

The Role of Public Sector Accounting in Promoting Transparency and Accountability in Government

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Abstract: This paper appraised the role of public sector accounting in promoting transparency and accountability in governance. Aimed at finding out the significant relationship between public sector accounting and transparency, as well as the correlation between public sector accounting and accountability in governance, this paper was anchored on the Agency theory and the Institutional theory. The study adopted a qualitative approach, and conducted systematic reviews of studies in the area. Findings from this paper reveals that Public sector accounting and transparency have a fundamental, two-way relationship - accounting provides the framework and information necessary for transparency, while transparency is a key objective that good accounting helps achieve. This relationship allows citizens to hold governments accountable for the use of public funds by providing clear, reliable financial information. Again, findings revealed that Public sector accounting and accountability in governance are fundamentally linked, as accounting provides the tools and information necessary to make governance accountable. A strong public sector accounting system is crucial for transparency, enabling citizens and stakeholders to hold the government responsible for the management of public resources. The paper concluded that Public sector accounting promotes transparency and accountability by providing clear, standardized financial reports that enable public scrutiny of how government funds are used. Through processes like financial reporting, auditing, and budgeting, it holds public officials responsible for their actions, builds public trust, and helps prevent corruption. Ultimately, effective public accounting is a cornerstone of good governance, allowing citizens to monitor government performance and ensure responsible resource management. Against the foregoing conclusion, it is therefore recommended that government should uphold their commitment to the OGP Action

Plan. Government should also deepen the awareness creation on the Freedom of Information Act, to make government records accessible to the public.



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1. INTRODUCTION

Globally, there has been a heightened advocacy for public sector accountability in the past one decade. This increasing demand for accountability in the public sector is not only borne out of the understanding that it is the inalienable hallmark of participatory democratic governance but also because lack of accountability poses various socioeconomic risks to the public sector prospects of any country. Perhaps, it is in pursuance of the global demand for transparency and accountability in governance that the United Nations General Assembly, on 20th September, 2011, formally launched the Open Government Partnership (OGP), which was endorsed by heads of state from eight founding governments - Brazil, Indonesia, Mexico, Norway, the Philippines, South Africa, the United Kingdom, and the United States (Harge, 2012). The eight founding members also announced their country action plans along with an equal number of civil society leaders, welcoming the commitment of 38 governments to join the OGP (Harge, 2012). According to Dadman (2012), the Open Government Partnership (OGP) is an international multi-stakeholder initiative aimed at improving transparency, accountability, citizen participation and responsiveness to citizens through technology and innovation. Dadman (2012) adds that OGP brings together government and civil society champions of reforms who recognize that governments are more likely to be more effective and credible when they open governance to public input and oversight. Corroborating the foregoing, Fung (2015) avers that OGP serves as a platform for reformers within and outside governments worldwide to develop initiatives that enhance transparency, empower citizens, combat corruption, and utilize new technologies to improve governance. Fung (2015) adds that OGP seeks to secure concrete commitments from national and sub-national governments to promote open government reform and innovation, advancing transparency, accountability, and citizen engagement, pointing out that it is a voluntary partnership that countries choose to join, allowing civil society organizations to collaborate with governments on initiatives aligned with their reform agendas. Fung (2015) further states that the four key principles that govern OGP are - transparency, accountability, Citizen participation, and technology and innovation.

Ahmed (2019) informs that Nigeria joined the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in July 2016, as the 70th member country, marking a significant step toward transparency, accountability, and inclusive governance. According to Ahmed (2019), the Nigeria's NAP on OGP aims to deepen and mainstream transparency mechanisms and citizens' engagement in the management of public resources across all sectors. Through a consultative process between government and non-state actors, the National Steering Committee (NSC) agreed to consolidate governance priorities into thematic areas in the NAP, which include: Fiscal transparency, public service delivery, extractive transparency, access to information, anti-corruption and asset recovery, participatory governance, inclusion, climate change and citizen engagement. Public sector accounting has emerged as a pivotal field of study due to the escalating demand for accountability and transparency in the management of public finances. Governments and public organizations are increasingly pressured to exhibit ethical stewardship of public funds, adhere to regulatory standards, and transparently communicate financial information to various stakeholders. Despite these expectations, numerous incidents of financial mismanagement, corruption, and opacity in reporting continue to undermine public trust and impede the efficient allocation of resources. High-profile cases of fiscal

