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From Hearsay to Observation: Livestreamed Court Proceedings and Public Trust in Mogadishu's Post-Conflict Judiciary

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Abstract

Introduction: Judicial legitimacy is dependent on public trust in judiciary, especially in post-conflict justice systems where courts are frequently subjected to allegations of lack of transparency, fairness, independence, and institutional credibility. In Mogadishu, the public's perception of the judiciary is often influenced by secondhand sources such as media reports, social narratives, community conversations, and individual experiences. This study explores the potential for changes in citizens' perceptions of courts from hearsay to observation, and the impact of such changes on perceptions of procedural fairness and public trust using live streaming.

Methods: The study was of a qualitative comparative interview design. Twenty adult residents of Mogadishu were interviewed, 10 of whom had viewed the live streamed court proceedings and 10 who had not. Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyze the data, which involved deductive coding based on literature on judicial transparency, procedural justice, digital open justice, and public trust and inductive coding based on the participants' accounts.

Findings: Five major themes emerged: livestreaming as a change from hearsay to observation; procedural fairness as visible courtroom conduct; livestreaming as a conditional trust-building mechanism; non-watchers' position between distrust and curiosity; and livestreaming as an accountability tool and a source of risk. Those who viewed the proceedings on live stream rated the courts based on observable factors like judicial neutrality, professionalism of lawyers, presentation of evidence, courtroom discipline, and equal treatment. Non-watchers were more likely to form their views based on indirect sources, the general reputation of judicial institutions, and general issues of corruption, delays, political influence, clan influence, and unequal access to justice.

Discussion: The results indicate that live-streaming court proceedings do not necessarily lead to greater public trust. Its effect is very much dependent on what citizens observe and how they interpret the conduct of the proceedings. Livestreaming can help build trust when courts are neutral, professional, clear, fair, and respectful of legal processes. It can also erode trust if it is inconsistent, poorly represented, biased, not communicated, or compromises privacy. The study is a contribution to the literature on digital justice, procedural justice, and judicial legitimacy in post-conflict contexts because it demonstrates how livestreaming is a means by which transparency and procedural fairness are brought to the public's attention.

It should therefore be regarded as a carefully controlled transparency process, not as free public broadcasting.

1. Introduction

Judicial legitimacy, judicial rule of law consolidation and public acceptance of judicial decisions are all dependent on public confidence in the judiciary. In addition to judging based on legality, courts are increasingly judged on their transparency, accountability, independence, accessibility and procedural

fairness. Judicial transparency enables citizens to gain a better understanding of how courts work and whether courts are objective, impartial and independent. (Bayer, 2024). Similarly, research on procedural justice focuses on the importance of citizens' confidence in the judiciary when they believe that judicial processes are fair, respectful, unbiased, and transparent. (Mentovich et al., 2023).

In this context, digital justice mechanisms, such as live streaming of court hearings, are gaining more significance as means to increase public access to judicial processes. The digitalization of justice technologies has opened new possibilities to enhance the visibility of the courts, access to justice and institutional accountability. Citizens can watch court proceedings in real time, seeing how the court is run, how the case is presented, how the evidence is handled, and how the case is argued, through livestreamed court proceedings. But digital justice reforms are not guaranteed to engender public trust. They are effective when they are accessible, have good digital infrastructure, have appropriate procedures, are protected, understood, and trusted by the public. Lack of regulations, unequal access to internet, low digital literacy, privacy and fairness concerns are also potential challenges to technology-driven justice reforms in developing and fragile justice systems. (Okeke, 2026).

Livestreaming should thus be regarded as more than just a technological advancement, but as a possible transparency route that makes judicial openness and procedural fairness visible to the public. In Africa, the justice sector is increasingly going digitally to overcome physical obstacles, increase access to justice and increase the efficiency of justice systems. Digital transformation in courts, however, is not uniform and universal. African experiences with digital justice reform indicate that technology can be used to facilitate access to justice and judicial administration, but it needs to be implemented in a way that is prepared by institutions, coordinated, has the necessary infrastructure, and is accepted by the public (Kuhimbisa, 2024). Wider studies on court digitalization similarly show that although technology may enhance efficiency and accessibility, it must be supported by proper governance, technical capacity, and safeguards against exclusion or misuse (Bhatt et al., 2024). The results suggest that the impact of live-streaming court proceedings on public trust is not a foregone conclusion but must be explored in the context of the institution and society.

The trust in the judiciary is a key governance and rule of law challenge in Somalia, particularly in Mogadishu. The justice sector is embedded in a weak and post-conflict institutional context that is characterized by security threats, weak institutional capacity, unequal access to justice, and ongoing institutional reform requirements. In this context, citizens' perceptions of courts might be influenced by issues of transparency, fairness, independence, accountability and lack of public understanding of judicial processes. The Somali judicial context has been found to be closely connected with public trust, as demonstrated by recent empirical studies in Mogadishu, which have shown that judicial transparency is closely linked to public trust. But transparency is not enough if citizens are not able to see if judicial procedures are fair, lawful, neutral and professionally conducted. (N. H. Ahmed et al., 2025).

While the literature on judicial transparency, procedural fairness, digital justice, and public trust is growing, the specific role of livestreamed court proceedings has not yet been explored, especially in

post-conflict justice settings. Previous research has tended to focus on judicial transparency, online judicial proceedings, public confidence and procedural justice as distinct fields of research. The study of digital judicial communication reveals that the communication for the public can help to enhance citizens' understanding of courts and build trust (Sung, 2025), Although outcome-based evaluations are also important for legal legitimacy, procedural justice research indicates that perceptions of fairness continue to play a key role in legal legitimacy. (Robinson & Evans, 2025). But little empirical work has explored whether livestreamed court proceedings are a mediating transparency mechanism that helps to convert judicial transparency and perceived procedural fairness into public trust, particularly in fragile and post-conflict urban justice systems like Mogadishu.

To address this, this study explores the role of the live-streamed court proceedings in the process of building trust in the post-conflict judiciary in Mogadishu. The study does not view mediation as a statistical relationship but rather conceptualizes livestreaming as a qualitative mediating mechanism between hearsay, rumor, media summaries, and community narratives and direct observation of judicial processes. In particular, the study examines the impact of judicial transparency and perceived procedural fairness on citizens' perceptions of livestreamed court proceedings, and how the livestreamed observation of court proceedings can affect citizens' trust in the judiciary. This framing is crucial as livestreaming can build trust when it demonstrates neutrality, professionalism, evidence-based reasoning, and fair treatment, but it can also undermine trust when it exposes inconsistency, weak representation, bias, public pressure, or a lack of procedural clarity.

The novelty of this study is the combination of the qualitative framework that connects judicial transparency, procedural fairness, livestreamed court proceedings and public trust in a post-conflict justice context. This study differs from previous studies which have focused on transparency, procedural justice, digital justice, or judicial trust individually, by examining how livestreamed court proceedings can be a digital visibility mechanism that can turn judicial openness and perceived procedural fairness into public trust. The study compares the perceptions of participants who viewed the court proceedings in real time with those who did not, to determine if direct exposure to court proceedings results in different perceptions than indirect exposure (information, institutional reputation, and community narratives).

This study has three contributions. It theoretically helps to conceptualize the use of a livestreamed court as a qualitative mediating mechanism in the process of forming trust, and contributes to procedural justice, judicial transparency, and digital justice literature. It offers empirical evidence from a post-conflict urban judiciary, which is underrepresented in the global discussion on digital justice and court legitimacy: Mogadishu. In practice, it provides a basis for courts, policy makers, law reform advocates, and civil society groups to understand the potential of livestreaming to improve judicial transparency, accountability, legal knowledge, and trust in the justice system, provided it is supported by safeguards, access, and procedural quality. The study thus tackles the question of how digital access relates to procedural justice and judicial legitimacy in fragile and post-conflict justice systems in a context-specific manner.

2. Literature Review

This study falls under the field of procedural justice, judicial transparency, digital open justice and post-conflict judicial legitimacy. There is a significant amount of literature that indicates that citizens' perceptions of the fairness, transparency, impartiality, accessibility, and understandability of judicial processes are crucial factors that help to build the legitimacy of courts. (Glavina & Zimmeren, 2025). Recent literature also shows that transparency does not always result in trust-building, procedural fairness can be in conflict with outcome agreement, digital open justice can conflict with privacy and dignity, and theories developed in stable judicial systems may not be readily applicable to fragile or post-conflict systems. (Robinson & Evans, 2025). This review therefore explores literature in the context of the key tensions that impact on the relationship between live broadcasting of court proceedings and public confidence.

Public confidence in the judiciary is seen as one of the important elements of judicial transparency. Transparency theory holds that the more visible, understandable, and open the process, decision, and institutional conduct of the court, the more legitimate it will be (Tešović, 2025). In this perspective, the public will trust the court not just for its legal correctness, but also for its legally correct decisions, and also for its judicial behavior and decision-making processes being understandable to the public (Sung, 2025). Transparency of the judiciary does not only mean the publication of judgments. It also involves the ability of citizens to observe, comprehend and assess the work of courts.

But the connection between transparency and legitimacy is not a given Grimmelikhuijsen & Klijn (2015) found that judicial transparency, when it comes to the visual aspect, can help to increase public trust in judges, but this may be contingent on the citizens' prior knowledge and predisposition to trust. Likewise, Tešović (2025) suggests that transparency can improve trust by providing substantive procedural clarity, rather than symbolic transparency. The results indicate that visibility is a means of creating legitimacy only when the visible is institutionally credible, procedurally clear, and publicly interpretable.

