



EVALUATING ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY MECHANISMS IN DEVELOPMENT FINANCE INSTITUTION

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Abstract: This study examines the tools that enhance public accountability and transparency in DIF, with a particular focus on auditing practices, stakeholder engagement, and ethical considerations. Adopting a systematic review methodology, the study observing the Preferred Reporting Items for Careful Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRICMA) guidelines to ensure methodological advancement and transparency. The literature review covers a 24-year period (2000–2024) and incorporated peer-reviewed journal articles and official document. Data were collected and analyzed using qualitative synthesis and thematic analysis to discover key patterns, themes, and research gaps. The findings highlight the essential role of effective external and internal auditing practices in sustaining public confidence, as well as the relevance of active stakeholder engagement and adequate ethical frameworks in promoting transparency and accountability. In all, the study underscores the need for a wider approach to strengthening public sector financial management. Policy formulators are encouraged to prioritize fame auditing systems and advocate ethical behavior through continuous professional orientation.

Keywords: Public Accountability Transparency, Auditing Practice, Stakeholder Engagement.

1. Introduction

Bank of Industry Limited is one of the leading development finance institutions in Nigeria. It was founded in 1959 as the Investment Company of Nigeria (ICON) Limited and later modernize in 1964, with the help of the World Bank, into the Nigerian Industrial Development



Bank (NIDB). In 2001, the responsibilities of the NIDB, the Nigerian Bank for Commerce and Industry (NBCI), and the National Economic Reconstruction Fund (NERFUND) were consolidated, giving rise to the formation of the Bank of Industry (BOI). This modernization increases the Bank's duties to include the financing of large, medium, and small-scale enterprises, the expansion and modern businesses, and the revitalization of distressed enterprises.

The transformation of the Bank of Industry occurred amid growing request for accountability and transparency in the management of public funds. As a development finance institution (DFI), BOI faces increasing pressure to demonstrate ethical stewardship of public resources, comply with regulatory requirements, and provide clear and transparent financial information to a wide range of stakeholders. High-profile cases of financial mismanagement and the ensuing public demand for stricter oversight and transparency highlight the practical relevance of these concerns.

From a theoretical perspective, public accountability comprises multiple dimensions, including financial, performance, and political accountability. Transparency is a fundamental component of democratic governance, as it ensures that citizens have timely and accurate information regarding how DFIs utilize public funds. Together, accountability and transparency underpin effective public governance by fostering ethical conduct and public trust in institutions. Nonetheless, realizing these principles remains challenging due to the complexity of DFI operations, competing stakeholder interests, and constantly evolving regulatory frameworks, all of which complicate the implementation of robust accountability and transparency mechanisms.

Recent studies have delved into various dimensions of public accountability and transparency. For example, Smith and Adams (2022) explored the role of regulatory frameworks in enhancing financial disclosures, Johnson et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis on the effectiveness of audit mechanisms in mitigating financial misreporting. Despite the significant contributions of these studies, several limitations remain. Many focus narrowly on specific regions or sectors, limiting the generalizability of their findings. Moreover, there needs to be more comprehensive reviews that systematically synthesize the vast array of research on this topic, highlighting the need for an integrative approach to understand the broader implications and identify consistent patterns or gaps. A systematic



review of public accounting in Europe by Fernandes (2021) highlights the need for improved accountability and transparency. This is further supported by King (2023) who extended his discussion to the United States, finding a positive association between audit quality and accountability and transparency in financial institutions. Donnelly (2023) underscores the importance of accountability in auditing, suggesting that a shift towards a rewards-based system could improve audit quality. These studies collectively emphasize the critical role of accountability and transparency in DFI accounting and the need for effective auditing practices to achieve these goals. Despite these significant contributions, the existing literature often needs to be revisiting the gap between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence.

Even though a lot of research has shown how crucial stakeholder participation, ethical issues, and auditing procedures are to fostering openness, more thorough studies are still needed to incorporate these aspects. More links must be made between the theoretical frameworks of transparency and public accountability and their actual implementation in various DFI contexts.

Existing scholarship must more effectively respond to the emerging challenges posed by the evolving and dynamic nature of DFI environments. In particular, additional research is needed to examine how sociopolitical factors shape the adoption and implementation of transparency policies. While numerous studies have assessed the effectiveness of specific accountability mechanisms, comprehensive consolidation remain limited. More integrative reviews are therefore necessary to consolidate existing findings and develop a wider understanding of best practices. This gap highlights the need for studies that not only bring together prior evidence but also examines the relationship among the factors influencing public accountability and transparency. Addressing these challenges is essential for developing robust and practical frameworks capable of guiding DFIs in strengthening their financial governance and operational transparency.