misconduct and the resulting public outcry for greater oversight and transparency exemplify this practical issue. The practical and theoretical challenges in public sector accounting underscore the need for this paper, the role of public sector accountability in promoting transparency and accountability in governance.

Objectives of the Paper

The general objective of this paper is to appraise the role of public sector accountability in promoting transparency and accountability. The specific objectives of the paper are as follows:

1. To find out the significant relationship between public sector accounting and transparency in governance.
2. To ascertain the correlation between public sector accountability and accountability in governance.
3. To identify the challenges to achieving transparency and accountability in governance.
4. To identify the ways forward to public sector transparency and accountability in governance.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical Underpinnings for this paper are the Agency theory and the Institutional Theory

Agency theory: According to Brusca, Gómez-Villegas, & Montesinos (2016), the first scholars to propose, explicitly, that a theory of agency be created, and to actually begin its creation, were Stephen Ross and Barry Mitnick, independently and roughly concurrently. Ross, in 1972, is responsible for the origin of the economic theory of agency, and Mitnick for the institutional theory of agency, though the basic concepts underlying these approaches are similar (Brusca, Gómez-Villegas, & Montesinos, 2016). Indeed, the approaches can be seen as complementary in their uses of similar concepts under different assumptions. In short, Brown, & Taylor (2021) reveal that Ross introduced the study of agency in terms of problems of compensation contracting; agency was seen, in essence, as an incentives problem, while Mitnick introduced the now common insight that institutions form around agency, and evolve to deal with agency, in response to the essential imperfection of agency relationships: Behavior never occurs as it is preferred by the principal because it does not pay to make it perfect. But society creates institutions that attend to these imperfections, managing or buffering them, adapting to them, or becoming chronically distorted by them. Donnelly (2023) avers that the Agency theory addresses information asymmetry between principals and agents, institutional theory explains how regulations and norms influence accountability, and decision-usefulness theory highlights the importance of clear and comparable information for stakeholders to make informed decisions. This theory addresses the principal-agent problem, where one party (the principal) delegates a task to another (the agent). It posits that transparency is crucial to reduce information asymmetry. Greater and higher-quality disclosure helps ensure that agents are acting in the best interests of principals. Financial reports help shareholders (principals) monitor the actions of management (agents).

Institutional theory suggests that organizational structures and practices are influenced by social pressures and institutional environments, including formal rules and informal norms. It helps explain how the "rules of the game," such as regulations, laws, and a culture of ethics, shape an organization's commitment to transparency and accountability. In the public sector, institutional theory helps analyze why some government bodies are more transparent than others, even if they have similar formal mechanisms, due to differing levels of corruption, weak enforcement, or political interference.

3. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Concept of Accountability

Fernandes (2021) defines accountability “as the obligation to demonstrate that work has been conducted in accordance with agreed rules and standards and the officer reports fairly and accurately on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans.” According to Fernandes (2021), public accountability is an essential component for the functioning of our political system, as accountability means that those who are charged with drafting and/or carrying out policy should be obliged to give an explanation of their actions to their electorate.

In their view, Smith and Adams (2022), posit that “accountability exists when there is a relationship where an individual or body, and the performance of tasks or functions by that individual or body, are subject to another’s oversight, direction or request that they provide information or justification for their actions”. Accountability is the liability to give an account of what one has done, or not done, to another who has authority to assess the account and allocate praise or blame’(King, 2022), ‘...accountability denotes a relationship between a bearer of a right or a legitimate claim and the agents or agencies responsible for fulfilling or respecting that right. ... It denotes the duty to be accountable in return for the delegation of a task, a power or a resource’ (Fernandes, 2021)‘...the concept of accountability is ... how those entrusted with the powers of the State are held responsible for their actions’ (Ahmed 2019) ‘...accountability as a proactive process by which public officials inform about and justify their plans of action, their behaviour, and results and are sanctioned accordingly’(Ahmed 2019).