This is a key difference in the case of court proceedings that are livestreamed. Livestreaming can enhance the visibility of judicial proceedings by allowing citizens to see judges, lawyers, parties, evidentiary presentation, courtroom discipline, and legal argument as they happen (Xu & Liu, 2020). By doing so, livestreaming can change the passive disclosure of transparency to direct observation of the process. However, transparency can also reveal institutional vulnerabilities. Livestreaming proceedings can either exacerbate or confirm public doubts about the fairness of the proceedings if they are biased, disorderly, poorly argued, decisions are not explained, proceedings are delayed, or the treatment of the parties is unequal (Legg, 2021).

This conditional effect is particularly significant in fragile or post-conflict situations. Livestreaming can help reduce uncertainty by shifting the source of judicial knowledge from hearsay to observation, if citizens already have a source of judicial knowledge based on rumors, social media narratives, clan-based interpretations, community stories, or selective media reports. In the meantime, increased

visibility can bring to light unaddressed institutional problems. So, the question isn't so much whether transparency breeds trust, but when does it do so?

One of the most influential theories of judicial legitimacy is procedural justice theory. It suggests that citizens will be more likely to trust courts if they think that the courts are fair, neutral, respectful, and inclusive (Tyler, 2006). In this perspective, trust in courts is influenced by the perception that parties are listened to, evidence is considered, judges are fair, and decisions are made in a fair manner, in addition to winning or losing a case.

This is the position that has been supported by recent research on online legal proceedings. (Mentovich et al. 2023) identified a link between procedural-justice perceptions and access-to-justice perceptions with legal-system legitimacy in online proceedings. The results of their study are relevant to the livestreaming of court proceedings, as livestreaming can enable citizens to assess procedural fairness even in the absence of physical presence in court. Citizens can judge whether judges are listening carefully, lawyers are presenting arguments professionally, evidence is taken seriously, and parties are treated equally, through the livestreamed observation.

The traditional procedural justice thesis is complicated by recent evidence, however. (Robinson & Evans, 2025) demonstrate that agreement with judicial outcomes can have a significant impact on perceptions of fairness and legitimacy, whereas procedural fairness can have less impact in certain situations. This implies that citizens might not assess courts just by procedure. They may also assess courts according to the degree of outcome agreement, prior beliefs, political opinions, social identity, or institutional reputation. (Gandur, 2025) also discovers that the partisan interpretation can affect the trust in the judiciary, especially if the decisions are politically relevant.

The debate is directly relevant to livestreamed justice. Livestreaming can reveal procedure, viewers may interpret proceedings through prior assumptions, political expectations, clan identity, personal experience, or preferred outcomes, what they expect to see, what they assume, what they have experienced, or what they hope to see. An orderly proceeding can be viewed by a viewer and still be politically motivated or socially undesirable, and therefore not trusted by the viewer. On the other hand, a viewer could approve a court decision even if the process is flawed, if they are happy with the outcome. Livestreaming thus does not eliminate interpretive bias; it merely shifts the basis for citizens' trust judgments.

This is a particular concern for Mogadishu. Perceptions of the process as well as the results of the court can influence public trust in the courts. Citizens can question the fairness of the judges, but also the social acceptability, political neutrality, clan neutrality and enforceability of the final decision. Livestreaming can then help to build trust only when it is combined with credible procedures and credible outcomes. Contested or unclear outcomes, or outcomes that are seen as being influenced by power, may mean that trust is limited if the proceedings are livestreamed and visible procedural fairness is not supported by credible outcomes.

Digital open justice suggests that technology can increase access to courts, increase public visibility and decrease barriers to legal information (Bhatt et al., 2024). The use of online courts, livestreamed hearings, digital case management and public judicial communication can help to make legal institutions more accessible and understandable. For instance, Sung,(2025) discovered that judicial communication that was directed at the public enhanced the understanding of courts and trust among citizens, especially those who used digital media frequently. This indicates that digital tools can help to shorten the gap between courts and citizens in communicating judicial processes clearly.

Livestreaming is a form of digital judicial communication. It enables the public to witness courtroom behavior first-hand and can help to diminish reliance on selective media coverage or community rumors. Xu & Liu, (2020) demonstrate that court This establishes a central confliction broadcasting can impact on the public's trust in justice through its impact on citizens' perceptions of interpersonal treatment and procedural justice. In a systematic review of the use of Industry 4.0 technologies in court administration, Bhatt et al., (2024) also demonstrates that digitalization has the potential to contribute to court efficiency, access, transparency and case administration, but also poses challenges in terms of evidence, infrastructure and responsible implementation. Kuhimbisa, (2024) also found that digital transformation in the justice sector can be used to enhance access to justice and service delivery in Uganda, but requires infrastructure, coordination, and institutional preparedness.

However, digital open justice poses significant threats. While online courts and livestreamed proceedings could improve access to justice and open justice, they can also pose a risk to privacy if access is not controlled (Ahmed, 2023). This is particularly applicable to livestreaming, as it can include accused persons, victims, witnesses, minors, family matters, sensitive evidence or national security issues. Recorded, edited, shared or removed from context, clips can cause reputational damage, misinformation, public pressure or social stigma in court proceedings (Legg, 2021).

This establishes a central conflict. Open justice demands public examination, but the open nature of proceedings could have a negative impact on dignity, privacy, fair trial rights and the integrity of proceedings. While livestreaming can help to increase the transparency of courts, it can also lead to performative behavior, reveal sensitive information, create pressure on judges, and be misunderstood by non-specialist audiences (Mentovich et al., 2023). Therefore, there is a need for regulatory protection of digital openness. Courts should have clear guidelines as to which cases can be livestreamed, how sensitive information should be protected, whether recordings can be kept and shared, and how the legal process should be explained to the public.

These risks are especially acute in Mogadishu, where legal conflicts can have social, political, clan and reputational repercussions outside of court. If the accused is acquitted, but the livestreamed content keeps spreading on the internet, he or she can still be hurt by the damage to his or her reputation. Proceedings in family, juvenile, sexual violence, corruption or security-related cases may also result in social harm if not conducted in a manner that includes protection. Livestreaming should thus be

understood not as free broadcasting, but as a regulated digital public access, which is transparent and private, dignifying and respecting the rights to a fair trial and public understanding.

Most of the literature on procedural justice, judicial transparency and digital courts is rooted in relatively stable institutional contexts. These settings tend to take for granted more predictable rules of procedure, more effective court administration, more effective enforcement, and greater institutional credibility. But these assumptions may not be entirely valid in fragile or post-conflict justice systems, where courts may be weak, insecure, corrupt, subject to political pressure, socially divided, and dependent on informal or customary justice systems (Harper, 2021).

Judicial trust is not only influenced by the process of court proceedings, but also by broader institutional and social factors in fragile contexts. Citizens can assess courts based on their experiences of delays, corruption, clan pressure, political interference, land disputes, weak enforcement, unequal access, or limited legal representation. Fragile and post-conflict states may have problems with the legitimacy of their formal justice systems, as citizens may still turn to customary or informal justice systems when the state justice system is inaccessible, weak, or not trusted (Harper, 2021). This implies that in such situations, judicial legitimacy is not created through legal formality. It relies on the perceptions of institutions as fair, accessible, effective and socially credible.

African evidence also indicates that there is a social inequality in trust of courts. (Acheampong & Cann, 2025) found that education, gender, partisanship and standard of living affect public trust in courts in Ghana using Afrobarometer data. While the study is not directly applicable to Somalia, it does show that trust in courts is not something that can be taken for granted from formal judicial institutions, as is the case in Ghana. It needs to be examined within the context of the social status, political interpretation and lived experiences of citizens. (Van De Walle & Migchelbrink, 2022) also demonstrate that institutional quality, impartiality, corruption, process quality and service outcomes influence citizens' trust in public administration.

These challenges are more acute in Somalia, and especially in the Somali capital, Mogadishu. Mogadishu is the political, administrative, legal and media hub of the country, but also a post-conflict justice system. The public perception of courts can be influenced by issues of judicial independence, accountability, transparency, clan influence, political pressure, access to justice and legal awareness. The documents from the justice sector in Somalia highlight the importance of enhancing legal frameworks, justice delivery, access to justice, and public trust in state institutions (M. Sheikh-Ali, 2025).

This is why Mogadishu provides an important context for refining existing theories of transparency, procedural fairness, and digital open justice. For stable systems, livestreaming can be explored primarily as an access, transparency or court communication tool. Livestreaming is a measure of institutional credibility in a post-conflict judiciary. It can help citizens to go from hearsay and rumor to first-hand observation, but it can also expose the weaknesses that lead to distrust. The impact of livestreaming is thus likely to be more contingent in Mogadishu than in stable court systems. It depends on whether

citizens observe neutrality, professionalism, evidence-based reasoning, equal treatment and procedural discipline, and the institutional credibility of the justice system to back what livestreaming reveals.

The reviewed literature establishes close relationships among judicial transparency, procedural fairness, digital access, and public trust. There are four gaps, however. First, there is a lack of understanding in existing research of how visibility can be translated into legitimacy (Grimmelikhuijsen & Klijn, 2015; Tešović, 2025). Livestreaming is a helpful context for studying this mechanism because it enables citizens to see the court process in action, not just through judgments, news reports or informal stories. Second, procedural justice research indicates that fairness is important, but recent research also indicates that outcome agreement, political interpretation and prior beliefs can influence legitimacy judgments (Gandur, 2025). This does not necessarily mean that the observation that is livestreamed will automatically result in trust. It can instead offer citizens new evidence that they can use to interpret courts. Third, the literature on open justice in the digital age acknowledges the advantages of online access but also cautions against privacy, dignity, exclusion and misinterpretation (S. Ahmed, 2023; Bhatt et al., 2024). This tension is especially relevant when a court proceeding is live-streamed, as it can create accountability and harm. Fourth, most of the research on online courts, livestreaming and judicial communication takes place in the context of stable or more institutionally developed settings (Sung, 2025). Fragile and post-conflict justice systems have not been explored. There is little empirical evidence on the effect of live-streaming court proceedings on public trust in urban courts in Africa, particularly Somalia.

