, for an unknown period of time.

² See <http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/wp/2006/wp0625.pdf>

³ See Hood, C. (2010)

⁴ Briere, S., Jobert, S., and Poulin, Y. (2010)

this research more interesting though, is that I conducted a similar study⁵ four years ago; this study is the same, but with many more participants: 650 vs. 40, modifications made to the interview questionnaires, and two more data collection sites added: Port-au-Prince and St. Marc.

Building on the objectives of the first study, which was to evaluate the perceptions of local Haitians in regards to transparency and accountability in public institutions, I added an additional objective, namely: to ascertain if these perceptions have changed since the last study conducted in 2013. The findings were not exactly beyond our expectations. In fact, key results show that Haitians perceptions have slightly changed from four years ago. More people from all categories selected - income, gender, education level, and work experience - believed that public institutions in the country have become less transparent and less accountable. For instance, 81% of participants believed that accountability is crucial, but does not and will not apply to Haiti's institutions anytime soon; 83% believed the majority of Haiti's public leaders does not want to deal with any form of transparency in their management of public affairs. Interestingly enough though, 11% in the current study vs. 8% in the prior study believed that it is possible to implement transparency and accountability in Haiti's institutions. Slightly more individuals, 12% in the current study vs. 8% in the prior study, seemed to believe also that the current government is somewhat interested, at least in words only, to see some changes in these institutions. However, the vast majority of participants - 80% - believed the current administration will not be able to implement these measures. The perceptions of younger and less educated Haitians in regard to the strengthening of the institutions have also become slightly worse than the perceptions of older and more educated Haitians. When it comes to gender, an equal proportion of women and men saw no change in Haiti's public institutions with more men saying, however, that things are becoming worse while slightly more women have adopted a wait and see attitude.

Perceptions were also divided along income lines. Individuals in the lowest income bracket believed that institutions will never be transparent and accountable no matter who is in power.

⁵ See my PhD's dissertation for reference. <http://gradworks.umi.com/36/21/3621539.html>

Individuals in the middle income bracket believed the institutions can get stronger, but not anytime soon. People from the highest income level are equally divided with many swearing that the Haiti government does not have the capacity to implement transparency and accountability, while others saw an opportunity for the government to do just that. By and large, most Haitians believe that transparency and accountability can help improve their public institutions, but they don't seem to believe that the government can do this job. Although I found some hints that may explain why they hold such a negative view of the government: traditions, perceptions of incompetency, lack of autonomy of public servants, and growing rumors about a lack of accountability and corruption of the current administration. Further research is needed to ensure an evidence-based response to this matter.

Research Design and Rationale

The breadth of literature that shows transparency and accountability practices contribute fairly to better institutions is enormous. My preferred texts include: Amosa (2010); Papadopoulos (2010); Hood and Heald (2012); Khagram, Fung and De Renzio (2013); and Hood (2010). In the case of Haiti, however, some fundamental questions remain: why does it seem that transparency and accountability strive to be absent in Haiti's institutional practices? Why do these practices appear so difficult to take hold in this country's public administration? Do Haitians themselves believe that transparency and accountability are necessary for better governance?

The purpose of this study was therefore to investigate these questions. More specifically, the research focused on examining whether gender, education level, income, and work experience in Haiti's public sector influence local Haitians' perceptions about the role of transparency and accountability mechanisms in the country's public institutions. I examined these factors within the context of one of the most important institutions in Haiti: the Administration General of Customs

(AGD), which, according to official data,⁶ contributes a large portion - 30% - of the country's national budget.

I designed this quantitative study to specifically analyze how local Haitians perceive the relationship between transparency and accountability at the AGD. Local Haitians represent an insider perspective of the country's public institutions because they live in Haiti and interact daily with these institutions. As demonstrated by wide-ranging literature on the topic, local perceptions do matter; examples of the literature include: UN DPKO (2013); Neumann and Schia (2012); Miyashita (2009); Fernandez et al. (2016); and Lopez-Hoffman et al. (2006). This system of acquiring information contains elements of culture, history, spiritual beliefs, taboos, and experiences from the local population that can only strengthen decision-making and make local application of policy decisions more practical.