Accountability is the process whereby public sector entities, and the individuals within them, are responsible for their decisions and actions, including their stewardship of public funds and all aspects of performance, and submit themselves to appropriate external scrutiny. It is achieved by all parties having a clear understanding of those responsibilities, and having clearly defined roles through a robust structure. In effect, accountability is the obligation to answer for responsibility conferred. (IFAC, Governance in the Public Sector: A Governing Body Perspective).

Concept of Transparency

The principle of transparency relates to the openness of a public sector entity to its constituents (Ahmed 2019). Good governance involves the right disclosure of important information to stakeholders to enable them access relevant facts and information on the performance and operations of the public sector so as to enable them determine the motive behind the actions of the public sector officials. Accordingly, the public sector’s decisions, actions, and transactions must be conducted in the open.

Transparency and Accountability

Transparency is a necessary part of accountability but it is not the same as accountability. In order to hold government officials accountable, one must first find out information about that public servant's decisions and actions (transparency), but you then must go further if you are actually to hold them to account for their decisions and actions. It is a major public interest that financial reporting arrangements are not in place in many countries around the world (Aldemir & Ucma, 2025). Government have the responsibility to enact, implement and execute the law; deliver services to the citizen; protect lives and properties and the decisions and actions taken to fulfill these responsibilities must be clearly stated in the interest of the general public because government are expected to act in the interest of the public who voted them in.

Government collects taxes, custom duties, value added tax etc. and the monies collected through taxes and other means of income generation are allocated to spending on both recurrent and capital projects. This responsibility makes it imperative for government to discharge their responsibility by displaying the manner by which they have effectively and efficiently used the

resources at their disposal. Without a robust and transparent financial reporting, it is not possible to determine whether or not the activities of the government have been in the interest of the public. Furthermore, without financial report, it is impossible for government to discharge accountability function.

Recent studies have delved into various dimensions of public sector accountability and transparency. For example, Smith and Adams (2022) explored the role of regulatory frameworks in enhancing financial disclosures, while Brown and Taylor (2021) examined the impact of digital transformation on public sector transparency. Additionally, 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 sector accounting in Europe by Fernandes (2021) highlights the need for improved accountability and transparency, mainly through adopting International Public Sector Accounting Standards. This is further supported by Prabowo (2022), who emphasizes the importance of robust accounting standards in ensuring transparency and accountability and the potential of accrual accounting and IPSAS. King (2023) extends this 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 public sector accounting and the need for robust standards and effective auditing practices to achieve these goals. Despite these significant contributions, the existing literature often needs to be revised to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence. The narrow focus of many studies on specific regions or sectors limits the generalizability of their findings, underscoring the need for a more holistic examination of how accountability and transparency can be systematically improved in public sector accounting practices.

While insightful, the existing literature often needs to be revised to bridge the gap between theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence. Despite numerous studies highlighting the importance of regulatory frameworks, digital transformation, and audit mechanisms in promoting transparency, more comprehensive analyses must be conducted to integrate these dimensions. For instance, many studies focus narrowly on specific regions or sectors, limiting the applicability of their findings to a broader context. Additionally, there needs to be more connection between the conceptual models of accountability and transparency and their practical application in diverse public sector environments. This gap is particularly evident in the limited exploration of how new technologies, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, can be leveraged to enhance transparency and accountability. The dynamic and evolving nature of public sector environments poses new challenges that existing studies must address adequately. For example, the impact of socio-political factors on the implementation of transparency measures still needs to be explored. Moreover, while several studies have investigated the effectiveness of specific mechanisms, more systematic reviews need to be conducted to synthesize these findings and provide a holistic understanding of best practices. This gap highlights the need for research that consolidates existing knowledge and explores the interplay between different factors influencing accountability and transparency. Addressing these gaps is crucial for developing more robust and applicable frameworks that can guide public sector entities in improving their financial practices.