This study aims to fill these gaps by exploring how livestreamed court proceedings operate a conditional pathway of digital visibility that connects judicial transparency, perceived procedural fairness and public trust in the post-conflict judiciary in Mogadishu. The study does not presume that livestreaming will necessarily strengthen or improve public trust, but it explores the circumstances in which livestreamed observation can strengthen, weaken, or complicate public trust. Its contribution is that it shows that the transition from indirect, rumor-based and media-filtered understandings of courts to direct observation of courts can have a trust-building effect, but that this effect relies on what citizens see, how they interpret it, and the institutional credibility of the justice system to support digital openness.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study used a qualitative comparative interview design to explore citizens' perceptions of the role of live-streamed court proceedings in fostering public trust in the post-conflict judiciary in Mogadishu. The study used a qualitative design, as it aimed to understand the perceptions, experiences and interpretations of judicial transparency, procedural fairness, livestreamed proceedings and trust in the judiciary among the study participants. This study was not designed to test statistical or causal relationships. Rather, it explored citizens’ explanations of livestreaming as a perceived, qualitative

mediating transparency mechanism that could relate to public trust and to perceptions of procedural fairness and judicial openness.

The research was carried out in a comparative structure, with two groups of subjects. The first group included participants who watched court proceedings on livestream and the second group included participants who did not watch court proceedings on livestream. This comparison was necessary to allow for analysis of whether there were differences in perceptions based on direct exposure to court proceedings via live stream versus indirect exposure, public discussion, media reporting, or general perceptions of the judiciary.

The design was also consistent with the procedural justice and open justice approach. The literature on procedural justice indicates that trust in courts is influenced by perceptions of fairness, neutrality, participation, and respectful treatment (Mentovich et al., 2023). The literature on digital justice suggests that access to courts online can increase the visibility of, and access to, justice, but also raise concerns about privacy, exclusion and misinterpretation of court proceedings (S. Ahmed, 2023). Therefore, the qualitative comparative interview design was appropriate for the purpose of capturing the contextual meaning attributed to the court proceedings that were livestreamed in Mogadishu.

3.1.1 The Livestreaming Context Under Study

In this study, “livestreamed court proceedings” refers to public access to court hearings through live or near-live video broadcasts and online circulation of courtroom proceedings. Based on participants’ accounts, such exposure in Mogadishu mainly occurred through television broadcasts, Facebook pages, and social media platforms. The proceedings viewed by participants were generally high-profile, public-interest, criminal, corruption-related, or socially significant cases, rather than routine broadcasts of all court hearings. This study therefore treats livestreaming as a form of selective digital visibility rather than comprehensive digital access to the judiciary. Some participants viewed substantial parts of proceedings, while others encountered selected clips or circulated video materials. This selective nature is important because it affects how citizens understand transparency, fairness, and trust. Livestreaming may help citizens observe courtroom conduct, judicial questioning, legal arguments, and evidence presentation directly, but it may also create uncertainty if broadcasts are incomplete, selective, or difficult for ordinary viewers to interpret.

The watcher group consisted of participants who had viewed livestreamed proceedings and could describe the source, type, and content of what they watched. The non-watcher group had not directly viewed such proceedings and relied instead on media reports, social media posts, community narratives, relatives, friends, or personal experiences. Accordingly, livestreaming is examined as a conditional transparency mechanism through which judicial openness and procedural fairness may become visible to citizens, while still requiring safeguards for privacy, fair trial rights, and public understanding.

3.2 Target Population

The target population included adult residents of Mogadishu who had knowledge, awareness, or experience of the judiciary, court processes, livestreamed court proceedings, media coverage of courts, or public trust in legal institutions. This comprised those who had watched the live streaming of court proceedings and those who had not watched court proceedings but were able to give informed comments on court transparency, fairness of court proceedings, access to courts and confidence in the judiciary.

The city of Mogadishu was chosen as the research site because it is the political, administrative, legal and media center of Somalia. The city hosts the main courts, legal professionals, universities, civil society organizations, media and public institutions. It is also a forum for public debate on judicial reform, accountability, transparency and institutional trust.

The population of Mogadishu was of strategic significance for three reasons. First, the visibility of court proceedings is more marked in urban areas, where the use of the internet, social media, legal awareness and public discussion of courts are relatively high. Second, the justice landscape in Mogadishu is marked by institutional fragility, public concerns about justice, and ongoing calls for accountability. Third, the study aimed to capture both direct and indirect perceptions of digital court visibility by comparing citizens who had seen the digital court proceedings live with those who had not.

The study was not conducted in a representative manner in a statistical sense of Somali citizens. Rather, it aimed to offer a contextual and analytical perspective on the potential of livestreaming to improve judicial transparency, procedural justice, and public trust in a post-conflict judiciary in selected residents of Mogadishu.

3.3 Sampling Strategy, Recruitment, and Sample Size

The study employed purposive, non-probability sampling to identify participants in Mogadishu who had information to share on the livestreamed court proceedings and public trust in the judiciary. Purposive sampling was appropriate because the study needed information-rich participants who had first-hand or second-hand experience with the phenomenon studied. In qualitative research, purposive sampling is a methodologically appropriate approach when participants are selected based on their relevance to the research aim and not on their statistical representativeness (Levitt et al., 2021).

3.3.1 Recruitment and Screening

Participants were recruited through purposive and snowball referral strategies in Mogadishu. Initial participants were identified through community, academic, and legal-awareness networks, and additional participants were referred to by earlier interviewees. Prospective participants were screened against the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria before being invited to interview. Inclusion criteria were being an adult resident of Mogadishu; and being able to provide informed views on court transparency, fairness, access, or trust, whether through direct viewing of livestreamed proceedings or through indirect awareness of the judiciary. Individuals were excluded if they were not resident in

Mogadishu, were unable to provide informed commentary on the topics of interest, or, in the case of the watcher group, could not describe the source, type, and content of the livestreamed proceedings they claimed to have viewed. Watcher status was confirmed by asking participants to describe the source, type, and content of the livestreamed proceedings they had viewed, and non-watcher status was confirmed by establishing that the participant had not directly viewed such proceedings. Recruitment continued until thematic saturation was reached, as described in Section 3.6.

3.3.2 Sample Size and Justification

The final sample consisted of 20 participants, half of whom had viewed the court proceedings on live stream and half of whom had not. This balanced distribution was used to compare direct exposure to non-exposure. The participants who watched proceedings from a distance reported on their experience of the visibility, fairness, clarity, legal reasoning and credibility of the proceedings in court. Those who did not watch the proceedings shared their understanding of the lack of awareness, access issues, indirect perceptions of the judiciary, and the potential impact of livestreaming on future trust if it were available and reliable.

Qualitative sampling logic, rather than statistical power, was used to assess the adequacy of the final sample. In a systematic review of qualitative saturation, Hennink & Kaiser, (2022) concluded that saturation is often achieved in relatively small samples when the research purpose is narrow and the sample is homogeneous. Malterud et al., (2016), also suggests that the information power of the sample should determine the sample size in qualitative research, where the research aim is focused, the participants are relevant, the interview dialogue is rich, and the analysis is theoretically informed. For this comparative qualitative study, 20 participants were deemed suitable for the study, as the research objective was limited, the participants were purposefully selected and the analysis was based on specific concepts: judicial transparency, procedural fairness, livestreamed court proceedings, and public trust. The results of purposive sampling cannot be statistically generalized to the Somali population. They do, however, provide analytically transferable insights into the nature of livestreamed court proceedings, digital visibility, and public trust in similar fragile or post-conflict justice contexts.

3.3.3 Participant Profile

The participants were aged between 20 and 35 years. The sample included 14 male and 6 female participants. In terms of educational background, 14 participants held bachelor’s degrees and 6 held master’s degrees. Ten participants had watched livestreamed court proceedings, while ten had not.

Code	Gender	Age	Education	Group	Main source of court information	Livestream exposure / reason for non-watching
W1	Male	21	Bachelor	Watcher	News outlets, social media, word of mouth	Occasionally watched high-profile cases
W2	Male	23	Bachelor	Watcher	Radio, social media, community discussion	Occasionally watched public-interest, security, or political cases
W3	Female	20	Bachelor	Watcher	Friends, neighbors, and people with court experience	Watched parts of a corruption-related case
W4	Male	33	Master	Watcher	Media, social media, and community discussion	Watched livestreamed public-interest court proceedings
W5	Male	24	Bachelor	Watcher	National Television/Facebook	Watched several socially significant cases
W6	Male	25	Bachelor	Watcher	Direct or limited court information before livestreaming	Watched several times to understand how cases are conducted
W7	Female	26	Master	Watcher	Online broadcasts and occasional court attendance	Watches when available, especially criminal cases
W8	Female	22	Bachelor	Watcher	Word of mouth, social media, and local news	Occasionally watched high-profile cases; law-related interest
W9	Male	23	Bachelor	Watcher	Media reports and livestreamed cases	Watches when time allows due to interest in the legal system
W10	Male	24	Bachelor	Watcher	Social media videos/reports and livestreams	Watched many cases
NW1	Male	35	Master	Non-watcher	Family/court-related experiences and informal narratives	Did not watch due to lack of time and distrust
NW2	Female	20	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Community narratives and family experience	Did not watch due to work/classes and time constraints

Code	Gender	Age	Education	Group	Main source of court information	Livestream exposure / reason for non-watching
NW3	Male	21	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Media, community stories, and institutional reports	Did not watch due to awareness, time, privacy, and interest barriers
NW4	Female	29	Master	Non-watcher	Relatives, friends, and media reports	Did not watch due to lack of time and limited platform awareness
NW5	Male	24	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Community stories, social media, and local media	Did not watch due to limited interest and legal complexity
NW6	Male	26	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Television, Facebook pages, and public discussions	Did not watch due to lack of awareness of source/schedule
NW7	Female	22	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Relatives, community members, journalists, and legal commentators	Did not watch due to privacy concerns
NW8	Male	34	Master	Non-watcher	Official news, public debate, and educated legal observers	Did not watch due to work and family responsibilities
NW9	Male	25	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Media, legal professionals, and community members	Did not watch due to limited interest and legal complexity
NW10	Male	23	Bachelor	Non-watcher	Public discussion.	Did not watch livestreamed proceedings due to limited interest and limited legal understanding.