This careful review investigates the following research questions in order to fill up the gaps that have been identified: What are the best ways to encourage transparency and accountability in public sector? What are the differences between these mechanisms in various technical and regulatory contexts? What are the newest developments and obstacles to maintaining accountability and openness in the public sector? The objectives of this study are to present a



thorough harmonization of the body of research, pinpoint best practices, and suggest a framework for additional research. The efficiency of various accountability and transparency procedures will be assessed, along with how these practices vary across distinct public sector environments, by a methodical analysis of the literature.

This study is innovative in its integrated manner of approach, combining empirical evidence with theoretical analysis to develop a comprehensive understanding of accountability and transparency mechanisms. It synthesizes findings from multiple investigations and critically evaluates their relevance and applicability. By focusing on actionable methodology to promote accountability and transparency in the public sector, the study offers practical insights for policymakers and practitioners. Ultimately, it contributes to the ongoing discourse by presenting a robust framework that addresses both the theoretical and practical dimensions of public accountability and transparency.

2. Literature Review

Public Accountability and Transparency

In public resource management, accountability and transparency denote the capacity to accurately account for all treasury management activities and to carry them out in an open and accessible manner. Public service accountability ensures that every action undertaken by government administrations can be clearly explained and scrutinized. Transparency, in this context, refers to the availability of comprehensive information on all stages of government activities through effective public information system management.

Transparency and Accountability in Public Services is the focus of a 2019 study by Karjunu Dt. Maa, which emphasizes that one of the primary responsibilities of government institutions is to deliver optimal services to the community. However, achieving this goal remains difficult due to persistent shortcomings in transparency and accountability within public service delivery. The study highlights that the recognition of citizens as both rights-bearing individuals and service users depends on the establishment of a transparent and accountable system of governance.

Nengsih et al (2019) in their study titled the application of the principles of transparency and accountability in the implementation of public services in Alai Parak Kopi Village, Padang City. This study describes service transparency as seen from the openness of services,



procedures and service requirements that can be understood by the public, ease of access to information and service accountability seen from the conformity of its implementation with service procedures, clear legal rules, outputs and measurable results.

To create workers who are honest, devoid of corruption, responsible, and effective. Therefore, implementing an open selection process that is transparent and thorough is one of the DFI's initiatives. In order to operate trust with the best, Sinjai has created an open selection method with the goal of producing officials who possess the necessary qualifications, competence, and integrity. (Adil & Mustikawati, 2020).

Role of Auditing

Auditing is a cornerstone of accountability and transparency in both public and private sector accounting, serving as a critical mechanism for safeguarding the integrity of financial management and reporting. By subjecting public enterprises to rigorous examination, auditing verifies the accuracy of financial records, detects irregularities, and fosters a culture of accountability. The credibility and reliability of DFI financial information are strengthened through complementary functions of internal and external audits. In particular, external audits conducted by independent audit bodies are relevant to maintaining public trust, as they provide an objective assessment of an organization's financial position and ensure that financial statements present a true and fair view.

Morin (2008) opine that robust external auditing practices substantially improve accountability by uncovering inconsistencies and ensuring that public funds are managed in accordance with legal and regulatory requirements. Such oversight not only discourages fraudulent act but also reinforces managerial responsibility, motivating DFI leaders to uphold high standards of financial governance.

Van Peurse (2015) further underscores the importance of external audits in promoting transparency. Her research demonstrates that independent audits are a powerful tool for enhancing the transparency of financial reporting processes. External audits facilitate informed decision-making and foster greater public confidence in DFI operations by providing stakeholders with reliable and verified financial information. The findings indicate that when public entities are subjected to thorough and unbiased audits, there is a significant improvement in the overall transparency and accountability of financial



reporting. Internal audits, while different in scope and execution, are equally vital in promoting accountability and transparency within DFI. As part of the organization, internal auditors conduct continuous assessments and provide management with insights on risk management, control processes, and governance. According to Mihret and Yismaw (2007), internal audits play a critical role in identifying areas for improvement and ensuring compliance with established policies and procedures. Their ongoing oversight helps organizations proactively address potential issues before they escalate into significant problems, thereby maintaining high operational integrity.

