

Transparency Mechanisms and the Integrity of Education Policy Implementation in Mauritius

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Abstract

The study examined the relationship between transparency mechanisms and the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius. It was guided by Principal-Agent Theory, Good Governance Theory, and Institutional Theory. It used a mixed methods design including a quantitative survey of 333 education stakeholders and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Structural Equation Modelling. The findings showed generally positive perceptions of transparency, accountability, and compliance with policies. The SEM results indicated that transparency had the strongest positive effect on policy implementation integrity ($\beta = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$), followed by ethical governance ($\beta = 0.410$, $p < 0.001$), accountability structures ($\beta = 0.387$, $p < 0.001$), and policy alignment ($\beta = 0.298$, $p = 0.001$). The indirect effects of transparency ($\beta = 0.162$, $p = 0.001$) and accountability ($\beta = 0.138$, $p = 0.008$) were significant as per mediation analysis. Qualitative findings confirmed the relevance of institutional culture and stakeholder participation. The study concluded that transparency greatly improves the integrity of policy, especially when combined with strong accountability and ethical governance structures. It recommended strengthening digital transparency platforms, enforcement mechanisms, and participatory governance structures. Future research should consider contextual factors influencing the operationalisation of global governance standards in Mauritius' education sector over time.

Keywords: *Accountability, Education Policy Implementation, Integrity, Mauritius, Transparency Mechanisms*

Introduction

Tahfiz Education is generally accepted as a strategic sector for national development because of its major contribution to human capital formation, social mobility, economic productivity, and sustainable national growth. Governments worldwide continue to invest heavily in educational reforms to improve access, quality, equity, and learning outcomes. But the success of such reform is not simply a matter of policy formulation, but also of the integrity and transparency of policy implementation processes. International organisations such as UNESCO (2023) and OECD (2021) emphasise transparency, accountability, ethical conduct, and stakeholder participation as key principles in effective educational governance. These principles help to ensure that educational resources are used efficiently, that policy goals are met, and that public confidence in government institutions is improved.

Globally, there is increasing concern about the gaps in policy implementation, weak monitoring systems, mismanagement of resources, and inadequate institutional accountability in the education sector. While many countries have embraced reforms that are aligned with international standards, implementation challenges often curtail the realisation of intended outcomes (Hallak & Poisson, 2020). Transparency mechanisms have thus become important governance tools to promote accountability, enhance institutional effectiveness, reduce opportunities for maladministration, and build public trust in education systems.

In this context, Mauritius provides a significant case for study. Since its independence in 1968, Mauritius has undertaken major reforms in the education sector to improve access, quality, and support national development. The country has moved from a colonial system of education to a national system of education supported by modern governance structures, curriculum reforms, teacher development initiatives, and investment in technical and vocational education (MoETEST, 2022). These accomplishments have placed Mauritius among the top-performing educational countries in Africa and a recognised model among Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

Notwithstanding these achievements, questions about how well transparency systems maintain integrity throughout the policy implementation process still need to be answered. Scholars and policymakers continue to focus on issues of accountability, stakeholder involvement, monitoring efficacy, and fair resource distribution (UNICEF, 2020). Additionally, there is no actual data on how transparency techniques affect the integrity of Mauritius' execution of education policy. With a focus on accountability frameworks, stakeholder participation, and governance procedures, this study aims to investigate the connection between transparency measures and the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius. The results should help achieve Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 16, add to the body of knowledge on educational governance, and guide policy changes.

Review of Related Literature

The empirical review of the literature offers an analysis of previous research on the integrity of education policy implementation within public sector governance and transparency procedures. It looks at important ideas, governance procedures, stakeholder participation, implementation procedures, and current issues. The review highlights further information gaps and lays the empirical groundwork for examining the ways in which transparency mechanisms affect the efficacy and integrity of Mauritius' execution of education policies.

Concept of Transparency in Public Administration

Transparency has emerged as a key tenet of modern public government and administration. According to recent research (OECD, 2023; United Nations, 2024), transparency is the degree to which government institutions make information, decisions, processes, and results available to stakeholders and the general public. Informational, procedural, financial, and decision-making openness are only a few of the many aspects of transparency. When taken as a whole, these aspects allow individuals to evaluate public institutions' performance and comprehend governmental activities.

One essential element of transparency is the disclosure of information. Open governance frameworks, according to UNESCO (2023), promote public institutions to provide

information about policies, budgets, programs, and implementation outcomes in a timely, accurate, and easily available manner. Public trust in governance procedures is increased, and informed stakeholder involvement is made easier by such transparency. Through online portals, open-data platforms, and electronic reporting systems, digital technologies have further increased the options for information exchange.

Transparency serves as a crucial technique for encouraging accountability, according to empirical data. According to the World Bank (2024), transparent governance systems increase institutional responsiveness, strengthen supervision, and decrease potential for corruption. Transparency in educational administration allows stakeholders to keep an eye on how policies are being implemented, how resources are being allocated, and how students are doing. Transparent administrative methods have been shown to promote policy compliance, improve service delivery, and boost public trust in both developed and developing nations (UNDP, 2023; OECD, 2023). As a result, openness continues to be a crucial factor in determining both sustainable institutional performance and efficient public sector governance.