Data Collection

The perceptions of Haitians were examined from a sample of 650 local citizens who hold the following characteristics:

1. Haitians, male and female, who live in Haiti.
2. Minimum high school degree
3. Any income level
4. Work experience in public or private institutions in Haiti

This study investigated the following principal research questions and hypothesis:

1. *Do local Haitians perceive transparency and accountability in public institutions in Haiti as essential for good governance and public administration?*

H01: Local Haitians do not perceive transparency and accountability in public institutions in Haiti as essential for good governance and administration.

⁶ See <http://www.mef.gouv.ht/upload/doc/Budget20Execution202016-201720Aout202017.xls>

H11: Local Haitians do perceive transparency and accountability in public institutions in Haiti as essential for good governance and administration.

2. *Do local Haitians believe that transparency and accountability can help improve the quality of services offered by the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti?*

H02: Local Haitians do not believe that transparency and accountability mechanisms can help improve the quality of services offered by the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti.

H12: Local Haitians do believe that transparency and accountability mechanisms can help improve the quality of services offered by the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti.

3. *Do local Haitians believe that Haiti and civil society leaders are willing and able to implement transparency and accountability mechanisms in their public institutions?*

H03: Local Haitians do not believe that Haiti and civil society leaders are willing and able to implement transparency and accountability mechanisms in their public institutions.

H13: Local Haitians do believe that Haiti and civil society leaders are willing and able to implement transparency and accountability mechanisms in their public institutions.

Time Frame

The data collection lasted 21 days during which I identified the participants, initiated interviews to confirm their qualifications, and conducted formal interviews using a questionnaire originally created by the World Bank⁷, but adapted with permission for the purpose of this study. Data were collected from March 19, 2017 to April 1, 2017; and then from September 16 - 24, 2017 from the following locations: Port-au-Prince, St. Marc, and Petit-Goave. Seven hundred and eighty-three (783) surveys were conducted. Upon final review, 133 were discarded due to insufficient information for statistical analysis.

⁷ The World Bank Institute developed this survey instrument in 2005. I obtained permission to modify and use the instrument from the then Director of the Institute, Marc Nelson.

Recruitment Process

The initial eight participants were referred to me by a personal contact who used to work for the AGD. I visited the AGD office in the three locations selected to meet personally with these individuals and, after a brief conversation to gauge that they met all the requirements and were willing - without any form of pressure - to participate in the surveys, I started the formal interviews. On average, each interview lasted for 20 minutes.

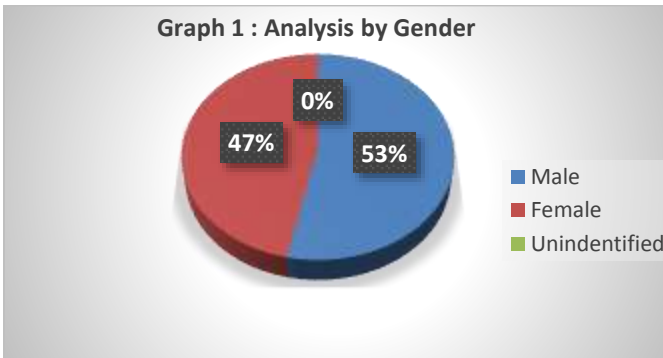
From this referral procedure, I continued to interview a total of 171 individuals who worked directly and indirectly with the AGD. During my visits to the AGD offices, I identified and approached other individuals who appeared to be customers of this institution. I would ask them to take part in the formal surveys if they were found eligible after some initial questions. The initial questions focused on age, level of education, and whether they live in Haiti or not. A total of 283 individuals were interviewed in this manner. Another group of participants, 300 of them to be exact, were selected randomly on the streets of the capital city, Port-au-Prince, Petit-Goave, and St. Mark. A final group of 29 people were also selected for this study; they had all participated in my prior research on this topic. Although the inclusions criteria described above were strongly adhered to, I tried very hard to select the most diverse pool of participants by including as many women and men from different age groups as possible.

Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

The following tables and figures describe the distribution of the sample by gender, ages, level of education, workplace, and income:

Table 1 : Sample Analysis by Gender

Gender	N	Percentage
Male	347	53.4%
Female	303	46.6%
Unidentified	0	0.0%
Total	650	100.0%



This classification was based on the participants' own categorizations as either male or female. Fifty-three percent (53%) identified themselves as males, 47% as females, and 0% unidentified. Participants were also classified by age. The purpose was to have a better sense of how different generations of Haitians perceived the problem of transparency and accountability in Haiti's public institutions:

Table 2 : Age Groups

Ages	N	Percentage
18-25	185	28%
26-33	158	24%
34-45	120	18%
46-60	112	17%
61+	75	12%
Total	650	100.0%

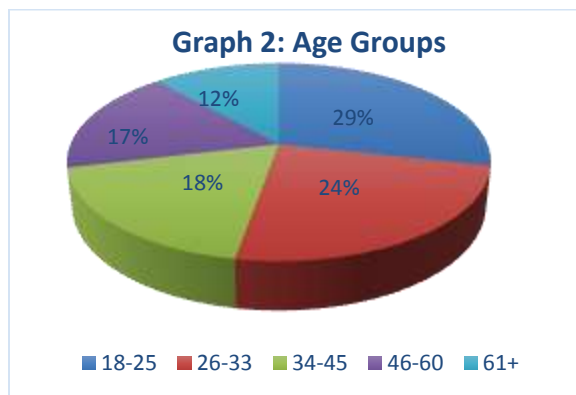
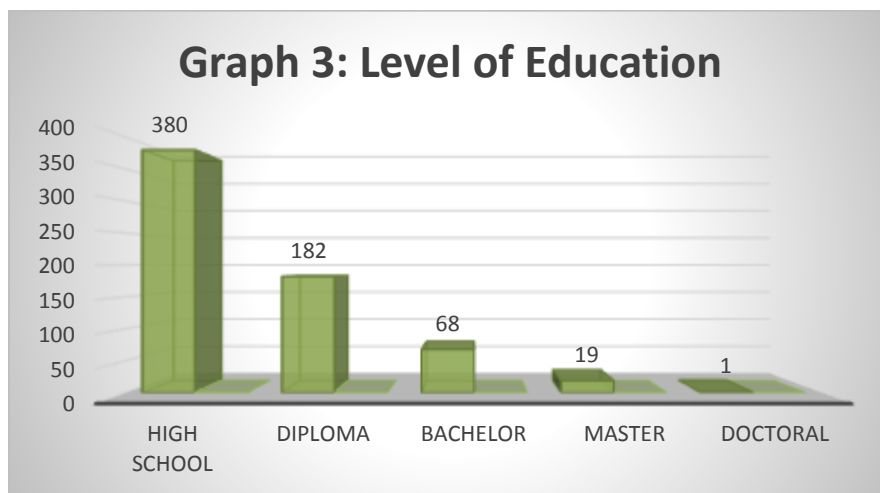


Table 3 and graph 3 below illustrate the numbers of participants by level of education:

Table 3 : Level of Education

Ages	N	Percentage
High School	380	58%
Diploma	182	28%
Bachelor	68	10%
Master	19	3%
Doctoral	1	0%
Total	650	100%



Finding individuals with work experience in Haiti was not an easy task since more than 70% of the population is unemployed (IHSI, 2012). For this study, I specifically targeted people with work experience at the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti. The reason for this choice was to sample people who were more likely to have interacted with the AGD currently or in the past, or who may have informed opinions and hands-on experiences with the institutions of the country. Such a sample is more likely to provide important data for analysis than a sampling of people with no work experience at all and who never interacted with public institutions in the

Haitian state. Table 4 below categorizes the sample per sector of employment in Haiti:

Table 4 : Work Experience

Employment	AGD	Other Public Institutions	Private Institutions	NGO
Male	84	105	110	48
Female	87	57	95	64
Total	171	162	205	112

Finally, Table 5 summarizes the sample by income level. The income range for each category is yearly and in USD.