By verifying that internal controls are sufficient and that financial reporting is accurate and comprehensive, internal audits improve transparency. Internal auditing's ongoing nature makes it possible to promptly find and fix mistakes, which is essential for preserving the accuracy of financial data. A strong internal audit role can greatly improve an organization's overall governance framework, resulting in increased accountability and transparency, as stated by Arena and Azzone (2009). In order to have a thorough audit system that promotes accountability and transparency in public sector accounting, the complementary functions of internal and external audits are essential. Internal audits guarantee continued compliance and continual improvement within the company, whilst external audits offer an impartial confirmation of financial accounts.

These auditing tasks establish a strong foundation that aids public sector organizations in efficiently and openly handling their financial obligations. Beyond merely ensuring compliance, auditing plays a vital role in promoting accountability and openness. Additionally, audits give public administrators and legislators important information about how well their financial management procedures are working. For example, Lonsdale's (2008) study emphasizes how audit results can influence policy choices and result in improved financial controls and governance frameworks. Public sector organizations are guaranteed to adhere to current laws and enhance their financial management procedures on a constant basis thanks to this iterative approach.

Stakeholder Engagement

Promoting accountability and transparency in public sector accounting depends on actively involving stakeholders in the financial reporting process. Stakeholder engagement



mechanisms such as citizen oversight committees, public consultations, and participatory budgeting provide platforms for inclusive and democratic governance. These approaches enhance transparency and accountability by ensuring that financial information is comprehensive, relevant, and responsive to public concerns. Among these mechanisms, participatory budgeting is particularly effective, as it enables citizens to directly influence decisions regarding the allocation of public funds.

Fung (2015) suggested that participatory budgeting significantly improves transparency by involving citizens in budgetary decision-making. By allowing the public to participate in financial planning, participatory budgeting improve the clarity and accessibility of financial information while fostering a sense of ownership and accountability over public funds. This process empowers citizens to scrutinize and shape public spending, thereby strengthening public oversight.

Public consultations represent another vital method of stakeholder engagement. Through these forums, citizens, interest groups, and other stakeholders can express their views and contribute feedback on financial reports and policy decisions. Bovens (2007) notes that active stakeholder participation through public consultations can lead to more comprehensive and meaningful financial information. By incorporating stakeholder input, financial reports are more likely to address issues of greatest public concern, ultimately enhancing the quality of financial reporting and strengthening public trust in DFI financial management

Citizen oversight committees represent a more formalized approach to stakeholder engagement. These committees, often comprising representatives from various community groups and sectors, are tasked with monitoring and reviewing public financial practices. Research by Ackerman (2004) indicates that citizen oversight committees can strengthen accountability by providing an independent review of financial decisions and actions. These committees can hold public officials accountable by scrutinizing financial reports, investigating discrepancies, and recommending improvements. Such oversight mechanisms ensure that public sector entities remain transparent and accountable to their constituents. Stakeholder engagement fosters a culture of continuous improvement in public financial management. Ebdon and Franklin (2006) argue that when stakeholders are actively involved in the financial reporting process, they can provide valuable feedback and insights that lead to better financial practices and policies. This ongoing interaction



between public entities and stakeholders promotes a collaborative approach to financial management, where transparency and accountability are continuously reinforced through dialogue and feedback.

Although stakeholder participation offers clear benefits, several challenges must be addressed to fully realize its effectiveness. One significant challenge is ensuring broad and inclusive participation. Yang and Callahan (2007) emphasize the importance of integrating diverse perspectives, particularly those of underrepresented and marginalized groups, to achieve meaningful stakeholder engagement. To see that the process is genuinely representative, public-sector organizations must adopt methods such as targeted outreach efforts and accessible engagement platforms that encourages participation from these populations.

Ethical Considerations and Corruption Prevention

The pivot pillars of accountability and transparency in the public sector are ethical behavior and robust efforts to combat corruption. These elements are essential to ensuring sound financial management and maintaining public trust in governmental institutions. Scholarly literature highlights the critical role of strong ethical standards, comprehensive anti-corruption legislation, and effective whistleblower protection mechanisms in fostering an open and accountable public sector.

Rose-Ackerman (1999) assesses the importance of moral principles in preventing corruption and promoting transparency, arguing that a well-defined ethical framework forms the foundation of effective governance. By establishing clear guidelines for acceptable conduct and decision-making in public sector accounting, ethical standards help safeguard integrity within public institutions.