Integrity in Policy Implementation

Integrity is essential to both successful policy implementation and efficient public sector governance. Integrity is defined in contemporary governance literature as following legal requirements, professional standards, ethical principles, and public service ideals when implementing government programs (OECD, 2024). In order to be considered honest, fair, and consistent, public leaders and institutions must put the public interest ahead of their own political or personal agendas.

Building public trust in political institutions starts with ethical governance. Integrity in public administration fosters legitimacy, accountability, and citizen confidence, according to the United Nations (2024). Since implementing policies frequently requires significant public resources, stakeholder participation, and long-term developmental objectives, educational institutions are especially dependent on honesty. Stakeholders are more likely to view educational innovations as legitimate and helpful when implementation procedures are marked by moral behaviour and openness.

There is a high correlation between implementation success and transparency, according to additional research. Transparency improves accountability systems, makes it easier to monitor implementation efforts, and deters misbehaviour or poor resource management (World Bank, 2024). According to OECD (2024), integrity in educational systems supports better learning results, fair resource allocation, and efficient policy implementation. Therefore, empirical research has shown that integrity plays a crucial role in determining whether public policy efforts succeed or fail, especially in areas where the quality of governance has a direct impact on societal progress and citizen welfare. Transparent governance settings foster moral conduct and bolster institutional integrity.

Education Policy Implementation in Mauritius

Several educational changes have been put into place in Mauritius with the goal of enhancing the system's relevance, equity, access, and quality. Competency-based learning, curriculum modernisation, digital transformation, and inclusive education policies created to satisfy both national development goals and international educational standards have been the main focus of recent reforms (Ministry of Education, Tertiary Education, Science and Technology [MOETEST], 2024). The implementation of the

Nine-Year Continuous Basic Education reform is one of the biggest efforts to improve educational achievement and learning continuity.

The Ministry of Education, regulatory bodies, school administration authorities, and local stakeholders are all part of the institutional structure that oversees education in Mauritius. UNESCO (2023) states that the Ministry is primarily responsible for policy development, coordination of implementation, monitoring, and assessment. It is required of educational institutions to retain accountability for performance outcomes while coordinating their operations with national policy directions. Planning, resource mobilisation, stakeholder consultation, monitoring, and assessment are common steps in Mauritius' policy implementation procedures. Research indicates that the nation has made significant strides in educational access, literacy rates, and school technology integration (World Bank, 2023).

However, issues with governance transparency, stakeholder participation, and implementation consistency still affect policy results. According to recent research, strong accountability systems, clear decision-making procedures, and efficient institutional actor coordination are necessary for successful implementation (UNESCO, 2024). As a result, improving implementation effectiveness and guaranteeing sustained educational progress in Mauritius continue to depend heavily on educational governance.

Transparency Mechanisms in Educational Governance

In educational governance systems, transparency techniques are crucial tools for fostering integrity and accountability. Public reporting systems are now commonly used instruments that allow educational authorities to reveal information on the execution of policies, institutional performance, the use of resources, and educational results. According to UNESCO (2024), frequent public reporting increases stakeholder knowledge and makes it easier for outside parties to examine educational initiatives.

Transparency is also ensured via monitoring and assessment procedures. These frameworks offer methodical techniques for determining performance gaps, evaluating implementation progress, and producing data for decision-making. The OECD (2024) states that by creating quantifiable indicators and performance criteria, efficient monitoring systems enhance accountability. Transparent educational governance is further supported by open budgeting and financial disclosure procedures.

Stakeholders can evaluate the effectiveness of resource distribution and spot possible anomalies thanks to public access to budgetary data. According to the World Bank (2024), financial openness boosts public trust in educational institutions and lowers the danger of corruption.

Opportunities for transparency have increased as digital governance platforms have been more widely used. Online dashboards, open-data portals, and electronic information systems make it easier to obtain educational information in real time and enhance stakeholder and institutional communication. Furthermore, stakeholders can actively participate in governance processes through citizen engagement and feedback mechanisms such as public forums, surveys, complaint systems, and consultations (UNDP, 2023).

When taken as a whole, these methods increase accountability, boost transparency, and improve the efficiency of implementing education policies across a variety of governance situations.

Stakeholder Participation and Accountability

The involvement of stakeholders in educational governance and accountability has grown in significance. Effective policy implementation necessitates the active participation of educators, school administrators, parents, civil society organisations, and legislators, according to modern governance theories (UNESCO, 2024). These stakeholders monitor implementation efforts, offer insightful viewpoints, and assist in achieving educational goals. Transforming legislative goals into useful educational results is a direct responsibility of educators and school administrators. Their participation in the design, execution, and assessment phases improves the efficacy and relevance of policy. Through advocacy campaigns, monitoring roles, and feedback systems that encourage responsiveness and accountability within educational institutions, parents and community leaders contribute (OECD, 2023).