3.4 Data Collection Procedure

Semi-structured interviews were used to gather data. Semi-structured interviews were used as they allowed the researcher to ask the same basic questions to all participants and follow up questions for clarification or further explanation. This was appropriate for a study of perceptions, meanings and interpretations which could not be captured by closed questions. An informed consent form was provided to each participant prior to interview. The form included the title and purpose of the study, the researchers and host institution, the interview procedure, the voluntary nature of participation, confidentiality protections, potential risks and benefits, and the option to have the interview audio

recorded. The participants were informed that the interview would last for about 30–60 minutes and would address issues of transparency, livestreaming, fairness and public trust in the judiciary.

Those who had viewed the proceedings live were asked about their first-hand experiences, including whether they had gained an understanding of the court process from the livestream, whether the process seemed fair, and whether they had a greater trust in the judiciary because of the viewing. Participants who had not seen the court proceedings on live stream were asked if they knew about court livestreaming, why they had not seen it, what they found difficult to access, where they found out about the courts, and whether accessible, credible and understandable live streaming would make them more confident in the courts. With participants' consent, interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accuracy. If the participants did not agree to be recorded on tape, a detailed note was taken during and after the interview. Interview data were anonymized before analysis.

3.4.1 Translation Procedure

Interviews were held in Somali and translated into English by the research team. To maintain meaning, key terms related to judicial transparency, procedural fairness, trust, impartiality, and livestreaming were reviewed and standardized across the Somali transcripts, with each concept being consistently translated in English. Quotations were checked by a second bilingual reviewer to minimize translation distortion, and only lightly edited for readability without altering the meaning of the quotations.

3.5 Research Instrument

The research instrument used was semi-structured interview guide. The guide is based on the conceptual framework of the study and literature on judicial transparency, procedural justice, open justice, online courts and public trust. The instrument was not intended to measure variables, but to provide rich qualitative descriptions of how participants think about the court and the public trust when watching the court on the internet. The guide was based on five areas of focus: awareness of the livestreaming of court proceedings; perceptions of judicial transparency; perceptions of procedural fairness; perceived benefits and risks of livestreaming; and public trust in the judiciary in Mogadishu.

The questions were open-ended, giving the participants the opportunity to voice their opinions in their own words. They included: What do you know about the livestreaming of court proceedings in Mogadishu? Have you ever watched a court case on the internet? If yes, why? If not, why not? Is the court process more open to the public when it is livestreamed? Does livestreaming enhance citizens' understanding of the operation of courts? Does livestreaming enable people to judge the fairness of court procedures? Does watching, or knowing about, live proceedings impact your trust in the judiciary? What are the potential dangers of livestreaming court proceedings? And what are the strengths and weaknesses of the judiciary in Mogadishu, and what should be improved if livestreaming is expanded? The guide was pre-tested for clarity, neutrality and contextual relevance to ensure the questions were understood and did not guide the participants to the answers. It also allowed the researcher to

investigate new topics like digital access, selective livestreaming, privacy issues, language barriers, public legal awareness, and the possibility of livestreaming to strengthen or weaken trust.

3.6 Data Analysis Strategy

Reflexive thematic analysis was used to analyze the interview data. This method was selected because it allows the researcher to discover, analyze and structure the meaning in qualitative data. Reflexive thematic analysis is appropriate for interview-based research as it offers a systematic and flexible approach to analyzing participants' experiences, perceptions and explanations (Braun & Clarke, 2021). It is not just about identifying repeated words or phrases, but about the researcher's interpretation, careful coding and coherent theme development (Braun & Clarke, 2021).

The analysis was carried out in six stages. The researcher read and re-read the interview transcripts and notes to familiarize himself with the data and to identify early patterns of judicial transparency, procedural fairness, livestreamed court proceedings, public trust, and institutional legitimacy. Second, initial codes were generated from meaningful statements in the transcripts, which included descriptive and interpretive meanings, such as “direct observation of court procedure,” “second-hand information,” “media and community narratives,” “visible judicial fairness,” “professional courtroom conduct,” “increased public confidence,” “privacy concern,” “fear of public exposure,” “mistrust of incomplete information,” and “need for legal explanation.”

Third, codes were grouped into larger analytical categories. “Indirect sources of judicial knowledge” included social media, word of mouth, community stories, and media reports. The rules of judicial questioning, lawyer conduct, evidence presentation, and courtroom order were all merged into “visible procedural fairness.” Codes relating to greater confidence, less uncertainty, and public oversight were categorized as “livestreaming as a transparency and accountability mechanism.” Codes relating to corruption, political influence, clan influence, delays, and unequal access were combined into “persistent institutional distrust.” Fourth, candidate themes were compared to the entire data set to verify that they represent patterns of participants' accounts, not individual responses. Fifth, the themes were refined, defined and named. Finally, selected evidence from the participants was used to substantiate the interpretation of each finding and written up.

Both deductive and inductive coding were used. Theoretical framework of the study (judicial transparency, perceived procedural fairness, open justice, digital access, institutional legitimacy, and public trust) guided the deductive coding. Inductive coding enabled new themes to emerge from the data, such as concerns about selective broadcasting, privacy risks, reputational harm, fear of public exposure, limited awareness of livestream platforms, limited legal understanding, mistrust of incomplete livestreams, and the need for public legal education. This allowed for a theoretically informed analysis that was also based on the participants' own accounts.

Selection of quotations. Quotations were chosen for their clarity, their relevance to the theme, and their ability to represent common or contrasting views within the watcher and non-watcher groups. If a theme

was common, an illustrative quotation was selected; if groups differed, contrasting quotations were selected to make the difference visible.

After themes were developed, a comparative thematic analysis was completed between the two groups: the livestreamed proceedings and the non-livestreamed proceedings. This comparison was based on themes that were common to both groups, themes unique to watchers, and themes unique to non-watchers. It was employed to examine the effects of direct exposure to live streamed proceedings on perceptions of transparency, fairness, and trust compared to perceptions from media reports, community narratives, and indirect information. The comparative stage was central to the study because it allowed for analysis to be conducted to find out whether livestreaming influenced citizens' perception of the judiciary in Mogadishu.

3.6.1 Coding Audit Trail

To make the analytical pathway transparent, Table 3.2 summarizes representative movement from initial codes to categories and final themes. The full coding framework and memos are retained in the audit trail.

Initial codes	Category	Theme
Direct observation; judge questioning; evidence presentation	visible court process	From hearsay to observation
judge neutrality; lawyer professionalism; equal opportunity	visible procedural fairness	Procedural fairness becomes visible
increased confidence; reduced doubt; public monitoring	livestreaming as accountability mechanism	Transparency and accountability
edited clips; privacy; reputational harm; fear of exposure	livestreaming risks	Accountability and its risks
corruption; political and clan influence; delays; unequal access	persistent institutional distrust	Enduring distrust of institutions

3.6.2 Coding Reliability and Reflexivity

Initial coding was carried out by the lead researcher. A second researcher then independently examined a subsample of about 25% of the transcripts and the coding outputs to check the clarity and consistency of the coding framework. The coding process was not a mechanical one, as in statistical inter-coder reliability, but was rather an interpretive process, as in reflexive thematic analysis, where disagreements were resolved through discussion and consensus. Coding memos were kept throughout to record coding decisions, new interpretations, revisions of themes, conflicting cases, and the researcher's own assumptions, which enhanced the analytical rigor. The final thematic structure was checked against the entire data set to ensure that there was evidence from the participants for each theme. Negative and contradictory cases were discussed, such as those of watchers who were still skeptical about the

fairness of the judiciary, and non-watchers who expressed willingness to see if the proceedings were made more accessible and clearly explained.

The analysis was conducted reflexively. The researcher recognizes that the qualitative interpretation is influenced by the researcher's academic background, interest in judicial reform, and familiarity with the Somali institutional context. To avoid over-interpretation, the analysis remained close to the participants' own words, evidence was systematically compared between the two groups, assumptions were surfaced, alternative explanations were explored, and reflexive notes were employed to counter the assumption that livestreaming is a positive phenomenon. This was significant because the data showed both trust building and trust testing effects: some viewers saw livestreaming as a means of transparency and accountability, while others continued to be sceptical due to issues of inconsistency, political influence, partial representation, or privacy.

Saturation was evaluated in the process of coding and theme development. When additional analysis of the transcripts did not yield any new themes and when subsequent interviews did not reveal any new themes, saturation was deemed to have been reached. The recurring patterns were: (1) the use of indirect information before livestreaming; (2) the need for visible procedural fairness; (3) increased trust among watchers; (4) ongoing institutional distrust among non-watchers; and (5) privacy concerns, reputational damage, public pressure, and misuse of livestreamed content. Although the sample was small, the data was adequate for comparative qualitative analysis. The findings are not meant to be statistically generalizable, but rather to provide insight into the impact of livestreamed court proceedings on perceptions of transparency, fairness, and judicial trust in Mogadishu.