To bridge the identified gaps, this systematic review explores the following research questions: What mechanisms most effectively promote accountability and transparency in public sector

accounting? How do these mechanisms vary across different regulatory environments and technological contexts? What are the emerging trends and challenges in ensuring transparency and accountability in the public sector? This study aims to provide a comprehensive synthesis of existing research, identify best practices, and propose a framework for future studies. By systematically analyzing the literature, this review will evaluate the effectiveness of various accountability and transparency mechanisms and assess how these practices differ across diverse public sector environments. The study will also investigate the role of emerging technologies, such as blockchain and artificial intelligence, in enhancing or posing new challenges to transparency in public sector accounting. The novelty of this research lies in its integrative approach, which combines theoretical insights with empirical evidence to offer a holistic view of accountability and transparency practices. This approach synthesizes findings from various studies and critically evaluates their practical implications. The review aims to provide actionable insights for policymakers and practitioners, highlighting strategies that can be implemented to improve transparency and accountability in public sector accounting. Ultimately, this research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse by offering a robust framework that addresses the theoretical and practical aspects of public sector accountability and transparency.

Regulatory Frameworks and Standards

A significant body of literature underscores the pivotal role of regulatory frameworks and standards in promoting accountability and transparency in public sector accounting. Central to this discourse are the International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) and Government Financial Statistics (GFS), frequently cited as critical instruments for enhancing the comparability and reliability of financial information across different jurisdictions. The Staff Writer (2024) posits that International Public Sector Accounting Standards (IPSAS) are a set of accounting standards issued by the IPSAS Board for use by public sector entities around the world in the preparation of financial statements. The Staff Writer (2024) adds that these standards are based on International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). aims to improve the quality of general purpose financial reporting by public sector entities, leading to better informed assessments of the resource allocation decisions made by governments, thereby increasing transparency and accountability. According to the Staff Writer (2024), this objective is to be delivered by developing and maintaining IPSAS and other financial reporting guidance, and by raising awareness and adoption of accrual-based accounting in the public sector. IPSAS (2023) are accounting standards for application by national governments, regional (e.g., state, provincial, territorial) governments, local (e.g., city, town) governments and related governmental entities (e.g., agencies, boards and commissions). IPSAS standards are widely used by intergovernmental organizations or institutions. IPSAS do not apply to government business enterprises.

IPSAS are issued by IPSASB (International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board), an independent organ of IFAC (International Federation of Accountants). The IPSASB adopts a due process for the development of IPSAS that provides the opportunity for comment by interested parties including auditors, preparers (including finance ministries), standard setters, and individuals. IPSASB meetings to discuss the development and to approve the issuance of IPSAS or other papers are open to the public. Agenda papers, including the minutes of the meetings of the IPSASB, are published on the IPSASB's website: www.ipsasb.org. Observers on the IPSASB meetings include ADB, EU, IASB, IMF, INTOSAI, OECD, UN, UNDP and the World Bank. PSAS are based on the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS), formerly known as the International Accounting Standards (IAS). IFRS are issued by the International Accounting Standards Board (IASB). IPSASB adapts IFRS to a public sector context when appropriate. In undertaking that process, the IPSASB attempts, wherever possible, to maintain the accounting

treatment and original text of the IFRS unless there is a significant public sector issue which warrants a departure.