Models of participatory governance have become more popular as ways to improve openness and cooperative decision-making. Participatory governance promotes stakeholder ownership of policy results, inclusivity, and shared accountability, according to the United Nations (2024). These methods enhance the legitimacy of policies while facilitating communication between communities and governmental entities.

By allowing stakeholders to keep an eye on policy compliance, resource utilisation, and educational performance, community oversight mechanisms further promote accountability. Research from poor nations shows that community involvement leads to better educational outcomes, less resource misuse, and better school administration (World Bank, 2023). Stakeholder participation is therefore still essential for fostering accountability, openness, and integrity in educational governance systems, including those in Mauritius.

Challenges Affecting Transparency and Integrity

Transparency and integrity are becoming more widely acknowledged as governance principles, yet a number of obstacles still prevent them from being effectively implemented. One of the biggest challenges is still bureaucratic inefficiency. Excessive centralisation, institutional delays, and complicated administrative processes frequently restrict timely information disclosure and impede the successful execution of policies (OECD, 2024). Asymmetry in information also poses significant difficulties. Meaningful engagement and accountability may be hampered in circumstances when government officials have much more knowledge than stakeholders. According to UNESCO (2023), stakeholder participation is frequently hampered, and monitoring mechanisms are weakened by limited access to pertinent educational material.

Another significant issue compromising the integrity of government is political meddling. According to research, political factors may have an impact on implementation procedures, resource allocation choices, and policy agendas, jeopardising institutional independence and justice (United Nations, 2024). Such meddling has the potential to erode public trust in educational changes and lessen their efficacy.

Initiatives for transparency are also impacted by resource limitations. The development of efficient reporting and monitoring systems may be hampered by a lack of funding, a lack of technology infrastructure, and a shortage of personnel. Furthermore, organisations are frequently unable to identify implementation flaws and quickly correct governance weaknesses due to inadequate monitoring mechanisms (World Bank, 2024). Together, these issues compromise educational governance systems' integrity, accountability, and openness and emphasise the need for ongoing institutional development and governance changes.

Transparency, Integrity, and Sustainable Development

Integrity and transparency are becoming more widely acknowledged as key factors in the education sector's sustainable growth. The governance structures that supervise the execution of policies are just as important to educational excellence as curriculum design and resource availability. Transparent and responsible educational institutions are more likely to provide equitable, effective, and high-quality educational services, according to UNESCO (2024).

Governance quality and institutional effectiveness are strongly related. Organisations with integrity and openness exhibit better decision-making, more robust accountability frameworks, and increased public confidence, according to OECD (2024). These organisations are in a better position to fulfil stakeholder demands, manage resources efficiently, and accomplish policy goals. Learning environments, teacher effectiveness, and student results are all strongly impacted by the quality of governance in educational settings. Beyond educational institutions, openness and honesty have wider consequences for national development objectives. Effective governance is crucial to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 4 on high-quality education and Goal 16 on robust institutions, according to the United Nations (2024).

Economic competitiveness, social inclusion, and the development of human capital are all supported by transparent educational governance. Additionally, integrity-based governance improves the effective use of public resources and lowers the danger of corruption. Therefore, improving integrity and openness in the application of education policies is a wise investment in long-term social advancement and sustainable national development.

Empirical Gap

There are still a lot of empirical gaps about Mauritius, even though openness and integrity have gotten a lot of scholarly attention in the literature on public administration and educational governance. Studies that have already been conducted have mostly concentrated on learning outcomes, curriculum reforms, educational access, and digital transformation; relatively little attention has been paid to investigating implementation integrity and transparency mechanisms in the Mauritian education sector (UNESCO, 2024; World Bank, 2023). The majority of the research that is currently available has examined governance issues from more general regional or global viewpoints, frequently ignoring the unique institutional, cultural, and administrative circumstances that influence educational governance in Mauritius.

As a result, there is still little data on the efficacy of transparency methods such as financial disclosure procedures, digital governance platforms, public reporting systems, and stakeholder input channels. In a similar vein, little empirical research has been done

on how these processes affect accountability, integrity, and the results of policy implementation.

The significance of context-specific evidence for developing successful reforms and enhancing institutional performance has been emphasised in recent governance literature (OECD, 2024; UNDP, 2023). Policymakers may find it challenging to pinpoint governance flaws and carry out focused reforms in the absence of such proof. An empirical study is thus required to investigate the connection between transparency mechanisms and the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius. In addition to adding to the body of information already in existence, such a study would offer useful insights for enhancing educational governance, accountability, and policy efficacy.

Objectives

The theoretical framework for the investigation of transparency mechanisms and the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius is presented in this part. To explain how accountability, governance principles, and institutional frameworks influence policy implementation, it draws on Principal-Agent Theory, Good Governance Theory, and Institutional Theory. When combined, these viewpoints offer a basis for evaluating implementation results and transparency in school governance.

Principal-Agent Theory

Principal-Agent Theory offers a helpful perspective for comprehending accountability dynamics in educational administration and public sector governance. The idea outlines the interaction between agents, who are in charge of carrying out assigned duties and obligations, and principals, who assign power. Government officials, legislators, and educational ministries play the role of principals in the implementation of education policies, while school administrators, education officers, and other implementing agencies act as agents. According to Eisenhardt (2022), the theory posits that agents may have interests that diverge from those of principals, which might lead to difficulties in attaining desired policy results.