Several steps were taken to increase trustworthiness. The repeated reading of the transcripts, systematic coding, comparison of watchers and non-watchers, and the use of participant evidence to support each theme provided credibility. The analytical process from open coding to category development to theme review was documented to enhance dependability. Reflexive memoing and consideration of contradictory cases supported confirmability. The issue of transferability was addressed by providing contextual information on the judicial system in Mogadishu, the nature of the livestreamed court proceedings, and the difference between direct and indirect information. The following steps ensured the analysis was transparent, systematic, and data driven. The research team, study design, sampling, data collection, analysis, reflexivity, findings, limitations, and implications were reported transparently and in accordance with established qualitative reporting standards: Consolidated Criteria for Reporting Qualitative Research (COREQ; Tong et al., 2007) and Standards for Reporting Qualitative Research (SRQR; O’Brien et al., 2014).

3.7 Ethical Considerations

The SIMAD University Institutional Research Ethics Board approved the study (Approval No. EC000228, dated 14 January 2026). Before data collection, participants sign informed consent forms after being informed about the purpose of the study, procedures, voluntary participation, confidentiality, potential risks and benefits, and audio recording. The consent form stated that the interview would take about 30–

60 minutes and would cover the issues of transparency of the court, livestreaming, fairness of the process, and public confidence in the judiciary. The participation was voluntary, and the participants were told that they could refuse to answer any question and could withdraw at any time without any consequences. Consent to audio recording was obtained through a separate consent form, which gave participants the opportunity to consent or decline. Interviews were audio-recorded if participants agreed and detailed notes were taken if they did not. Transcripts, analysis and reporting were anonymized of the participants' names and identifying information. Participants who watched the proceedings on the internet were coded W1–W10 and those who did not watch the proceedings were coded NW1–NW10. No identification of judges, lawyers, litigants, witnesses or sensitive cases.

Audio files and transcripts were placed in password protected digital folders and only accessible to the research team. During transcription and translation, identifying details, such as the names of judges, lawyers, litigants, and witnesses, and references to specific sensitive cases were redacted. Data were kept securely for the duration necessary for academic verification and were only used for academic research purposes.

3.8 Methodological Limitations

There are several methodological limitations in this study. First, it employed purposive sampling in one city, which means that the results are not statistically representative of Somali citizens. Second, the sample was small (20 participants, ten of whom had watched the proceedings live) which may restrict the scope of direct viewing experiences captured. Third, self-reported interview data may be subject to limitations in recall and social-desirability bias. The limitations are not an impediment to the analytical contribution of the study, but rather they set its boundaries without diminishing its analytical contribution; the purpose of the study was analytical explanation, not statistical generalization.

In addition to these methodological limitations, opinions of those who did not watch the proceedings live may have been based on second-hand information, media coverage, or general impressions. In addition, the study did not include judges, lawyers, court officials, journalists, or policymakers, who could offer further institutional perspective. Future research might include more diverse and larger samples, including citizens as well as court officials, journalists, lawyers and judges, and might also include a combination of qualitative interviews and survey data to determine if the themes identified here are present in a larger population.

4. Results

Comparative thematic analysis was used for analyzing the interview data. The analysis was conducted between the participants who watched the live streamed court proceedings (W1–W10) and the participants who did not watch the live streamed court proceedings (NW1–NW10). It explored the meaning of judicial transparency, procedural fairness, public trust, access to court information, and the possible advantages and disadvantages of livestreaming, among other things, for the two groups. The results suggest that livestreaming was not seen as a source of public trust by itself. Instead, it gave

participants a chance to watch the actual proceedings of the court and to assess the conduct of the court, the presentation of evidence, the presentation of legal arguments, and the treatment of the parties. This firsthand experience boosted participants' trust in the judiciary for some. For others, livestreaming exposed institutional weaknesses or inconsistencies that maintained or reduced their confidence.

Five themes were identified:

1. From hearsay to observation: livestreaming reframes the source of judicial knowledge.
2. Procedural fairness becomes visible through courtroom conduct.
3. Livestreaming builds trust conditionally, not automatically.
4. Non-watchers remain between distrust and curiosity.
5. Livestreaming strengthens accountability but creates new risks.

4.1 From Hearsay to Observation: Livestreaming Reframes the Source of Judicial Knowledge

One of the common themes was the contrast between indirect and direct exposure to information. Before viewing livestreamed proceedings, participants commonly relied on television, radio, social media, relatives, friends, and community discussions for information about court cases. Some of these sources were deemed to be incomplete, selective, biased, or hard to verify.

Watchers

Watchers reported that they were able to see parts of the judicial process that were not typically included in media summaries, through livestreaming. W2 explained: “The judge’s questions, the lawyers’ arguments, the defendant’s responses, and the way evidence is presented.”

This quotation shows that livestreaming was used to give access not only to the final judgment, but also to the procedural development of a case.

W9 pointed out that there is a distinction between seeing something and hearing about it from someone else: “The difference lies in the details obtained when watching a livestream compared with hearing what happened from someone whose bias may be unknown.”

The participant recognized direct viewing as a means of minimizing the need for a third party to interpret the experience or perhaps bias.

However, W5 acknowledged that digital access may remain selective or incomplete: “When I watch proceedings directly, I can follow many details; however, when a report has been edited, only selected parts are presented.”

This paradoxical evidence suggests that livestreaming can help to lessen the need for hearsay, but edited videos and selected segments can still influence and/or restrict citizens' perceptions.

Non-watchers

Those who didn't watch relied on media reports, community stories, family, friends and personal networks. NW1 explained: “Different sources sometimes gave different versions of the same case, and there was no simple way to verify the official decision.”

This participant felt uncertainty since sometimes the information from the indirect sources was contradictory.

NW5 similarly stated: “In many situations, I only heard the final decision without understanding the legal reasoning behind it.”

This means that indirect sources often reported the result of a case, but not the evidence, arguments or reasoning that led to the judgment.

Another non-watcher explained: “It was difficult to know whether reports reflected the full facts of the case or only selected parts” (NW10).

The quotation reflects concern about the completeness and reliability of media and community reports.

NW2 had a slightly different perspective, however: “I trusted the information depending on the person from whom I received it and whether I trusted that person.”

This contrasting account shows that some non-watchers evaluated judicial information through interpersonal trust rather than through direct institutional access.

Comparative interpretation

The main difference between the two groups concerned the basis of their knowledge. While the watchers could make observation-based assessments of court proceedings, the non-watchers were more likely to trust the source, the reputation of the institution, personal experience, and community narratives.

Livestreaming thus transformed more than just the amount of information available. It changed the way citizens could assess the judiciary. The results also indicate, however, that direct digital access was not always full. The edited footage, selected clips and partial broadcasts may continue to shape the public perception.

4.2 Procedural Fairness Becomes Visible Through Courtroom Conduct

The concept of procedural fairness was a recurring theme, especially among watchers. These participants did not consider fairness only in terms of the result of a case. They also considered the behavior of the judges and lawyers, the order of the court, the presentation of evidence, the neutrality of the judges and whether both sides had been given a chance to present their arguments.

Watchers

W2's attitude towards judicial conduct was positive: “The judges’ demeanour was restrained, calm, and focused on maintaining order.”

This participant saw calmness, restraint and control in the court as a manifestation of judicial professionalism.

The same person related confidence with both the impartiality of the judge and the work of the lawyers: “When I see a judge conducting the case impartially and a lawyer arguing professionally, my confidence increases” (W2).

This implies that perceptions of procedural fairness were influenced by the overall behavior of judges and lawyers. W8 gave a more critical evaluation: “The judges behaved ethically and impartially, but the lawyers had weak professional argument-building and cross-examination techniques.”

This quotation shows that a participant might have a positive attitude toward judicial behavior but be critical of legal advocacy. Livestreaming revealed both the good and bad of various aspects of the same proceeding.

W7 also had a conditional assessment: “When proceedings appeared balanced and respectful, my confidence increased, but when there were signs of bias or unequal treatment, my sense of fairness decreased.”

The quotation demonstrates that there was not a consistent positive evaluation of visibility. Rather, it allowed the participants to recognize fair and unfair behavior.

Non-watchers

Non-watchers generally understood fairness through institutional reputation, personal experience, and community narratives. NW2 stated: “My uncle’s land case experienced many delays because he had no connections within the court and did not know people there.”

This connection between fairness and perceived social connections and unequal access was not to courtroom procedure.

NW4 found that there were several institutional issues that needed to be addressed: “Justice and impartiality are affected by institutional weakness, clan pressure, bribery, and weak prosecutorial capacity.”

In this participant's view, the concept of procedural fairness was inseparable from the political, social and institutional context of the courts.

NW8 similarly explained: “Those with financial resources or strong social connections are believed to have better chances of winning their cases.”

This is indicative of the idea that money and social status can influence access to justice and case outcomes.

However, NW7 had a more qualified view: “Some people receive justice, while others believe they are treated unfairly.”

This contradictory perspective implies that the judiciary was not seen as being unfair. Rather, experiences and public evaluations were case and person specific.

Comparative interpretation

Fairness was evaluated by observing the courtroom’s behavior, such as judicial neutrality, professionalism, evidentiary consideration and equal participation. Non-watchers judged fairness on a wider range of perceptions of corruption, delay, clan influence, political pressure and unequal access.

Livestreaming thus brought procedural fairness to the fore and into focus. But Greater visibility did not consistently produce more positive assessments. Confidence was boosted when participants saw professionalism and neutrality. Their confidence was low when they saw poor legal representation, potential bias, or inconsistencies.