The Government Financial Statistics: The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, UNCCD (2020) states that the Government Finance Statistics (GFS) contains data for all reporting countries in the framework of the Government Finance Statistics Manual, 2014 (GFSM 2014). According to UNCCD (2020), the GFSM 2014 classifications remain largely the same as in the GFSM 2001 presentations. However, some tables now include an expanded list of GFS items, where others have dropped some GFS items. Nonetheless, there are no changes in the aggregates and balancing items of the converted data when compared with the GFSM 2001 data. All new data reported in the GFSM 2001 format, as well as historical data in the previous GFS database, have been converted to the GFSM 2014 format. UNCCD (2020) informs that GFS data are compiled either on a cash basis of recording or noncash basis of recording (e.g., an accrual basis or a commitment basis), adding that GFS contains detailed data on revenue, expense, transactions in assets and liabilities, and stocks positions in assets and liabilities of general government and its subsectors. GFS also includes preset presentations of GFS data by country, and by indicator, and also provides the option to download data with customized queries.

Towards a more open and Transparent government in Nigeria

Prior to the President's commitment, Nigeria had already engaged in several initiatives aimed at achieving a more open government. Many home grown anti-corruption reforms had been initiated by previous governments. The OGP initiative, therefore, presented a complimentary platform for increased transparency, accountability, global participation, peer learning and continuous self-assessment. It also provided an opportunity for enhanced vertical and horizontal coordination for improved impact on citizens. The country has also witnessed the application of technology and innovation in enhancing an open government as is evident in the following reforms:

1. *Financial Management Systems*: Implementation of the Government Integrated Financial Management Information System (GIFMIS) and the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) has brought greater transparency to public financial management processes. The Federal Ministry of Finance, Office of the Accountant General and Budget Office regularly publish allocations of federation revenues to all tiers of government, and widely disseminate information on budget allocation and execution. Similarly, IPPIS has created a centralized database system for the Public Service with a single, accurate source of employee information.
2. *Treasury Single Account (TSA)*: Full implementation of the TSA has enabled the government to better monitor the financial activities of over 900 MDAs from a single platform, reduced the amount the government loses in interest rates on borrowing from commercial banks, eliminated the process of cash backing MDAs' accounts with commercial banks, improved the reconciliation process for MDA accounts and saved the government several billions of naira which would otherwise have been lost through corrupt practices.
3. *Bank Verification Number (BVN)*: The implementation of the BVN initiative has created a centralized biometric identification system for the financial system. It has reduced fraudulent practices by dubious individuals and restored confidence in our banking industry given that it makes it possible to follow the trail of money.
4. *Freedom of Information (FOI) Act*: The enactment of the FOI Act in 2011 has made public records and information more freely available and accessible to Nigerians. Several government agencies have set up compliance structures that now enable them to respond to requests for information within the ambit of the law. The Bureau of Public Service Reform (BPSR) has adopted a unique electronic FOI platform on its website that gives real-time information to citizens and also encourages voluntary disclosure.

5. *Public Procurement Act, 2007*: The Bureau for Public Procurement (BPP) is working to implement and improve transparent and competitive procurement processes in line with global open contracting principles. It is the objective of this government to pursue the automation of public procurement processes in all government agencies as the amendment to the act is ongoing at the National Assembly. Already the Universal Basic Education Commission (UBEC) has adopted the open contracting standards in its operations and is one of the first agencies of government to do so.
6. *Beneficial Ownership Register*: The Nigeria extractive industries transparency initiative (NEITI) first developed a register of beneficial owners of all companies operating in the Nigerian extractive industry. **Nigeria open central register of persons with significant control (beneficial ownership register)**. On Thursday, 25 May 2023, Nigeria launched its Open Central Register of Beneficial Ownership (known as the Persons with Significant Control (PSC) Register) in line with its commitment at the Anti-Corruption Summit held in London on 12th May 2016.
7. *Asset Declaration*: The Code of Conduct Bureau is now able to implement its mandate of ensuring that public officers declare their assets promptly and such assets are verified and recorded in accordance with the law