Information asymmetry, which happens when agents have more knowledge about how policies are implemented than principals, is a major issue in Principal-Agent Theory. Policymakers' capacity to oversee compliance, assess performance, and guarantee accountability may be hampered by this disparity. Transparency methods, such as public reporting, performance audits, digital information systems, and disclosure procedures, are crucial instruments for closing information gaps and bolstering supervision, according to recent governance literature (OECD, 2023; United Nations, 2024). Principals have more access to data about institutional performance, resource usage, and policy execution thanks to these channels.

Transparency efforts can be seen as monitoring tools that enhance accountability and reduce potential for policy deviation or administrative wrongdoing in Mauritius' education system. Therefore, the idea contends that more openness fosters higher integrity in the application of policies and improves leaders' ability to properly oversee agents. As a result, Principal-Agent Theory offers a theoretical framework for investigating how accountability and implementation results in educational institutions are impacted by transparency measures.

Good Governance Theory

One of the most popular frameworks for evaluating the efficacy and accountability of the public sector is good governance theory. According to the notion, governance systems that are marked by accountability, openness, involvement, responsiveness, effectiveness, and respect for the rule of law provide superior results for public institutions (World Bank, 2023; United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], 2024). These ideas are seen to be essential for fostering institutional legitimacy, public trust, and sustainable development.

Transparency is seen as an essential element of good governance since it provides stakeholders with relevant information regarding decisions, policies, spending, and organisational performance. Transparency is enhanced by accountability, which guarantees that public servants are held accountable for their choices and deeds. Participation further improves governance by including people, communities, and other stakeholders in decision-making processes, and responsiveness demands that institutions address public concerns in an efficient and fair manner (OECD, 2023).

Good Governance Theory emphasises the value of transparent decision-making procedures, moral leadership, stakeholder involvement, and efficient monitoring mechanisms in educational administration. It is required of educational institutions to handle public resources responsibly, function transparently, and give clear information about the goals of policies and the results of their execution. Applying good governance principles is crucial to ensure that education plans are carried out efficiently and fairly in Mauritius, where education continues to be a vital part of national development.

Therefore, the theory backs up the claim that integrity in the application of education policies is much enhanced by transparency systems. Transparency strategies assist educational institutions in achieving governance goals and improving policy results by promoting openness, accountability, and stakeholder confidence. Thus, a thorough framework for comprehending the connection between institutional efficacy and transparency in the education sector is provided by good governance theory.

Institutional Theory

Institutional theory describes how formal and informal institutional systems in society influence organisational behaviour. According to the idea, organisations' activities and decision-making processes are influenced by a system of rules, regulations, norms, values, and cultural expectations (Scott, 2022). These institutional factors influence how organisations behave as well as how policies are understood and used in various situations.

Formal institutions that provide official standards for corporate behaviour include laws, rules, policy frameworks, administrative processes, and governance structures. Conversely, informal institutions include corporate culture, professional ideals, social conventions, and behavioural expectations that impact conduct outside of official legislation. According to institutional theory, the institutional framework in which organisations function is just as important for successful policy execution as explicit policy directions (Meyer & Rowan, 2023).

Institutional frameworks have an impact on how educators, administrators, and legislators understand and implement educational policies. Formal institutional structures intended

to encourage integrity and responsible behaviour are represented by transparency measures such as public disclosure requirements, audit systems, reporting procedures, and accountability frameworks. Organisational cultures that prioritise integrity, professionalism, and ethical conduct also support openness practices and improve the results of policy implementation.

Institutional theory offers Mauritius important insights into how organisational norms and governance systems influence the success of transparency efforts. According to the hypothesis, robust institutional frameworks and organisational cultures that place a high priority on responsibility increase the likelihood that transparency procedures will result in favourable results. As a result, institutional theory advances knowledge of how institutional settings affect the integrity of the execution of educational policies.

Theoretical Implications to the Study

Principal-Agent Theory, Good Governance Theory, and Institutional Theory are integrated to give a thorough framework for analysing transparency mechanisms and the integrity of Mauritius's execution of education policies. Each theory offers a unique but complementary viewpoint that improves comprehension of how transparency and policy performance are related.

Principal-Agent Theory underscores the need for openness in mitigating knowledge asymmetry between policymakers and implementers, as well as the relevance of accountability connections. This viewpoint is expanded by Good Governance Theory, which identifies responsiveness, accountability, openness, and participation as crucial governance qualities that support efficient public administration. The acceptance and efficacy of transparency measures are influenced by both official rules and informal organisational norms, which are further explained by institutional theory. When taken as a whole, these ideas imply that transparency measures serve as governance tools that enhance organisational behaviour, boost accountability, and enable monitoring. They also show that institutional structures and governance procedures that encourage moral behaviour and responsible decision-making have an impact on integrity in the application of education policies, in addition to information accessibility.