Similarly, Klitgaard (1988) emphasizes the role of anti-corruption laws in curbing financial mismanagement. His research demonstrates that comprehensive anti-corruption strategies—characterized by rigorous enforcement and transparent reporting mechanisms—significantly reduce opportunities for corrupt practices. Klitgaard's work highlights the necessity of adopting a holistic approach to corruption prevention that addresses both the incentives and opportunities that enable corrupt behavior.

DFI can lower the risk of financial irregularities and guarantee that public resources are



used for their intended objectives by putting strict anti-corruption rules into place. Another essential component of preventing corruption and acting morally is protecting whistleblowers. In order to expose financial mismanagement and unethical behavior in public sector enterprises, whistleblowers are essential. Effective whistleblower protection laws are crucial for enabling people to expose unethical activity without worrying about reprisals, claim Near and Miceli (1985).

Their study indicates that when public sector employees are confident, they will be protected from adverse consequences, they are more likely to come forward with information about corrupt practices. This increased willingness to report wrongdoing enhances transparency and accountability by bringing unethical actions to light and prompting corrective measures. The enforcement of ethical standards and anti-corruption policies is fundamental to their effectiveness. Doig and Theobald (2000) argue that ethical guidelines and anti-corruption measures are likely ineffective without robust enforcement mechanisms.

Their research underscores the need for independent oversight bodies equipped with sufficient authority and resources to investigate corruption allegations and enforce ethical compliance. Such institutions play a critical role in ensuring timely responses to violations and holding DFI staff accountable for misconduct. Beyond formal enforcement mechanisms, the study emphasizes the importance of cultivating an organizational culture grounded in integrity to encourage ethical conduct and deter corruption. Findings suggest that employees are more likely to adhere to ethical standards and resist corrupt practices when transparency and ethical behavior are embedded in the organizational culture. Achieving this requires strong leadership commitment to ethical values and openness. Integrity in public accounting is particularly vital, as leaders who model ethical behavior and enforce accountability establish expectations for the entire organization. Furthermore, ethics and anti-corruption training programs are essential in equipping DFI personnel with the skills and knowledge needed to navigate ethical dilemmas and uphold transparency.

Theoretical framework

This study is anchor on stakeholders' theory. Stakeholder theory propounded by Edward, modified by Freeman (1984), defined it as "Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" The theory asserted that



stakeholders are required to be provided with reports in order to know the actual performance and make decisions regarding the business. Such report is expected that values are impacted to the stakeholders and that the stakeholders are enjoying the benefit for which they are entitled to. Normative stakeholder theory was defined as ethical behavior to be portrayed by the manager and stakeholders in evaluating the organization's goal by Fontaine, Haarman, and Schmid (2006). According to the stakeholders' theory, management must be transparent and accountable to the stakeholders (the people). The public is the stakeholder in this situation, and any action made by the government has an impact on the public.

Empirical Review

Abdul-Kahar, Ebi, Bin, and Nasser (2019) carried out a study on government financial reporting and public accountability in using primary data through administration of questionnaire and personal interview. The study reported a weak score for the level of managerial accountability which depicts reduction in accountability in the managerial function. The study recommended that financial report should be prepared by following the standards and disclose of financial reporting information must be reasonable and reliable.

Ibietan (2013) studied the effect of corruption and public accountability in the Nigerian public sector and recommended that those found guilty of the corrupt practices should be sanctioned and public service audit committee should be restructured.

In 2015, Bouvard, Pierre, and Adolfo conducted research on financial system transparency. For this study, an ex-post facto research design was used. According to the researcher's findings, openness makes the financial system more stable in times of crisis but destabilizes it in times of normal economic growth.

Osho and Afolabi (2014) examined the impact and efficacy of openness and accountability in government sectors. They employed secondary data and analyzed it using chi square and cross tabulation. Based on the results, they suggested that in order to attain accountability and transparency in the government sector, independent and efficient internal control would be required.

3. Methodology

With an emphasis on auditing procedures, stakeholder involvement, and ethical



considerations, this study uses a critical review design to investigate the concepts of accountability and transparency. A systematic review is used because it can find gaps in the literature and provide a thorough synthesis of the current research. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review are used in this review. Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) guidelines to ensure a rigorous and transparent methodological approach. This design allows for the aggregation and critical analysis of findings from multiple studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of the current state of research and practical applications in DFI.