Empirical Literature

This study Sari and Muslim (2023) in a study titled "Public Sector Accounting: A Systematic Review," aimed to systematically review the mechanisms that promote accountability and transparency in public sector accounting, focusing on regulatory frameworks, auditing practices, digital transformation, stakeholder engagement, and ethical considerations. The study employs a systematic review design, following PRISMA guidelines to ensure a rigorous and transparent approach. The literature search spans from 2000 to 2023, including peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and official reports. Keywords such as "accountability in public sector accounting," "transparency in government financial reporting," and "public sector auditing" were used to identify relevant studies. Data was extracted and analyzed using qualitative synthesis and thematic analysis to identify patterns, themes, and gaps. The review highlights the significant role of IPSAS and GFS in enhancing financial transparency and accountability. Effective external and internal auditing practices are crucial for maintaining public trust. Digital technologies and e-government initiatives improve the accessibility and transparency of financial information, although challenges such as data security and digital literacy remain. Active stakeholder engagement and robust ethical frameworks are essential for fostering a culture of transparency and accountability. The findings underscore the need for a multifaceted approach to improving public sector financial management. Policymakers should prioritize adopting international standards, invest in digital infrastructure, and promote ethical behavior through continuous education. Future research should explore tailored support initiatives and the impact of emerging technologies on transparency and accountability.

In a related study, Okere and Ogundana (2024) sought to examine the role of public sector audit in enhancing accountability and transparency in the public sector while bringing about a reduction in the level of corruption in the country. Okere & Ogundana (2024) stated that Accountability and Transparency has over the years been recognized as instruments of reduction of corruption at all levels of public sector, adding that a lack of transparency and accountability in the public sector presents a major risk to the efficiency of the capital markets, financial stability, long term economic sustainability, economic growth and development. Okere & Ogundana (2024) argued that the issue of accountability is a basic and fundamental problem in our country Nigeria, and posited that this was as a result of the high rate of corruption embedded in virtually all sector of our economy Nigeria. Going by the increase in democratization and concern about corruption, citizens are demanding from the government accountability and transparency by being well

informed about what the government intends to achieve and what it has actually accomplished. Since public sector financial statement is the medium of information of government activities, the public is demanding audit reports in order to access the performance of those entrusted with public sector resources. This therefore implies that proper audit plays a significant role in promoting accountability. This study therefore seeks to examine the role of public sector audit in enhancing accountability and transparency in the public sector while bringing about a reduction in the level of corruption in the country.

In a study with the title, " Building Public Trust through Transparency and Accountability: A Systematic Review of the Role of Public Sector Accounting," Saihay (2023) aimed to systematically examine the relationship between public sector accounting practices, financial information transparency, institutional accountability, and public trust. The paper was premised against the backdrop of the crisis of trust in public institutions has become a growing concern amidst increasing demands for transparency and accountability in governance. In this context, public sector accounting plays a strategic role as an instrument to strengthen institutional legitimacy and integrity of public services. This study used is Systematic Literature Review (SLR) with a qualitative descriptive approach. Data sources came from reputable scientific publications obtained through purposive sampling technique with certain inclusion and exclusion criteria. The literature review process includes the stages of identification, selection, extraction, and synthesis of data, with an additional snowballing strategy to expand coverage. The results show that public sector accounting practices, especially those that are accrual-based and refer to international standards such as IPSAS, support the continuous improvement of transparency and accountability. Good transparency proves to be a prerequisite for institutional accountability, which in turn plays a role in building public trust. This study concludes that public trust is not formed directly but is the result of a structured public financial management system with integrity. The implications of this research encourage the need for comprehensive, collaborative, and participatory governance-oriented public sector accounting policy reform.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a systematic review design to explore the role of public sector accounting in promoting transparency and accountability in governance. A systematic review is chosen for its ability to synthesize existing research comprehensively and identify gaps in the literature. The review follows the PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses) 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 public-sector accounting. The sample population for this research comprises scholarly articles, books, and official reports published on accountability and transparency in public sector accounting. The selection criteria include peer-reviewed journal articles, conference papers, and authoritative reports from reputable organizations such as the International Public Sector Accounting Standards Board (IPSASB) and the World Bank. The subject focuses specifically on public-sector accounting practices, excluding private-sector studies, to maintain the relevance and specificity of the findings.