4.3 Livestreaming Builds Trust Conditionally, Not Automatically

Most watchers said that livestreaming helped them to better understand the court process. But greater knowledge did not always lead to complete trust in judiciary. Trust was often reported as being partial, or dependent on the fairness and professionalism of the proceedings or being cautious.

Watchers

W1: More confidence with visible compliance with procedure: “Watching trials live made me feel more confident because I could see the procedures being followed.”

The participants gained confidence because of the ability to live stream and have an independent assessment of the way the proceedings were conducted.

W2 reported a less significant improvement: “Watching trials live slightly increased my confidence, although it did not completely restore it.”

This suggests that there was some scepticism that was dampened by direct observation, but not eliminated by it, of concerns about the judicial system.

W8 reported a clearly mixed response that showed a clearly mixed response: “Watching trials live made me feel both more and less confident.”

The participant felt more confident when the proceedings were transparent and structured, but less confident when there was inconsistency and/or potential influence.

W10 argued that: “Watching did not increase my confidence because the court decided exactly as I had expected.”

When the result seems foreseeable or preordained, this indicates that livestreaming can validate rather than question the concerns that already exist.

Non-watchers

Non-watchers generally anticipated that livestreaming could influence their confidence, but only under specific conditions. NW1 explained: “If I observed that the judge handled the case fairly, gave both sides equal opportunity, and based the decision on evidence, my trust would increase.”

The quotation indicates that trust was based on the perception of fairness and evidence-based decision making, not on broadcasting.

NW4 stated that there were positive and negative possibilities: “Livestreaming can increase trust if the judge acts fairly, decrease trust if viewers see pressure or partiality, and indirectly improve professionalism because the public is watching.”

This participant saw livestreaming as a tool that could either enhance or diminish trust based on what was seen.

NW5 similarly stated: “If the court proceedings were transparent and professional, I would have more confidence. If the process appeared disorganized or unfair, it would confirm my concerns.”

The participant viewed livestreaming as a means of testing existing perceptions rather than automatically improving them.

NW8 highlighted the constraints of transparency: “Livestreaming alone cannot solve all problems. Trust also depends on whether judgments are independent, evidence-based, and free from external influence.”

This contradictory evidence indicates that transparency was deemed to be important but not enough without institutional independence and substantive judicial fairness.

Comparative interpretation

Both groups disagreed that livestreaming inherently establishes public trust. Watchers indicated that their confidence had increased, decreased or changed in some way. Non-watchers expected similar "ifs ands" and "buts".

Livestreaming was thus a means of testing trust. It boosted confidence when proceedings were neutral, professional, equal participation, orderly and legal reasoning. It undermined confidence when viewers felt bias, inconsistency, weak representation, political influence or unclear decision making.

4.4 Non-Watchers Remain Between Distrust and Curiosity

One trend among those who were not watching was that they were sceptical and yet willing to watch in the future. The reasons they did not watch were time constraints, lack of awareness, lack of interest, legal issues, time-consuming processes, and privacy issues. But most were not opposed to livestreaming per se.

Non-watchers

NW1 explained: "The main reason I have not watched is lack of interest and lack of time, not lack of access."

The participants' lack of watching was therefore related to motivation and other priorities, not to a lack of Internet or media access.

NW7 found that there was little information on the location and timing of the broadcasts: "I knew that some cases were discussed online, but I did not know the official source or schedule for livestreaming."

This indicates that the existence of livestreaming did not necessarily make proceedings practically accessible. There was also a need for citizens to have access to reliable information on official platforms and schedules.

NW8 voiced concerns over publicizing private conflicts: "I am not comfortable watching legal disputes publicly because some cases involve private matters."

This participant did not oppose all livestreaming but felt that it was not suitable to broadcast in sensitive cases.

Another non-watcher noted that it was hard to grasp the legal process: "I have not watched livestreamed court proceedings because I find legal proceedings difficult to follow without explanation" (NW10).

This implies that the complexity of the law and low public legal literacy may make it difficult to make livestreaming an effective transparency tool.

Watchers

Watchers described several motivations for following livestreamed proceedings. W1 stated: “I was motivated by curiosity and the desire to understand how the judicial process works directly.”

The participants watched because it was a chance to learn about the courts without having to learn about them from others.

W3 explained: “I watched parts of the proceeding because the case was sensitive and related to corruption.”

This means that if a case is of public importance, it may encourage citizens to watch the case.

W7 related viewing to educational interest: “As a law student, I was interested in understanding how the system works in practice.”

This implies that the more knowledgeable one is about the law or interested in it, the more likely they are to watch and understand the proceedings.

W8 also reported watching for an interest in the judicial system and to get legal insight.

Comparative interpretation

The difference between watchers and non-watchers involved more than technological access. It also included issues of motivation, time, awareness, legal literacy, relevance of the case, and attitudes towards privacy. Often, watchers were interested in the case for curiosity, legal interest, concern about corruption, or because of the public importance of the case. Non-watchers encountered barriers to watching, but many were willing to see if the proceedings were more accessible, brief, understandable, and restricted to "appropriate cases". The results show that simply providing a broadcast is not enough. Livestreaming also needs to be accessible, understandable, publicly announced and ethically managed.

4.5 Livestreaming Strengthens Accountability but Creates New Risks

Watchers and non-watchers acknowledged the potential of livestreaming for enhancing transparency and accountability. Concurrently, they noted risks to privacy, public pressure, reputational damage, edited content, misinterpretation and vulnerable parties.

Watchers

W1 found a conflict between transparency and performative behavior: “The main benefit is increased transparency, but participants may change their behavior because they are being recorded.”

This means that cameras can help to increase accountability but can also lead to changes in behavior by the participants due to the presence of cameras.

W2 expressed concerns regarding circulation of edited material: “Cameras can encourage professionalism, but parts of a trial may be edited and shared incorrectly on social media.”

The participants thus considered cameras as potentially useful, provided that they were used responsibly and presented in context.

W4 highlighted the reputational risks to accused persons: “A person who was accused and later found innocent may still suffer because their reputation has already been damaged.”

This demonstrates that social harm can be caused in the long term even if the accused is found not guilty by the court.

W9 also had concerns about privacy and harmful content: “Some cases are private and should be concealed, and disturbing images may cause fear or trauma in society.”

This participant supported limitations on the broadcasting of sensitive or potentially harmful material.

Non-watchers

NW3 found that there were advantages and disadvantages to judicial independence, including: “Livestreaming may reduce violations because the judiciary will protect its reputation, but public opinion may also influence judicial decisions.”

The participant felt that the public observation would help to promote good behavior and at the same time exert pressure on the judicial actors.

NW4 stressed the importance of safeguarding victims and sensitive information: “Broadcasting may violate the privacy of victims, especially in cases involving sexual violence, national matters, or family disputes.”

This account provides for selective broadcasting and enhanced protection for vulnerable parties.

NW8 similarly stated: “I might watch a public-interest case, but I would not be comfortable watching family disputes, victim-related cases, or private matters.”

The participant upheld public access when there was a legitimate public interest but denied the right to unlimited access to private proceedings.

NW10 was about the danger of miscommunication: “If proceedings are not explained clearly, viewers may misunderstand what is happening.”

This indicates that access without adequate legal explanation may create confusion, inaccurate conclusions, or further distrust.

Comparative interpretation

Both groups knew about the double-edged nature of livestreaming. It could help to diminish the need for rumours, promote professionalism, subject judicial practice to public scrutiny and enhance accountability. But it may also infringe on privacy, harm reputations, reveal victims, put pressure on them and enable edited material to be spread without legal context.

4.6 Overall Comparative Findings

Comparative analysis shows that livestreaming had a more pronounced effect on the quality of the assessments of the participants than on the direction of their trust. Watchers could see specific signs of fairness and unfairness because they had witnessed the behavior of the courts first-hand. They were therefore more procedure and detail oriented in their views.

But direct observation did not always lead to greater confidence. Others grew more confident following professional and impartial behavior. Others were skeptical or less confident due to lack of consistency, poor legal representation or potential influence.

Non-watchers were more reliant on media reports, family experiences, community stories and institutional reputation. However, the majority were only willing to watch proceedings in the future if it was possible to broadcast it in an official manner, understand it, and it was relevant and respectful of privacy.

In general, livestreaming proved to be a conditional transparency tool that linked judicial visibility and public trust. Its impact was shaped by the fairness of the proceedings, the thoroughness of the presentation of the cases, the citizens' understanding of the legal process, and the independence, professionalism and credibility of the judiciary.