Table 5 : Income

Income Level	N	Percentage
Lower: 1,200 -10,000	349	54%
Middle: 11,000 -25,000	288	44%
Higher: 26,000 +	13	2%
Total	650	100%

Tool and Method of Analysis

A structured survey questionnaire, used by the World Bank Institute in 2005 to assess governance and corruption in Haiti, was adapted with permission to collect the data needed for this study. The survey contains three sections and five questions. The first section contains one (1) question that collected the profile of the participants: name, age, gender, education level, and contact information. The second section contained three main questions designed to capture Haitians' perceptions of accountability and transparency at the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti. The third section contained one (1) open-ended question designed to capture Haitians' perspectives on the subject at large. In this section, the participants' answers were recorded in their own words.

The Likert scale was used throughout the questionnaire to evaluate the participants' responses and facilitate statistical analysis. At the end of the interviews, the participants had the opportunity to review the recorded responses and request for any corrections if necessary.

Data Analysis

Data were arranged by questions/answers and analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. I used the mean, median, percentage, and variance to analyze the data descriptively. Graphs were also used to support this analysis. Inferential statistics were used to analyze the data with the goals of making generalizations from the sample selected. One way-ANOVA was used to compare the difference in means between and within groups. The different demographic categories were tested independently to determine if there were any significance means variation in Haitians' perceptions regarding the practices of transparency and accountability in Haiti. The level of significance assigned, or the alpha value identified as (α), was 0.05; this was the level at which the null hypothesis identified as H_0 was rejected in favor of the alternative hypothesis identified as H_1 . The formula for acceptance or rejection of the null hypothesis is as follows:

$P\text{-value} \leq \alpha$, (α being the level of significance set at 0, 05) H_0 is rejected at 0.05

$P\text{-value} > \alpha$, (α being the level of significance set at 0, 05) H_0 is not rejected at 0.05

Analysis by Survey Questions

Question

1: *What is your perception of the role of transparency and accountability to improve efficiency at the AGD and other public institutions in Haiti?*

There were three choices given and the participants needed to select an option reflecting whether they strongly agreed, agreed, neither agreed nor disagreed, disagreed, or strongly disagreed with each of the following sentences:

1. Reduce corruption and increase public confidence

Eighty-one (81%) of participants agreed that transparency and accountability reduce corruption and increase public confidence at the AGD. This number is the same for the other institutions. This represented an 11 point increase from four years ago where only 70% believed that these measures could reduce corruption in Haiti. There were six individuals who disagreed with such an assessment.

Table 6: Reduce Corruption

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
Male	298	27	21	1		347
Female	229	47	22	5		303
	527	74	43	6	0	650

Further ANOVA testing allowed to reject the null hypothesis when it comes to the mean difference among and between age groups. See below:

Oneway

		Descriptives							
		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Reduce Corruption	Age Group: 18-25	185	1.26	0.498	0.037	1.19	1.33	1	3
	Age Group: 26-33	158	1.11	0.451	0.036	1.04	1.18	1	3
	Age Group: 34-45	120	1.07	0.336	0.031	1.01	1.13	1	3
	Age Group: 46-60	112	1.27	0.600	0.057	1.16	1.38	1	3
	Age Group: 61+	75	1.99	0.993	0.115	1.76	2.22	1	4
	Total	650	1.27	0.622	0.024	1.23	1.32	1	4
Leaderless	Age Group: 18-25	185	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Age Group: 26-33	158	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Age Group: 34-45	120	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Age Group: 46-60	69	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Age Group: 61+	10	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Total	542	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
Cur Leaders vs Prior	Age Group: 18-25	185	4.39	0.652	0.048	4.30	4.49	2	5
	Age Group: 26-33	158	4.01	0.944	0.075	3.86	4.16	2	5
	Age Group: 34-45	120	4.33	0.890	0.081	4.16	4.49	2	5
	Age Group: 46-60	112	3.85	0.988	0.093	3.66	4.03	2	5
	Age Group: 61+	75	3.08	1.194	0.138	2.81	3.35	2	5
	Total	650	4.04	0.987	0.039	3.97	4.12	2	5

		ANOVA				
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Between Groups	47.342	4	11.836	37.437	.000
	Within Groups	203.913	645	.316		
	Total	251.255	649			
Leaderless	Between Groups	.000	4	.000	.	.
	Within Groups	.000	537	.000		
	Total	.000	541			
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Between Groups	106.360	4	26.590	32.579	.000
	Within Groups	526.434	645	.816		
	Total	632.794	649			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means^b

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Welch	18.220	4	266.241	.000
	Brown-Forsythe	29.702	4	221.289	.000
Leaderless	Welch	.	.	.	.
	Brown-Forsythe	.	.	.	.
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Welch	25.889	4	261.721	.000
	Brown-Forsythe	28.785	4	398.012	.000

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

b. Robust tests of equality of means cannot be performed for Leaderless because at least one group has 0 variance.