Data collection involves a comprehensive search of electronic databases, including Google Scholar, JSTOR, ScienceDirect, and PubMed. Keywords such as "accountability in public sector accounting," "transparency in government financial reporting," "public sector auditing," "digital transformation in public accounting," and "ethical considerations in public sector finance" are used to identify relevant studies. The search process includes reviewing the articles' titles, abstracts, and full texts to determine their relevance to the research questions. Inclusion and exclusion criteria are applied to ensure that only studies directly related to the research themes are included in the review. The data analysis involves qualitative synthesis and thematic analysis to

identify common patterns, themes, and gaps in the literature. Initially, a descriptive analysis is conducted to summarize the characteristics of the included studies, such as publication trends, geographic focus, and methodological approaches. Subsequently, a thematic analysis is performed to identify recurring themes and insights related to the study's focal areas: regulatory frameworks, auditing practices, digital transformation, stakeholder engagement, and ethical considerations. Thematic coding is used to categorize and interpret the qualitative data, allowing for the identification of key themes and the synthesis of findings across different studies. Additionally, where applicable, a meta-analysis may be conducted to quantify the effects of specific interventions or practices on accountability and transparency outcomes. The findings are then critically analyzed

5. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Findings from this paper reveals that Public sector accounting and transparency have a fundamental, two-way relationship - accounting provides the framework and information necessary for transparency, while transparency is a key objective that good accounting helps achieve. This relationship allows citizens to hold governments accountable for the use of public funds by providing clear, reliable financial information. Again, findings revealed that Public sector accounting and accountability in governance are fundamentally linked, as accounting provides the tools and information necessary to make governance accountable. A strong public sector accounting system is crucial for transparency, enabling citizens and stakeholders to hold the government responsible for the management of public resources. These findings align with the study by Saihay, A. Z. (2023), which *systematically examined the relationship between public sector accounting practices, financial information transparency, institutional accountability, and public trust, and found out that public sector accounting practices, especially those that are accrual-based and refer to international standards such as IPSAS, support the continuous improvement of transparency and accountability.* Again, our findings are in tandem with study by Sari and Muslim, (2023), in a study titled " Public Sector Accounting: A Systematic Review," and discovered that effective external and internal auditing practices are crucial for maintaining public trust.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Public sector accounting promotes transparency and accountability by providing clear, standardized financial reports that enable public scrutiny of how government funds are used. Through processes like financial reporting, auditing, and budgeting, it holds public officials responsible for their actions, builds public trust, and helps prevent corruption. Ultimately, effective public accounting is a cornerstone of good governance, allowing citizens to monitor government performance and ensure responsible resource management. The under-listed practices are how public sector accounting promotes transparency and accountability:

Standardized financial reporting: Accounting systems produce clear, regular financial statements that provide citizens and other stakeholders with accessible information about government income and spending.

Independent audits: External auditors verify financial records, providing an independent assessment of government performance and ensuring that funds were used appropriately.

Audits and compliance: The process of auditing ensures that government agencies follow financial regulations and helps to detect and prevent fraud and mismanagement.

Budgetary control: Public sector accounting involves the preparation and monitoring of budgets, which allows for the tracking of how public funds are allocated and spent against a government's stated goals.

Data management systems: Modern accounting systems, especially those that use automation, can provide real-time financial data. This allows for faster reporting and enables citizens and officials to monitor the use of public funds more effectively and in a timely manner, as shown in this article from Formosa Publisher.

Building trust: By ensuring financial openness and holding public officials responsible for their actions, a robust public accounting system builds public trust in government institutions.

Facilitating informed decision-making: Transparent financial information allows both the public and government officials to make better-informed decisions about resource allocation and policy implementation.

Against the foregoing conclusion, it is therefore recommended that government should uphold their commitment to the OGP Action Plan. Government should also deepen the awareness creation on the Freedom of Information Act, to make government records accessible to the public.

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