Comparative Thematic Matrix

Theme	Watchers: Participants Who Watched Livestreams	Non-watchers: Participants Who Did Not Watch	Key Difference	Interpretation
Source of judicial knowledge	Relied on direct observation of judges, lawyers, evidence, courtroom procedure, and legal interaction	Relied on media reports, community stories, relatives, social media, and indirect experience	Watchers evaluated courts through visible procedure; non-watchers relied on institutional reputation and social narratives	Livestreaming changes trust formation from indirect belief to direct assessment
Perception of fairness	Judged fairness through judging neutrality, lawyer professionalism, evidence presentation, and orderly procedure	Judged fairness through delays, corruption stories, land disputes, clan pressure, political influence, and unequal access	Watchers assessed procedural performance; non-watchers assessed institutional reputation	Procedural fairness becomes more concrete when citizens observe proceedings directly
Effect on trust	Mostly increased confidence, but conditionally and not completely	Expected livestreaming to increase or decrease trust depending on what would be observed	Watchers experienced partial transformation; non-watchers imagined conditional transformation	Livestreaming is not automatic trust-building; it is a conditional trust-testing mechanism
Transparency	Experienced transparency as direct visibility into justice	Understood transparency as potentially useful but not personally experienced	Watchers experienced transparency; non-watchers anticipated it	Transparency must be accessible and understandable to become meaningful
Accountability	Saw cameras as reducing manipulation and encouraging professional conduct	Expect cameras to pressure courts and legal actors to behave better	Watchers observed accountability; non-watchers expected accountability	Livestreaming creates reputational pressure on legal actors
Barriers	Barriers were mainly related to case interest, time, and ability to follow proceedings	Barriers included time, lack of awareness, lack of interest, legal complexity, privacy concerns, and limited trust	Non-watchers faced stronger access and comprehension barriers	Digital access alone is insufficient without public communication and legal explanation
Risks	Identified privacy, reputational damage, edited clips, performative	Identified privacy, sensitive cases, politicization, misunderstanding, and public pressure	Both groups recognized risks, but non-watchers emphasized	Livestreaming requires regulation, not unrestricted exposure

Theme	Watchers: Participants Who Watched Livestreams	Non-watchers: Participants Who Did Not Watch	Key Difference	Interpretation
	behavior, and public pressure		ethical and privacy concerns more strongly	
Overall interpretation	Livestreaming produced more informed, balanced, and procedure-based judgments	Non-watching sustained uncertainty, skepticism, and reliance on informal narratives	Exposure changed the quality of trust judgment	Livestreaming mediates trust formation through visible fairness, transparency, and accountability

5. Discussion

This study examined how livestreamed court proceedings shape public trust in Mogadishu's post-conflict judiciary. Specifically, it explored how judicial transparency and perceived procedural fairness influence citizens' perceptions of livestreamed proceedings, and how livestreamed observation may, in turn, affect public trust. The comparative findings show that livestreaming does not simply increase trust by making courts visible. Rather, it changes the way trust is formed. Participants who watched livestreamed court proceedings evaluated courts through direct procedural observation, while non-watchers relied more heavily on indirect narratives, community experience, media reports, and institutional reputation. This finding is consistent with studies showing that public trust in courts is shaped by citizens' access to information, perceived institutional performance, procedural fairness, and prior experiences with judicial institutions (Glavina & Zimmeren, 2025).

The central finding is that livestreamed court proceedings function as a conditional qualitative mediating mechanism between judicial transparency, procedural fairness, and public trust. Livestreaming strengthens confidence when it makes fairness, professionalism, evidence-based reasoning, judicial neutrality, and courtroom discipline visible to citizens. However, it may weaken trust when it reveals inconsistency, weak representation, bias, public pressure, poor legal explanation, or procedural disorder. This supports previous research showing that visual judicial transparency can improve trust, but it also confirms that transparency is not automatically legitimizing; its effect depends on what citizens observe and how they interpret it (Xu & Liu, 2020). In Mogadishu's post-conflict justice context, this conditional effect is especially important because public trust is already shaped by concerns about corruption, political influence, clan pressure, delays, weak enforcement, and unequal access to justice.

5.1 Livestreaming as a Mechanism of Judicial Transparency

The findings indicate that livestreaming improves judicial transparency by allowing citizens to observe court proceedings directly. This supports the first research objective, which examined the influence of judicial transparency on citizens' perceptions of livestreamed court proceedings. Participants who watched livestreams repeatedly contrasted direct observation with second-hand information. Before livestreaming, court information was often fragmented and mediated through social media, community discussions, or brief news reports. After watching proceedings, participants reported a stronger ability to understand how cases were handled and how judicial actors behaved.

This finding is consistent with Grimmelikhuijsen & Klijn, (2015)field experiment, which found that judicial transparency had a positive effect on public trust in judges. It also aligns with Xu & Liu, (2020) study of courtroom broadcasting, which showed that video exposure to court proceedings can influence public confidence in justice through citizens' perceptions of courtroom interaction and procedural treatment. In the present study, transparency was not experienced merely as the availability of information. Rather, it became meaningful when citizens could observe legal procedure, assess judicial conduct, and interpret the fairness of the process for themselves.

This finding strengthens the study's main argument that livestreaming can mediate trust formation by shifting citizens from hearsay to observation. In this sense, livestreaming does not create trust directly. It creates the conditions under which citizens can evaluate whether the judiciary is acting transparently, fairly, and professionally. The practical implication is that courts should not treat livestreaming only as a communication tool. It is also a legitimacy-building mechanism. However, transparency must be accompanied by accessibility, legal explanation, ethical safeguards, and institutional professionalism. Without these conditions, livestreaming may expose court proceedings without necessarily improving public understanding or trust.

5.2 Procedural Fairness as the Pathway Through Which Livestreaming Affects Trust

The second major finding is that perceived procedural fairness is the main pathway through which livestreaming shapes trust. Watchers did not judge the judiciary only by whether they agreed with court outcomes. They judged fairness through observable procedural indicators: whether judges were calm and impartial, whether lawyers were allowed to argue, whether evidence was considered, whether proceedings were orderly, and whether both sides appeared to have a voice.

This finding addresses the second and fifth research objectives. Participants' accounts suggest that livestreamed observation may provide an interpretive pathway through which visible procedural fairness informs assessments of public trust. The finding is consistent with procedural justice theory, which argues that people's judgments of legal authority are shaped not only by outcomes, but also by voice, neutrality, respect, trustworthiness, and fair treatment (Tyler, 2007). Similarly Burdziej et al., (2022) found that procedural justice remains important for court legitimacy, even in contexts where courts face legitimacy challenges.

At the same time, the findings show that procedural fairness does not automatically produce trust. Some participants remained cautious even after observing livestreamed proceedings because they continued to perceive delays, possible external influence, weak legal representation, or inconsistent decision-making. This supports more recent evidence that procedural fairness may affect perceptions of legitimacy, but that citizens' evaluations can also be shaped by outcome agreement, prior beliefs, and wider institutional trust (Robinson & Evans, 2025). Therefore, livestreaming strengthens trust only when visible procedure confirms fairness, neutrality, professionalism, and legal seriousness.

The theoretical contribution is that this study extends procedural justice theory into a digital justice context. It shows that citizens can form judgments of procedural legitimacy through livestreamed observation, even when they are not physically present in court. In this sense, livestreaming creates a form of digitally mediated procedural justice. It allows citizens to evaluate fairness through visible procedural cues, including judicial neutrality, evidentiary reasoning, courtroom order, and equal treatment of parties.

5.3 Livestreaming as a Trust-Building and Trust-Testing Mechanism

The third major finding is that participants perceived livestreaming as having dual potential. It can build trust, but it can also test or challenge trust. Most watchers reported increased confidence after observing court proceedings. However, some participants also became more aware of weaknesses, including delays, inconsistency, poor legal representation, weak argumentation, and possible external influence. This shows that livestreaming operates as a conditional mechanism rather than a guaranteed source of legitimacy.

The accounts of watchers whose confidence remained unchanged or declined challenge a simple transparency–trust assumption. They indicate that visibility may intensify scepticism when viewers interpret outcomes as predictable, representation as weak, or proceedings as vulnerable to external influence. These cases suggest that livestreaming produces evaluability rather than legitimacy: it allows courts to be judged but does not determine whether that judgment will be favorable.

This finding addresses the third research objective: the effect of livestreamed court proceedings on public trust. The evidence suggests that livestreaming can increase public trust, but the relationship described by participants was conditional rather than automatic. Xu & Liu, (2020) found that courtroom broadcasting can influence public confidence in justice by shaping perceptions of interpersonal treatment and procedural fairness. Similarly, Legg, (2021) argues that the use of technology in courts must preserve open justice, procedural fairness, and impartiality. These studies support the present finding that livestreaming can enhance confidence when it reveals fair and professional proceedings, but may damage confidence when it exposes weakness, disorder, or perceived bias.

These finding challenges overly optimistic assumptions about digital transparency. Visibility alone does not guarantee legitimacy. If what becomes visible is unfair, disorganized, politicized, or poorly explained,

livestreaming may reinforce distrust. Therefore, livestreaming should be understood as both a trust-building and trust-testing mechanism. This is particularly relevant in post-conflict justice systems, where courts may already face public skepticism and where visible institutional weakness can intensify distrust.

The findings suggest that expansion of livestreaming should be considered alongside improvements in procedural quality, professional capacity, public explanation, and privacy protection. Livestreaming should therefore be accompanied by professional training for judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and court communication officers. It should also be supported by clear public explanations of legal procedure so that viewers can understand what they are observing.

5.4 Non-Watchers and the Persistence of Indirect Institutional Distrust

The comparison with non-watchers shows that lack of direct exposure sustains uncertainty. Non-watchers' views were shaped by community narratives, social media, family experience, land disputes, corruption allegations, political influence, and perceived unequal access. Their trust was generally more cautious or lower than that of watchers. The differences between watchers and non-watchers should not be attributed exclusively to livestream exposure. Participants who chose to watch may have had greater prior interest in legal affairs, stronger digital access, higher legal awareness, or greater motivation to follow public-interest cases. Their more detailed assessments may therefore reflect both direct exposure and pre-existing engagement with judicial issues. Future research should examine prior trust, legal knowledge, digital literacy, and case interest before and after livestream exposure.

This supports studies showing that public trust in courts is shaped not only by institutional quality, but also by citizens' awareness, personal experience, and ability to understand judicial processes (Glavina & Zimmeren, 2025).