Follow-up interviews hinted that this increase in positive perceptions may be due to the impact of social media⁸ as more Haitians are becoming aware of developments in other countries about how public officials are held accountable for bad deeds committed in public management.

The null hypothesis was also rejected for the difference among and between *gender*:

Oneway

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Reduce Corruption	Male	347	1.21	.551	.030	1.15	1.27	1	4
	Female	303	1.35	.688	.040	1.27	1.43	1	4
	Total	650	1.27	.622	.024	1.23	1.32	1	4
Leaderless	Male	302	1.00	.000	.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Female	240	1.00	.000	.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Total	542	1.00	.000	.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Male	347	4.14	.933	.050	4.04	4.24	2	5
	Female	303	3.93	1.037	.060	3.82	4.05	2	5
	Total	650	4.04	.987	.039	3.97	4.12	2	5

⁸ There is an assumption that the increase usage of social media and apps such as WhatsApp, Twitter, and Facebook may contribute to the increase in transparency observed, however, more studies are needed to confirm this assertion.

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Between Groups	3.277	1	3.277	8.564	.004
	Within Groups	247.978	648	.383		
	Total	251.255	649			
Leaderless	Between Groups	.000	1	.000	.	.
	Within Groups	.000	540	.000		
	Total	.000	541			
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Between Groups	6.754	1	6.754	6.991	.008
	Within Groups	626.040	648	.966		
	Total	632.794	649			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means^b

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Welch	8.314	1	577.089	.004
	Brown-Forsythe	8.314	1	577.089	.004
Leaderless	Welch	.	.	.	.
	Brown-Forsythe	.	.	.	.
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Welch	6.892	1	612.759	.009
	Brown-Forsythe	6.892	1	612.759	.009

a. Asymptotically F distributed.

b. Robust tests of equality of means cannot be performed for Leaderless because at least one group has 0 variance.

The largest means difference was found in the *income* category. ANOVA testing allowed to confirm that the p value is $p = .200$ was greater than $\alpha = .05$. Therefore, I failed to reject the null hypothesis that there is no significant relationship between income level and Haitians' perceptions of transparency and accountability in public institutions in Haiti. The biggest difference was in the middle-income class who believed that transparency and accountability can effect change in public institutions not in the lowest or the highest income level. See ANOVA testing below:

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Reduce Corruption	Lower : 1,200-10,000	349	1.23	0.594	0.032	1.17	1.30	1	4
	Middle : 11,000-25,000	288	1.32	0.644	0.038	1.25	1.40	1	3
	Higher : 26,000+	13	1.23	0.832	0.231	0.73	1.73	1	4
	Total	650	1.27	0.622	0.024	1.23	1.32	1	4
Leaderless	Lower : 1,200-10,000	315	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Middle : 11,000-25,000	217	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Higher : 26,000+	10	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
	Total	542	1.00	0.000	0.000	1.00	1.00	1	1
Cur Leaders vs Prior	Lower : 1,200-10,000	349	4.21	0.892	0.048	4.11	4.30	2	5
	Middle : 11,000-25,000	288	3.86	1.062	0.063	3.74	3.99	2	5
	Higher : 26,000+	13	3.62	0.961	0.266	3.03	4.20	2	5
	Total	650	4.04	0.987	0.039	3.97	4.12	2	5

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Between Groups	1.245	2	.623	1.612	.200
	Within Groups	250.010	647	.386		
	Total	251.255	649			
Leaderless	Between Groups	.000	2	.000	.	.
	Within Groups	.000	539	.000		
	Total	.000	541			
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Between Groups	20.852	2	10.426	11.023	.000
	Within Groups	611.942	647	.946		
	Total	632.794	649			

Robust Tests of Equality of Means^b

		Statistic ^a	df1	df2	Sig.
Reduce Corruption	Welch	1.562	2	32.039	.225
	Brown-Forsythe	1.161	2	29.791	.327
Leaderless	Welch	.	.	.	.
	Brown-Forsythe	.	.	.	.
Current vs. Prior Leaders	Welch	10.694	2	32.564	.000
	Brown-Forsythe	10.966	2	51.687	.000

b. Leaderless cannot be tested because at least one group has 0 variance.