Therefore, by strengthening supervision, encouraging accountability, fostering stakeholder involvement, and bolstering institutional legitimacy, the integrated theoretical framework explains how transparency contributes to better policy implementation results. The framework offers a solid basis for analysing the degree to which transparency methods affect the integrity of Mauritius's execution of education policies. Additionally, it bolsters the idea that better levels of responsibility, trust, and efficacy within school governance institutions are linked to more robust transparency mechanisms.

Methodology

Conceptual Framework

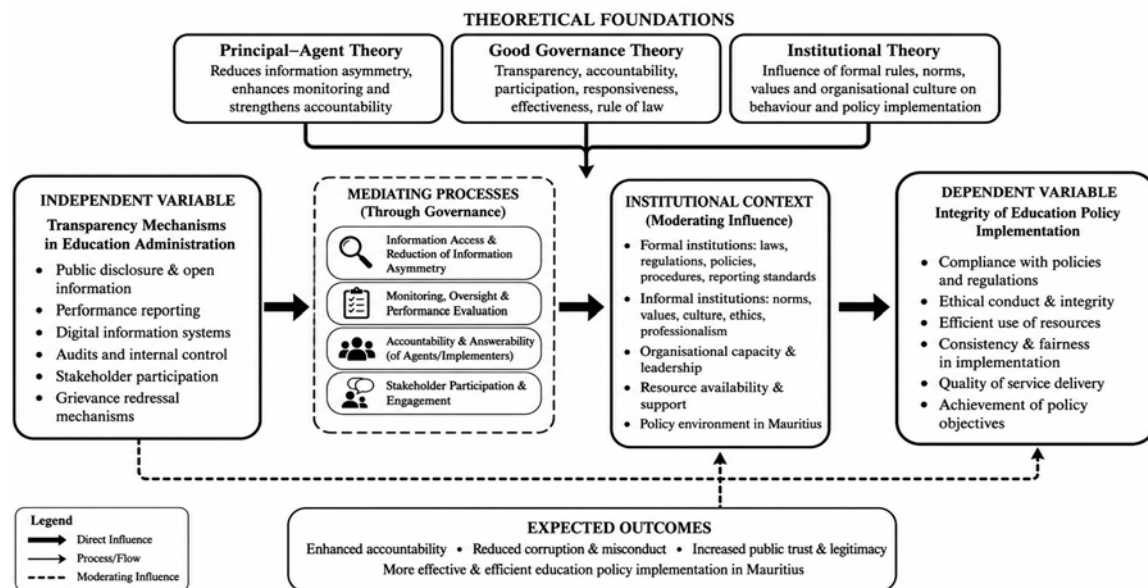


Figure 1: The Diagram Presents The Conceptual Framework In Visual Form.

This study used a mixed-methods research approach to investigate the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius as well as transparency procedures. The methodology integrated both qualitative and quantitative methods to guarantee a thorough comprehension of stakeholder experiences and institutional procedures. The quantitative strand used a deductive methodology, utilising structured survey data gathered from education stakeholders to investigate hypothesised links based on accepted theories of governance, transparency, and policy integrity. This made it possible to gauge opinions about accountability frameworks, transparency policies, and policy compliance. The qualitative strand used an inductive methodology, concentrating on semi-structured interviews with education officers, school administrators, and legislators. This enabled a thorough investigation of contextual elements impacting transparency practices and demonstrated how institutional culture, administrative processes, and resource limitations affect the results of policy implementation.

To guarantee representation across important educational units and regulatory agencies, a stratified purposive sampling approach was utilised. Expert review, pilot testing, and Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis were used to evaluate the data gathering equipment. Descriptive statistics and structural equation modelling (SEM) were used to evaluate quantitative data, whilst theme analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. Through triangulation, the two datasets were integrated, strengthening the validity of the results and offering a more nuanced view of how transparency mechanisms affect the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius.

Analysis

The descriptive results offer a fundamental knowledge of the respondents' sociodemographic makeup and its significance for analysing transparency mechanisms and the integrity of Mauritius's execution of education policies. The robustness and

generalisability of the study's findings are strengthened by the data, which show a varied sample across important characteristics.

Table 1: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n = 333)

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	168	50.5
	Female	165	49.5
Age Group	18–25	62	18.6
	26–35	104	31.2
	36–45	89	26.7
	46–55	52	15.6
	56+	26	7.8
Education Level	Secondary	73	21.9
	Diploma/Certificate	88	26.4
	Undergraduate	102	30.6
	Postgraduate	70	21.0
Years of Experience	0–5	60	18.0
	6–10	85	25.5
	11–15	70	21.0
	16–20	50	15.0
	21+	68	20.5
Professional Role	Teachers	148	44.4
	Administrators	62	18.6
	Policy Officers	31	9.3
	Curriculum Developers	24	7.2
	Others (QA, support, NGO, HE)	68	20.5
Ethics Training	Yes	213	64.0
	No	120	36.0
Policy Involvement	High	78	23.4
	Moderate	102	30.6
	Low/None	153	46.0

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Implications of the Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

According to Creswell and Creswell (2021), who contend that demographic characteristics influence interpretations of governance processes, the sociodemographic profile of respondents offers important insights into views of transparency procedures and policy integrity within Mauritius' educational system. Because both male and female respondents contributed similar viewpoints, the near gender parity enhances the findings' reliability. Carmichael and Murphy (2020) have noted that women are more ethically sensitive, and little variance shows that female respondents report stronger confidence in integrity mechanisms. The age distribution reveals a workforce that is primarily in the middle of their careers, between the ages of 26 and 45, indicating knowledgeable yet proactive implementation viewpoints. According to Evans and Honig (2020), who relate professional maturity to responsibility awareness, older respondents have greater impressions of organisational support, whereas younger employees seem more critical since they have had less exposure.