Population of the Study

Scholarly publications on accountability and transparency in the public sector, including books and official reports, make up the sample population for this study. Peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and authoritative reports from respectable organizations are among the selection criteria. The literature search's time scope, which runs from 2000 to 2024, guarantees that both foundational research and the most current developments in the subject are included.

Data Collection Method

The data collection process involves a comprehensive search of electronic databases, including PubMed, Science Direct, and Google Scholar. Relevant studies are identified using keywords such as *public sector auditing*, *transparency in government financial reporting*, *accountability in the public sector*, and *ethical considerations in public sector finance*. The search strategy includes screening titles, abstracts, and full texts to assess their relevance to the research questions. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are applied to ensure that only studies directly aligned with the research objectives are incorporated into the review.

To facilitate systematic analysis, a data extraction form is used to capture key information from each selected study, including authorship, year of publication, research design, methodology, principal findings, and conclusions.

4. Results and Discussion

To identify recurring trends, themes, and gaps in the existing literature, the data analysis process employed a combination of descriptive analysis, thematic analysis, and qualitative synthesis. First, a descriptive analysis was conducted to summarize key characteristics of the



included studies, such as publication trends, geographic focus, and methodological approaches. This was followed by a thematic analysis to uncover recurring themes and insights related to the study's core areas auditing procedures, stakeholder participation, and ethical considerations.

The qualitative data were systematically coded and grouped using thematic coding, enabling the identification of key patterns and the synthesis of findings across multiple studies. Where appropriate, a meta-analysis was also undertaken to quantify the effects of specific interventions or practices on accountability and transparency outcomes. Finally, the results were critically examined to draw meaningful conclusions and to inform recommendations for future research and practice in the public sector.

The systematic review of accountability and transparency in the public sector, particularly within Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), provides insights into the current state of research, prevailing practices, and existing challenges. The findings underscore the critical role of ethical considerations, stakeholder engagement, and effective auditing mechanisms in strengthening accountability and transparency in DFI financial management. One of the key conclusions of the review is the significance of regular auditing practices.

Both external and internal audits emerge as essential mechanisms for promoting accountability and transparency. External audits, carried out by independent audit institutions, play a vital role in verifying the reliability of financial statements and identifying financial irregularities. Morin (2008) argues that strong external auditing practices enhance accountability by ensuring that public sector entities are held responsible for their financial management. Likewise, Van Peursem (2015) highlights the role of external audits in promoting transparency by providing stakeholders with credible and validated financial information.

Internal audits complement external audits by supporting ongoing oversight and identifying areas for operational improvement. According to Mihret and Yismaw (2007), internal auditing is fundamental to ensuring operational integrity and compliance with established policies and procedures. Together, external and internal audits form a comprehensive framework that reinforces accountability and transparency within DFIs

Stakeholder engagement is a critical mechanism for enhancing accountability and transparency in public financial management. Participation in the financial reporting



process is achieved through tools such as citizen oversight committees, public consultations, and participatory budgeting. Fung (2015) argues that participatory budgeting strengthens accountability and transparency by enabling citizens to directly shape decisions regarding the allocation of public resources. Similarly, Bovens (2007) finds that public consultations contribute to more comprehensive and relevant financial information. Ackerman (2004) emphasizes the importance of citizen oversight committees in offering independent scrutiny of financial decisions, thereby reinforcing accountability. Furthermore, Ebdon and Franklin (2006) contend that active stakeholder involvement promotes continuous improvement in public financial management by generating valuable feedback and insights. Despite these benefits, achieving broad and inclusive participation remains challenging, as noted by Yang and Callahan (2007). Consequently, deliberate efforts to engage diverse stakeholders and enhance financial literacy are necessary to ensure effective participation.

Promoting accountability and openness requires ethical standard as well as the prevention of corruption. Strong ethical standards are crucial for thwarting corruption and advancing openness, according to Rose-Ackerman (1999). According to Klitgaard (1988), comprehensive anti-corruption programs are effective in lowering the likelihood of corruption. Protecting whistleblowers is also essential for promoting the disclosure of unethical activity. According to Near and Miceli (1985), establishing a culture of accountability and transparency requires strong whistleblower protection laws.

Discussion

Deep insights into the mechanisms behind these essential facets of public financial management are revealed by the systematic assessment of accountability and transparency in the public sector. The results are linked to basic ideas and theories, offering a thorough grasp of the ways in which different frameworks and practices support increased accountability and transparency.