2. Increase bureaucracy but it is a waste of time and resources

Eighty-three percent (83%) of participants strongly agreed that bureaucracy may also increase but it will be a waste of time and resources. What this means is that most of the participants strongly agreed that there is a need to establish a system of transparency and accountability practices in Haiti's institutions. They believed the AGD and other public institutions will be more efficient as a result. But they also strongly agreed that, after spending much time and resource to create such a system, it would be a big waste since it would not eradicate corruption in the specific case of Haiti. Why do they believe this, especially after showing a small increase in the positive perceptions about these factors to resolve the problem of corruption? I did not investigate this further, but from my perspective, this level of pessimism suggests that more studies need to be done about the nature of corruption in Haiti and what accountability truly means for Haitians.

3. Have no impact at all on public institutions

Once again, 81% strongly disagreed that transparency and accountability may have no impact at all on the institutions. Seventy-six percent (76%) of the interviewees, however, strongly agreed that transparency alone may have no impact at all. This finding seems to support the developing literature⁹ that claims transparency may have the negative effect of promoting impunity when accountability is not in the game. Similarly, a vast majority of the participants (87%) agreed that accountability will never transpire if there is no transparency to bring bad deeds to light. It seems as if Haitians perceived a strong link between these two concepts, and agreed strongly that one could not survive without the other.

Question 2: *Do you think that Haiti's leaders are working to create more transparent and accountable public institutions, whether at the AGD or other institutions in Haiti?* There were

⁹ See my article published on the American Society for Public Administration
<http://nebula.wsimg.com/a86165d84964075dddf5c53f4cd0f18?AccessKeyId=4789B1878BFCD925F352&disposition=0&alloworigin=1>

three choices given and the participants needed to select an option reflecting how strongly they agreed or disagreed with each of the following sentences:

1. Haiti's leaders in general do not work to strengthen Haiti's institutions through transparency and accountability methods.

Eighty-three percent (83%) of the participants strongly agreed with this statement. I should add that this sentence was worded in a way as to avoid responses that could be tainted with political affiliation or emotional connections with public leaders.

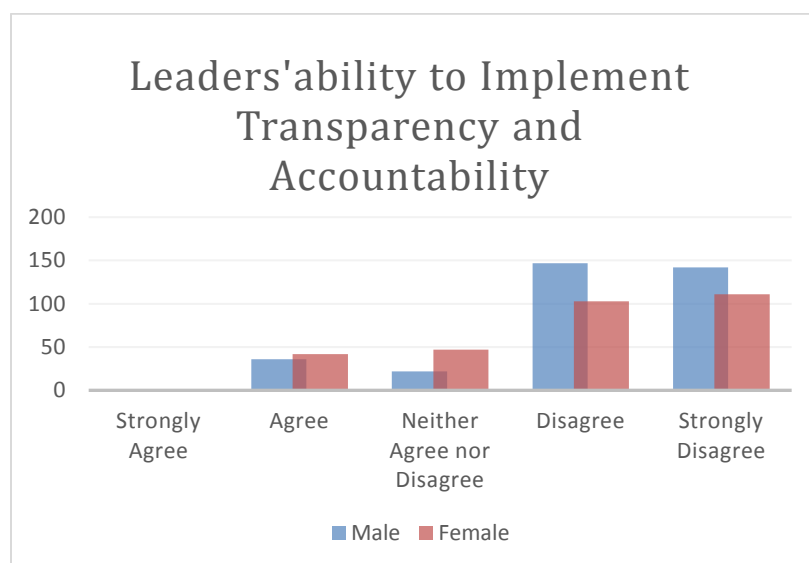
2. Haiti's current leaders have a greater chance than any prior Haitian leaders to implement transparency and accountability in Haiti's institutions.