However, non-watchers were not opposed to livestreaming. Most said they would consider watching if proceedings were accessible, shorter, clearly explained, or related to public-interest cases. This finding is important because it shows that non-watching is not always caused by rejection of judicial transparency. It may result from time constraints, lack of awareness, lack of legal knowledge, difficulty following long proceedings, privacy concerns, or uncertainty about where livestreams are available. Susskind, (2019) argues that digital justice should improve access to justice by making legal processes more reachable and understandable. The present findings support this argument but also show that access alone is insufficient unless court information is communicated in a way citizens can practically use.

The practical implication is that courts should develop public-facing summaries, official livestream schedules, explanatory notes, and short educational clips. Without these, livestreaming may reach only already interested citizens, such as law students, legal professionals, politically engaged viewers, or people following high-profile cases. To improve public trust more broadly, livestreaming must be

combined with public legal education. This is especially important in Mogadishu, where legal literacy, digital access, and institutional trust are unevenly distributed.

5.5 Post-Conflict Judicial Legitimacy and the Limits of Livestreaming

The Mogadishu context gives this study an important contribution. Participants' trust was shaped by post-conflict concerns, including corruption, clan influence, political interference, land disputes, weak enforcement, delayed hearings, and unequal access to justice. These issues cannot be solved by livestreaming alone. Although livestreaming can improve transparency and accountability, it cannot substitute for judicial independence, consistent procedure, anti-corruption reform, fair case management, and equal access to legal representation.

This finding is consistent with literature on fragile and post-conflict justice systems, which shows that formal courts often face legitimacy challenges where corruption, weak enforcement, political interference, or reliance on non-state justice mechanisms persist (Harper, 2021). It is also supported by Somalia-specific justice-sector documents, which emphasize the need to strengthen legal frameworks, expand access to justice, improve justice delivery, and build trust between citizens and state institutions (M. Sheikh-Ali, 2025).

The theoretical implication is that in fragile or post-conflict justice systems, trust is not built only through visibility. It also requires institutional performance, procedural consistency, credible independence, fair enforcement, and protection from corruption or political interference. Van De Walle & Migchelbrink, (2022) show that corruption, impartiality, process quality, and service outcomes are important for citizen trust in public administration. Applied to the present study, livestreaming can support legitimacy, but it cannot replace structural reform. This explains why many participants described trust as moderate, cautious, or conditional.

This finding also qualifies the mediation argument. Livestreaming may mediate the relationship between transparency, procedural fairness, and public trust by making court processes visible. However, the strength of this mediation depends on the quality of the institution being observed. Where livestreaming reveals professionalism, neutrality, and fairness, it may strengthen trust. Where it reveals weakness, inconsistency, or external influence, it may confirm existing distrust.

5.6 Risks of Livestreamed Justice

The findings also reveal serious risks. Both groups identified privacy concerns, reputational harm, edited clips, social media distortion, public pressure, and performative behavior. Some participants worried that witnesses, victims, accused people, or parties in sensitive cases may be harmed by public exposure. Others noted that legal content could be misunderstood or misused when clips are taken out of context.

These concerns are consistent with digital open justice literature. Legg, (2021) argues that online court processes must maintain open justice, procedural fairness, and impartiality. (S. Ahmed, 2023) similarly

notes that online courts and livestreamed proceedings may enhance access to justice and open justice, but they also create serious privacy risks when public access is uncontrolled. Therefore, livestreaming should not be understood as unrestricted visibility. It should be governed by clear rules.

The practical implication is that livestreaming should be supported by formal guidelines. Participants' concerns support a selective approach in which case eligibility is assessed against privacy, fair-trial, victim-protection, and public-interest considerations. Courts should develop rules for sensitive cases, victim protection, minors, family disputes, sexual violence cases, national security cases, and cases involving reputational risk. Courts should also regulate recording, redistribution, and official communication to reduce misleading editing or out-of-context circulation. In this sense, livestreaming can enhance judicial accountability only when it is embedded within a responsible digital justice framework.

5.7 Theoretical Contribution

This study makes four theoretical contributions. First, it contributes to judicial transparency theory by showing that transparency is not merely the publication of information. In this study, transparency becomes meaningful when citizens can directly observe court procedure and use that visibility to evaluate judicial behavior. Second, it contributes to procedural justice theory by showing that citizens assess fairness through visible procedural cues such as neutrality, respect, voice, evidence presentation, legal reasoning, and professional courtroom conduct. The study extends procedural justice theory into a digital environment by showing that citizens can evaluate fairness through livestreamed observation. Third, it contributes to digital justice literature by showing that livestreaming is not only a technological tool but also a legitimacy mechanism. It can strengthen institutional trust when it reveals fairness and professionalism, but it can weaken trust when it exposes weakness, inconsistency, bias, or poor explanation.

Fourth, it contributes to post-conflict governance literature by showing that digital transparency operates differently in fragile justice systems. In Mogadishu, livestreaming interacts with existing distrust related to corruption, clan influence, land disputes, political pressure, delayed justice, and uneven access to legal services. Therefore, livestreaming should be understood as a conditional transparency pathway rather than a stand-alone solution to judicial mistrust.

6. Conclusion

The findings show that livestreamed court proceedings can enhance public trust in Mogadishu's post-conflict judiciary, but only under specific conditions. Livestreaming strengthens trust when it makes procedural fairness, judicial neutrality, evidence-based reasoning, and professional conduct visible to citizens. Participants who watched livestreamed proceedings developed more direct, informed, and balanced perceptions of fairness, while non-watchers continued to rely on indirect sources such as media, social networks, and community narratives. The study therefore shows that livestreaming mediates trust formation by shifting citizens from hearsay to observation. However, this mediation is

qualitative and conditional rather than automatic or statistical. Livestreaming builds trust when what becomes visible is fair, credible, professional, and understandable. It may weaken trust when it exposes inconsistency, weak representation, bias, poor explanation, or institutional fragility. Therefore, livestreaming is not a complete solution to judicial mistrust. It must be supported by judicial independence, procedural consistency, privacy protection, public legal education, and broader institutional reform.

In post-conflict justice systems such as Mogadishu's, digital visibility can support judicial legitimacy, but only when it is embedded within responsible open justice, ethical safeguards, and credible institutional reform. Livestreaming should therefore be understood not as unrestricted broadcasting, but as a regulated transparency pathway through which citizens can evaluate the fairness, accountability, and credibility of the courts.

7. Practical Implications

The findings suggest three main areas of practical implication: institutional design, procedural quality, and public accessibility.

Institutional Design

Livestreaming should be introduced through clear and consistent judicial policies rather than applied informally or selectively. Courts should establish official platforms, publish accessible schedules, define case-selection criteria, and specify which proceedings should be restricted because of privacy, victim protection, family matters, national security, or fair-trial concerns. Clear rules should also govern recording, redistribution, and the use of edited clips to reduce misinformation and out-of-context circulation. Livestreaming should form part of broader judicial reform and should not be treated as a substitute for addressing delay, corruption, political interference, weak enforcement, or unequal access to justice.

Procedural Quality

Greater public visibility places additional responsibility on judges, lawyers, prosecutors, and court officials to maintain high standards of neutrality, professionalism, preparation, clarity, and respect for procedure. Livestreaming can strengthen accountability when proceedings demonstrate evidence-based reasoning, equal treatment, and orderly courtroom conduct. However, it may also expose weak advocacy, unclear decisions, inconsistency, or perceived external influence. Expansion of livestreaming should therefore be accompanied by professional training, stronger procedural standards, and clear judicial communication.

Public Accessibility

Livestreaming should be made accessible and understandable to ordinary citizens. Official broadcasts should be supported by plain-language case summaries, basic explanations of legal procedures, verified

schedules, and public legal education. These measures could help non-watchers and other citizens follow proceedings more accurately and reduce reliance on rumours, incomplete media reports, and misleading social media content. Public communication offices should also provide reliable summaries and contextual explanations to limit misunderstanding and improve legal awareness.

8. Limitations

This study has limitations. The sample size is small and qualitative, so the findings cannot be generalized statistically to all residents of Mogadishu. The study is based on self-reported perceptions, which may be affected by memory, social desirability, or personal experiences. Participants also had unequal exposure to livestreamed proceedings; some watched several cases, while others watched only limited parts of proceedings. The study also lacks detailed demographic comparison, such as age, gender, education, legal background, and prior court experience. In addition, the study focused on citizens and did not include judges, lawyers, court officials, journalists, or policymakers, whose perspectives could provide further institutional insight. These limitations do not weaken the value of the findings, but they define the scope of the study. Future research could use a larger sample, include legal professionals and court officials, compare different Somali regions, or apply a mixed methods design to examine whether the qualitative patterns identified in this study appear across a wider population. Future studies could also test the mediation relationship quantitatively by examining whether livestreamed court proceedings statistically mediate the relationship between judicial transparency, procedural fairness, and public trust.

Declarations

Ethics approval

This study was approved by the SIMAD University ethics committee of the Center for Research and Development under ethical reference number **EC000228**. The research protocol was reviewed and approved in accordance with SIMAD University's ethical guidelines.

Informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants before data collection. Participants were informed about the study's purpose, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw at any time.

Ethical statement

Participant identities were protected through anonymized codes. Names and other identifying information were not recorded or reported.

Author contributions

Osman Aded Osman: Conceptualization, methodology, supervision, interpretation, and manuscript review.

Abdihakim Ahmed Mohamed: Data collection, analysis, and original draft preparation.

Abdirizak Osman Abdullahi: interpretation of findings, and critical revision.

Mukhtar Mohamed Mohamud: Literature review, and final manuscript preparation.

All authors reviewed and approved the final version of the manuscript.

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Consent to participate

Informed consent was obtained from all participants.

Consent for publication

Not applicable. No identifiable personal information is included in the manuscript.

Competing interests

The authors declare no competing interests.

Data availability statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, Osman Aded Osman, upon reasonable request.

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