The findings demonstrate how important internal and external auditing are. Verifying the correctness of financial statements and identifying inconsistencies require external audits carried out by impartial organizations. Effective external auditing procedures greatly



improve accountability by making public institutions answerable for their financial management, as noted by Morin (2008).

Van Peurseem (2015) emphasizes the importance of external audits in promoting transparency by providing stakeholders with reliable and verified financial information. Internal audits complement this by providing ongoing oversight and identifying areas for improvement within organizations, as Mihret and Yismaw (2007) noted. These findings support the hypothesis that rigorous auditing practices are crucial for maintaining transparency and accountability in public-sector. They also align with the theory of agency, which posits that audits reduce information asymmetry between principals (citizens and stakeholders) and agents (public officials), thereby enhancing trust and accountability.

Another key discovery highlights the importance of stakeholder participation in enhancing accountability and transparency. Mechanisms that support inclusive and democratic governance such as citizen oversight committees, public consultations, and participatory budgeting play a critical role in strengthening public sector accountability. Fung (2015) argues that participatory budgeting enhances transparency and accountability by enabling citizens to directly influence the allocation of public resources. Similarly, Bovens (2007) shows that public consultations contribute to the disclosure of more comprehensive and relevant financial information, while Ackerman (2004) notes that citizen oversight committees improve accountability by providing independent assessments of financial decisions. Collectively, these findings support the view that active stakeholder engagement promotes greater accountability and transparency in the public sector. They also reinforce the principle of participatory governance, which posits that citizen involvement in decision-making leads to more responsible and transparent governance outcomes.

Ethical governance and corruption prevention are pivot to strengthening accountability and transparency within organizations. Rose-Ackerman (1999) underscores that strong ethical standards play a critical role in fighting corruption and enhancing transparency. Similarly, Klitgaard (1988) demonstrates that comprehensive anti-corruption policies effectively limit chances for corrupt practices. Protecting whistleblowers is equally essential, as it encourages the reporting of unethical conduct (Near & Miceli, 1985). Moreover, Treviño et al. (2006) opine that cultivating a culture of integrity within public sector organizations is key to promoting ethical standard and preventing corruption. In all, these studies support



the hypothesis that robust ethical frameworks and anti-corruption measures are indispensable for ensuring accountability and transparency. They also align with ethical leadership theory, which emphasizes integrity and ethical conduct as central to fostering an ethical organizational culture.

Comparing these findings with previous research reveals a consistent emphasis on the importance of robust auditing, stakeholder engagement, and ethical considerations in encouraging transparency and accountability. For instance, earlier studies by Lonsdale (2008) underscores the critical role of auditing in maintaining public trust and accountability. The findings on the importance of stakeholder engagement is also supported by earlier studies by Ebdon and Franklin (2006), highlighting the benefits of participatory budgeting and public consultations in promoting transparency. In line with previous research by Armstrong (2005) and Doig and Theobald (2000), the focus on ethical issues and corruption prevention emphasizes the value of moral principles and anti-corruption initiatives in promoting accountability. These results have significant practical ramifications. By putting strong auditing procedures into place, interacting with stakeholders, and encouraging moral behavior, public sector organizations can improve accountability and transparency.

5. Conclusion

This study examined auditing practices, stakeholder engagement, and ethical considerations through a systematic review of the mechanisms that described accountability and transparency in the public sector. The findings highlight the critical relevance of higher ethical standards, meaningful stakeholder participation, and effective internal and external audit processes in strengthening accountability and transparency in public sector financial management.

The relevance of this research emanated from its integrative review of existing research works and its practical contributions to improving financial management in the public sector. By consolidating multiple dimensions of accountability and transparency, the study presents a wide understanding of the factors that demonstrate effective public financial management. Its contribution lies in adopting a multidimensional perspective that highlights key mechanisms and examines the interplay among auditing practices, stakeholder involvement, and ethical considerations. These insights provide relevant guide



for scholars, practitioners, and decision makers seeking to improve accountability and transparency in public-sector financial management.

Recommendations

Decision makers should place greater emphasis on wider auditing practices to promote accurate and transparent financial reporting. Strengthening financial knowledge among staff can further improve the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement efforts. In addition, adopting a culture of integrity through ongoing education, training and re-training in ethics and anti-corruption is essential to sustaining public trust and accountability.

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