Thirty-eight percent (38%) of those surveyed disagreed with this statement. Thirty-nine percent (39%) strongly disagreed; while 12% agreed and 11% neither agreed nor disagreed. Those who disagreed advanced that many leaders in past administrations had their chance to implement transparency and accountability in their institutions. However, they all missed that chance. The 39% who strongly disagreed claimed the current administration has no chance at all to implement these measures since it is indebted to bad social players and is packed with agents who are not necessarily working for positive social changes in Haiti. The few who agreed with the above-mentioned statement cited news reports, open investigations, and recent revelations of public mismanagement to support the notion that transparency is increasing; this also offers them hope that accountability would follow sometime soon.

This finding is further explained in Table 5 and Graph 5 below:

Table 5: Perceptions of Haiti's Leaders to Implement Transparency and Accountability in Haiti's Institutions

	<i>Male</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Strongly Agree				
Agree	36	42	78	12%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	22	47	69	11%
Disagree	147	103	250	38%
Strongly Disagree	142	111	253	39%
	347	303	650	100%



3. Leaders from the international community (IC) can help to implement transparency and accountability in Haiti's institutions.

The responses to this statement revealed, in my opinion, another contradiction in Haitian's perceptions. Seventy percent (70%) of the respondents believed IC can help strengthen public institutions in Haiti, yet 86% believed they would not be successful in doing so. The causes for these beliefs varied greatly from "This is not really IC's interests in Haiti" to "IC does not really understand the dynamics at play in Haiti."

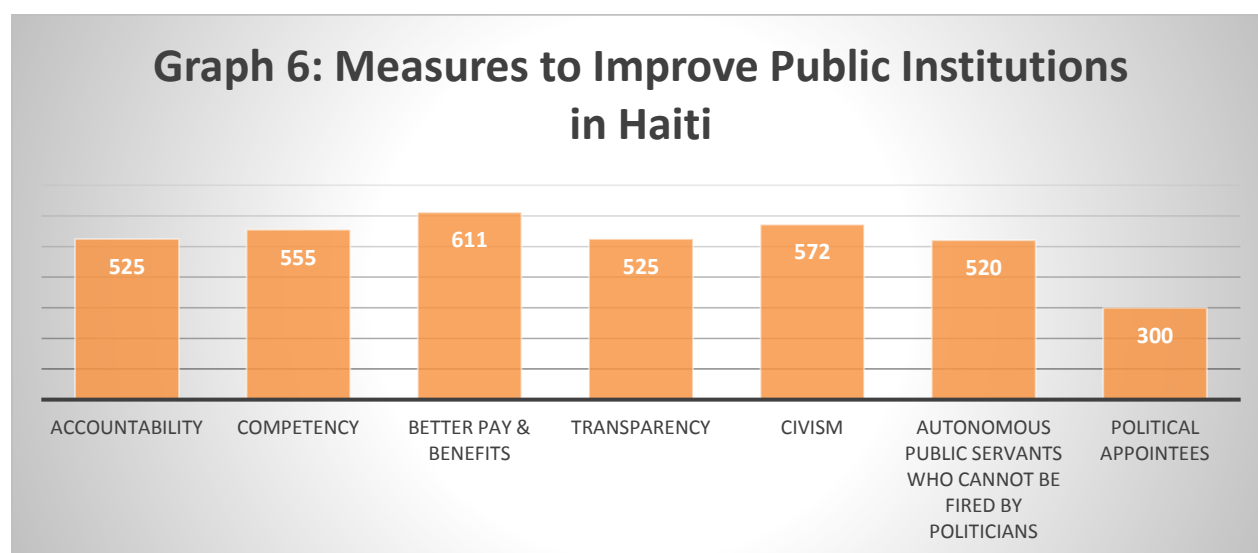
Surprised by this finding, I investigated further by asking a follow-up question to all the participants: *Why do more Haitians seem to believe that the IC can do a better job than Haitian leaders, and especially at a time when these international partners do not seem to be good examples of accountability in Haiti?* I was referring to the United Nations handling of the cholera epidemic¹⁰. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the participants responded that Haitian leaders do not have a tradition of transparency and accountability to rely upon, whereas the IC does, although not in the case of Haiti.