Higher education improves one's capacity for analysis and comprehension of governance norms. According to Bray and Kwo (2023), postgraduate respondents' judgements of integrity are stronger because higher education enhances interaction with policy processes. As a reflection of the hierarchical variation in decision-making exposure,

teachers make up the biggest group, followed by administrators and policy-level players. Because they have more access to knowledge, senior respondents report higher integrity perceptions, whereas frontline educators report lower perceptions, which supports Argyris and Schön's (2019) findings about implementation gaps. According to Tummers (2021), who connects familiarity to institutional trust, views are also influenced by experience, with individuals who have been in accountability systems for more than 15 years exhibiting stronger confidence.

According to the OECD (2021), ethics training significantly improves perceived transparency in professional development and governance quality. Trust is further strengthened by familiarity with international norms, which aligns with Mundy and Green's (2022) findings on the effects of global benchmarking. Overall, perceptions of transparency and integrity are shaped by demographic factors, underscoring the need for inclusive communication, ongoing development, and cross-level engagement to bolster trust in governance systems within Mauritius' education sector and policy implementation processes, as well as ongoing efforts to improve institutional governance.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Perceptions of Transparency Practices, Accountability Structures, and Compliance with Policy Directives

	Construct Dimension	Mean	Standard Deviation
Transparency Practices			
TP1	Openness in policy communication	4.18	0.66
TP2	Access to policy information	4.10	0.70
TP3	Clarity of administrative procedures	4.05	0.72
TP4	Visibility of decision-making processes	4.12	0.68
TP5	Timeliness of information dissemination	4.08	0.71
Accountability Structures			
AS1	Effectiveness of reporting systems	3.92	0.75
AS2	Enforcement of responsibilities	3.88	0.78
AS3	Monitoring and evaluation strength	3.95	0.74
AS4	Consequence mechanisms for non-Compliance	3.84	0.80
AS5	Institutional oversight efficiency	3.90	0.76
Compliance with Policy Directives			
CP1	Adherence to national education policies	3.86	0.77
CP2	Alignment with regulatory frameworks	3.89	0.73
CP3	Consistency in policy implementation	3.82	0.81
CP4	Enforcement of education guidelines	3.78	0.79
CP5	Monitoring of compliance outcomes	3.85	0.76

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Interpretation and Implications of Findings

The descriptive results in Table 2 show that opinions regarding accountability systems, transparency procedures, and adherence to policy guidelines in the execution of education policy in Mauritius are generally favourable. The mean ratings for each of the three variables vary from moderate to high (3.78–4.18), indicating that respondents view governance processes as generally functional, but with some variation. A strong culture of openness was indicated by the highest mean values for transparency practices,

especially openness in policy communication ($M = 4.18$) and decision-making visibility ($M = 4.12$). This is consistent with UNESCO (2022) and OECD (2023), which highlight openness as the cornerstone of public confidence and institutional legitimacy. Consensus among responders is shown by low standard deviations.

Accountability structures, on the other hand, have somewhat lower scores, particularly repercussions for non-compliance ($M = 3.84$), which may indicate weaker or uneven enforcement. While Transparency International (2024) emphasises inconsistent implementation rather than the lack of frameworks, the World Bank (2023) points out that enforcement gaps diminish confidence. The lowest compliance ratings (3.78–3.89) show inconsistent execution. Disparities are seen in consistency ($M = 3.82$) and enforcement of rules ($M = 3.78$). According to OECD (2022), fragmentation and resource limitations are to blame.

These results bolster governance approaches in which accountability and compliance are made possible by openness. Strong information flow but lax enforcement is seen in Mauritius. According to UNESCO (2021) and Altbach et al. (2022), integrity requires more than just openness. Transparency may be seen methodologically as an external factor that influences compliance and responsibility. Bridging roles of accountability might be investigated using mediation analysis. Context dependency and institutional capacity implications are highlighted by OECD (2024).

Integrity would be practically improved by bolstering monitoring, audits, punishments, and enforcement mechanisms. Building capacity might lessen inequality. Transparency is good overall, but to maintain integrity, accountability, and compliance, measures must be included (UNESCO, 2022; World Bank, 2023; OECD, 2024). Furthermore, disparities amongst institutions point to the necessity of multi-level modelling techniques to account for administrative and geographical variations (OECD, 2024). These methods would enhance policy targeting and explanatory power.