¹⁰ See UN's admission of bringing cholera to Haiti: <https://www.npr.org/sections/thetwo-way/2016/08/18/490468640/u-n-admits-role-in-haiti-cholera-outbreak-that-has-killed-thousands>

Question 3: *From your perspective, (1) being the most important and (4) the least important, how would you classify the following measures to improve public institutions in Haiti?:*

- **Accountability**
- **Competency**
- **Better pay & benefits**
- **Transparency**
- **Civism**
- **Autonomous public servants who cannot be fired by politicians**
- **Political appointees**

Most participants, 611 (94%), responded that *Better pay & benefits* was the most important factor to improve public institutions in Haiti. *Civism* was the second most important with 572 (88%) respondents. *Competency* had 555 (85%) respondents. *Transparency and accountability* shared the 4th most important measures to strengthen institutions in the country with 525 (81%) respondents each. *Political appointees* was the least important factor capable of improving Haiti's institutions, with 300 (46%) of the respondents in favor. These findings are summarized in Graph 6 below:



Conclusion and Recommendations

In conclusion:

1. Haitians believe that transparency and accountability can improve their public institutions, although it seems they do not believe this can happen anytime soon. Middle-class Haitians are the strongest believers in transparency and accountability, while individuals in the highest income bracket are divided about whether this will ever happen. Haitians from the lowest income bracket do not expect to see transparency and accountability in their life time.
2. Haitians also do not believe in the ability of Haiti's governments to increase transparency and accountability in public institutions. Compared to recent past administrations, it seems the current government may benefit from a "*wait and see*" attitude, although patience seems to be fanning away. The middle-class seems to be more patient than any other group while the lowest income bracket seems to have lost all hope. The general perception is that no one is sure about how to move forward.
3. It appears the IC may have a slight advantage over current Haitian leaders regarding the perceptions of their ability to implement transparency and accountability in Haiti's institutions. However, most of the participants in the study believed that the IC would not work to implement these measures because this is not in their interests.

Recommendations:

1. In light of recent disclosures¹¹ about deeply corrupted practices in government, I believe some concrete actions should be taken now to send a message that public mismanagement will not go unpunished. This would set the stage for all parties to abide by the laws of public administration or accept the consequences for failures.
2. A national plan that focuses on training public servants as well as Haiti's civil society agents on the practices of transparency and accountability is needed. Although these

¹¹ A Senate hearing is scheduled in Haiti on Tuesday, November 14, 2017 to discuss the corruption practices of high-level public officials named in a Petro Caribbean Report of 656 pages, signed between Haiti and Venezuela.

practices are currently deeply debated in Haiti, I got the impression from follow-up conversations, that many of the participants did not grasp the full meaning of these concepts, especially accountability. Most of the younger generation of Haitians for instance, people between 19-25 years old, seem to be lost regarding the meaning and practice of accountability when it comes to public officials particularly. These youngsters have not seen this concept being fully or regularly implemented in Haiti's practices. Thus, I believe this situation must be addressed. I suggest that a panel of experts should be constituted to consider the best approach to this phenomenon. Any approach should involve: a) the civil society (see recommendation #2 for more details), and b) the executive branch of the government, which should take concrete steps and actions to increase its leadership and credibility in this matter. This is a golden opportunity to lead by example. The judiciary branch should be the most important players among the three branches of the government to address the situation of corruption as a result of lack of transparency and accountability. The judiciary should be the liaison, the direct link between transparency and accountability. In other words, the judiciary should be the branch that ensures accountability follows a legal, transparent, and just path.

3. The role of civil society has no substitute. It is, in my opinion, the real force behind social change; they are the agents whose participation in governance is critical. From elementary schools to universities, a course should be added to the curriculum to teach students about the principles of public administration, which include transparency and accountability measures. Advocacy groups should organize trainings, seminars, and conferences around these topics. Civil society organizations should be represented by credible and competent voices, independent from government but working collaboratively to constantly monitor and report on matters affecting the public interest.

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