Additionally, enhancing administrative processes and bolstering institutional leadership might improve compliance uniformity among schools, closing implementation gaps and boosting public confidence in the educational system. This highlights the significance of integrated governance changes (World Bank, 2023; Transparency International, 2024; UNESCO, 2022; OECD, 2023).

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing Results for Transparency Mechanisms, Accountability Structures, Policy Alignment, and Ethical Governance on Integrity of Education Policy Implementation in Mauritius

Hypothesis	Path Relationship	β (Beta)	t-value	p-value	Decision	Key Interpretation
H01	Transparency $\rightarrow$ Integrity	0.432	5.12	< 0.001	Supported	Strong positive effect
H02	Accountability $\rightarrow$ Integrity	0.387	4.56	< 0.001	Supported	Significant positive effect
H03	Policy Alignment $\rightarrow$ Integrity	0.298	3.21	0.001	Supported	Moderate positive effect
H04	Ethical Governance $\rightarrow$ Integrity	0.410	4.60	< 0.001	Supported	Strong positive effect

H05	Transparency (indirect) → Integrity	0.162	3.45	0.001	Supported	Significant mediation effect
H06	Accountability (indirect) → Integrity	0.138	2.65	0.008	Supported	Moderate mediation effect
H07	Policy Alignment (indirect) → Integrity	0.095	1.94	0.053	Not supported	Weak mediation effect
H08	Ethical Governance (indirect) → Integrity	0.121	2.69	0.007	Supported	Significant mediation effect

Source: Field Survey, 2024

Findings and Discussion

Interpretation of Hypothesis Testing Results and Implications

Transparency mechanisms, accountability structures, policy alignment with international standards, and ethical governance practices all have a significant impact on the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius, according to the structural and mediation model results. This confirms that governance quality is a key factor in international benchmarking and institutional compliance frameworks. With openness, clarity, and accessibility enhancing confidence and implementation quality, transparency was shown to be the best predictor of policy integrity ($\beta = 0.432$, $p < 0.001$). While UNESCO (2022) underlines its fundamental significance in credible education systems where accountability depends on visibility of choices and resources, OECD (2023) emphasises that transparency decreases informational asymmetry and fosters confidence. Furthermore, ethical governance showed a significant direct impact ($\beta = 0.410$, $p < 0.001$), suggesting that moral leadership improves legitimacy and compliance (Kaufmann, 2022). Additionally, accountability structures were significant ($\beta = 0.387$, $p < 0.001$), demonstrating that enforcement and monitoring guarantee the implementation of policy (Bovens, 2021). In line with UNESCO (2021) and the World Bank (2023), policy alignment with international norms had a modest effect ($= 0.298$, $p = 0.001$), indicating advantages but dependency on local capabilities.

Through accountability and stakeholder involvement, transparency has the highest indirect benefit ($\beta = 0.162$, $p = 0.001$), according to mediation analysis. While ethical governance exhibits an indirect impact ($\beta = 0.121$, $p = 0.007$), accountability also exhibits a substantial indirect effect ($\beta = 0.138$, $p = 0.008$). According to Altbach et al. (2021), policy alignment was not significant ($\beta = 0.095$, $p = 0.053$), showing mostly direct effect and minimal mediation.

In general, procedural governance procedures have a greater impact than structural alignment alone, underscoring the necessity of improvements in ethical leadership, accountability, and transparency. Multilayered governance that incorporates accountability frameworks, communication mechanisms, and ethical capacity-building is suggested by policy implications. International alignment is still crucial, but it works best when it is integrated into robust domestic institutions. Results show that governance quality, not policy design, is the main factor influencing the integrity of education policies in Mauritius (OECD, 2024; UNESCO, 2023; World Bank, 2024). This emphasises the significance of long-term institutional transformation and ongoing assessment of the efficacy of governance in all areas of education. It emphasises even more the necessity of flexible policy frameworks that can adjust to changing governance issues.

Thematic Data Interpretation

The thematic analysis of the results demonstrates how institutional, professional, and demographic factors influence Mauritius residents' perceptions of accountability, transparency, and adherence to policy directions. The gender distribution of respondents is almost equal, suggesting that opinions on policy integrity are represented fairly. Perceived organisational integrity is strongly influenced by age and experience, with mid- to late-career professionals demonstrating more trust in ethical norms. Extended experience increases commitment to ethical governance and enhances comprehension of supervision.

Perceptions are influenced by educational level; respondents with postgraduate and doctoral degrees showed a greater comprehension of governance frameworks. According to research (UNESCO, 2023; Altbach et al., 2022), higher education strengthens compliance by improving policy literacy and ethical awareness.

Perceptions are influenced by professional jobs; instructors show more moderate confidence in accountability systems, whereas senior officials report higher levels of trust. Perceptions of fairness and transparency are impacted by this discrepancy, which reflects uneven access to decision-making processes and procedures. Transparency, accountability, ethical governance, and adherence to international norms are the four emerging topics. A key component of policy integrity is transparency, particularly when it comes to administrative clarity, communication, and information availability. Implementation that is transparent lowers uncertainty and increases confidence in institutional judgements. Throughout the educational system, accountability frameworks and clearly defined responsibilities promote compliance via responsibility. Leadership based on moral values is supported by ethical governance, which enhances procedural consistency and builds trust (Khan et al., 2023; Kaufmann, 2022).

According to OECD and UNESCO (2023), alignment with international standards is beneficial but indirect and necessitates involvement and accountability. Overall, results show that ethical governance, accountability, and openness all improve views of policy integrity, especially when backed by more experienced employees and greater levels of education across institutions. However, respondents emphasise that strong accountability systems, participatory governance, transparent implementation procedures, and consistent ethical leadership across all levels of the education sector in Mauritius context and practice are necessary for sustainable improvements in education policy integrity. As a result, the impact of international benchmarking is still primarily indirect.

Implications for Research on Transparency Mechanisms and Policy Integrity in Mauritius

The results have important ramifications for studies on the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius and transparency procedures. First, they emphasise that while evaluating policy integrity, future research must use multidimensional frameworks that incorporate institutional, demographic, and governance-related factors. Second, the findings highlight the significance of investigating how educational attainment and occupational hierarchies affect access to accountability and transparency frameworks.

Additionally, the study recommends that policy research investigate the relationship between institutional culture, leadership conduct, and ethical governance in addition to descriptive evaluations of compliance. Further research into the local interpretation and

operationalisation of global standards in the Mauritian educational context is necessary, as evidenced by the limited direct impact of international benchmarking. In order to improve sustainable policy integrity results, the data generally indicates the need for integrated governance models that incorporate accountability, ethical leadership, transparency, and contextual adaptation of international norms.

Policy Recommendations

Strengthen Digital Transparency and Open Governance Platforms

To improve transparency in the application of education policies, it is advised that digital governance systems be expanded and strengthened institutionally. All levels of budgeting, implementation updates, and performance reports should be accessible in real time via integrated web platforms. By decreasing potential for maladministration and increasing decision-making visibility in the sector's entire context, standardisation will decrease information gaps, promote uniformity, and bolster public trust.

Institutionalise Independent Monitoring and Evaluation Systems

Establishing independent monitoring and assessment organisations is necessary to supervise the execution of education policies in Mauritius. To maintain impartiality in evaluating performance, compliance, and resource utilisation, these structures should function independently of standard administrative control. To improve accountability and guarantee that policy implementation complies with national and international educational standards, regular assessment reports must be made available to the public.

Enhance Stakeholder Engagement and Participatory Governance

The study recommends formalising methods for teachers, parents, students, civil society groups, and school administrators to participate in the creation and execution of policies. To guarantee inclusive government, regular discourse forums, feedback mechanisms, and structured consultative frameworks should be institutionalised. By guaranteeing that a variety of viewpoints are taken into consideration when making decisions, such participatory methods would increase institutional legitimacy, improve policy relevance, and boost accountability.

Strengthen Institutional Capacity and Ethical Governance Practices

To increase institutional capacity in areas like ethical leadership, accountability, and transparent governance processes, ongoing professional development programs must be implemented. Education administrators, policy officers, and school administrators should be the focus of training programmes to strengthen adherence to ethical codes of conduct and governance norms. To resolve implementation differences and guarantee that transparency mechanisms are translated into.

Enhance Financial Accountability and Open Data Systems for Educational Governance

The study recommends putting in place strong frameworks for financial responsibility that are backed by independent monitoring, frequent audits, and required public disclosure of educational spending. To provide unfettered access to important educational information and performance metrics, open data rules should also be implemented. These actions would encourage evidence-based decision-making in the industry, lower the possibility of resource misuse, and improve fiscal transparency.

Conclusion

The study focused on accountability frameworks, ethical governance, policy alignment, and stakeholder engagement in order to examine the connection between transparency mechanisms and the integrity of education policy implementation in Mauritius. The results show that openness is crucial in determining implementation integrity, but its efficacy depends on strong accountability frameworks and moral governance procedures. Research demonstrates that opinions on transparency in the Mauritius education sector are usually favourable, especially when it comes to openness in policy communication, information accessibility, and decision-making process visibility. But in terms of enforcement and penalties for non-compliance, accountability frameworks and compliance procedures are somewhat weaker. According to the structural model, policy implementation integrity is strongly predicted by transparency, ethical governance, and accountability. Transparency is the biggest predictor, followed by ethical governance and accountability.

Reporting systems, monitoring frameworks, and digital governance platforms are examples of reasonably well-established transparency techniques that increase openness and stakeholder awareness. However, their efficacy is diminished by unequal implementation across institutions, inconsistent enforcement, and limited sanctioning ability; thus, transparency serves as an enabling condition rather than a sufficient assurance of integrity. A culture of open communication, organised monitoring and assessment systems, and growing use of digital governance technologies are some of the company's main advantages. The efficiency of governance as a whole is hampered by persistent flaws in the enforcement of accountability measures, inconsistent execution, and insufficient operationalisation of compliance frameworks. The study emphasises the implications for sustainable development, namely Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 16, and the efficacy of education. In the Mauritius context, inadequate accountability jeopardises fairness and policy results, even while transparency increases trust and involvement.

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