

**PUBLIC SECTOR TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN DEVELOPMENT
PROCESSES: FOCUS ON OREDO LOCAL GOVERNMENT AREA, EDO STATE**

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SSC2209741**

**DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION
FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES
UNIVERSITY OF BENIN
BENIN CITY**

NOVEMBER, 2025

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**BEING A PROJECT WORK SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION, FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES,
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THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF BACHELOR OF SCIENCE
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CERTIFICATION

This is to certify that this project was carried out by JOHN ENDURANCE with Matriculation Number SSC2209741 of the Department of Public Administration in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Bachelor Degree (B.Sc.) in Public Administration, University of Benin.

Dr. (Mrs. C.K. Omorede)
(Project Supervisor)

Prof. A.I. Mustapha
(Head of Department)

Date

Date

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to God almighty for his grace towards my life and my academic pursuit and also to my family for their care, prayers and financial support. And to my late father Prof. H.S.A. Aluyi of blessed memory and Mrs. Tina Aluyi for her contributions, care and support.

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– I say a big thank you. To my sweet mom, Mrs. John Ajalah, this journey wouldn't have been possible without you. Thank you for being a part of my success story.

ABSTRACT

This study examined public sector transparency and accountability in the development process: A case study of Oredo Local Government Area In Edo State This study adopted the survey design which was used to source data from a sample of 400 respondents. The data was analysed using percentages and frequency table. The hypotheses were analysed using chi-square statistical instrument. The result revealed that there is significant relationship between public sector accountability and local development process in Edo State. There is significant relationship between public sector accountability and national developmental project plan in Edo State .There is significant relationship between challenges of public sector accountability and national development in Edo State. The recommended that the Edo state government should take an efficient and effective planning control measures and prudent management of their resources and also to increase the salaries of all staff and members of the state government so as to motivate their efforts towards the discharge of the duties assigned to them in other to achieve the stated objective(s) of the state government that geared toward national development. The state government authority should endeavor to look into its administrative activities regularly and then prosecute any officer(s) found embezzling public funds and also make the head of the account office answerable for any such misappropriation.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the Study

Transparency and accountability have emerged as foundational principles for effective governance and sustainable development across the globe. International frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly Goal 16, emphasize the need for inclusive institutions and accountable governance to foster peace, justice, and strong institutions (United Nations Development Programme, 2025). In nations where public sector institutions operate transparently and are held accountable, development outcomes have significantly improved, particularly in education, healthcare, infrastructure, and social services (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021). Transparency, by making government decisions and processes visible to the public, and accountability, by holding public officials answerable for their actions, help build trust and reduce the incidence of corruption (Konanykhin, 2018).

Moreover, in many developing countries, especially in sub-Saharan Africa, the promise of transparency and accountability remains largely unfulfilled due to entrenched corruption, institutional weaknesses, and limited civic engagement. Nigeria, Africa's most populous nation, continues to struggle with poor governance practices, particularly at the sub-national and local government levels (Okereke, 2020; Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2021). Despite various reform programmes and the existence of anti-corruption frameworks,

the enforcement of accountability mechanisms remains weak, and access to public information is often restricted, thereby impairing citizen participation and undermining development goals (Nwachukwu & Uzochukwu, 2021).

The Nigerian local government system, designed to facilitate grassroots development and bring governance closer to the people, has consistently underperformed due to systemic inefficiencies. Challenges such as financial mismanagement, poor transparency in resource allocation, and lack of institutional accountability have plagued local councils across the country (Adeyemi, 2019; Arowolo, 2018). These governance lapses have not only hindered public service delivery but have also contributed to growing citizen apathy and mistrust in government institutions. Although oversight institutions and policies exist to promote accountability, their impact is constrained by limited implementation and political interference (Okpala & Osanebi, 2020; Maliki & Asaju, 2025).

Oredo Local Government Area, located in Edo State and encompassing Benin City, is one of the most politically and economically significant Local Government Areas in Southern Nigeria. Despite its strategic importance and access to government revenue streams, Oredo Local Government Area continues to face glaring development issues such as poor infrastructure, inadequate sanitation, youth unemployment, and abandoned public projects (Oluwabusayo, Akintoye & Rufus, 2024). These issues raise questions

about how public resources are managed and whether local leaders are being held accountable for the quality and outcomes of governance in the area (Nathan, 2025).

There is increasing concern regarding the lack of transparency in budgeting, procurement, and project implementation at the local level. Public records, when available, are often incomplete or inaccessible, and citizen engagement in development planning remains low (Ogundipe & Ajayi, 2025). This lack of openness has contributed to a sense of disempowerment among residents, as they are frequently unaware of how decisions affecting their welfare are made (Mohamed, 2021). Moreover, without mechanisms for community feedback and monitoring, elected officials are seldom compelled to respond to poor performance or unmet promises (Ojo, 2019).

The weak accountability environment in Oredo Local Government Area has created room for a culture of impunity, mismanagement of public funds, and substandard service delivery. As observed in other parts of Nigeria, the failure of local councils to operate transparently and accountably erodes public trust, discourages citizen participation, and impedes socio-economic progress (Okeke & Nwagwu, 2019; Matthew et al., 2020). The persistent disconnect between the local government and the people it serves highlights the urgent need for empirical research that can expose existing governance gaps and recommend corrective measures (Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020).

This study is therefore timely and essential, focusing on the extent to which transparency and accountability are implemented in the governance structure of Oredo

Local Government. By evaluating factors such as financial disclosure, access to information, citizen engagement, and institutional mechanisms for oversight, the study seeks to contribute to ongoing conversations about reforming Nigeria's local governance systems (Mekar, 2025). The findings are expected to inform stakeholders including policymakers, development practitioners, and civil society on how to foster participatory governance and enhance the effectiveness of development initiatives at the grassroots level (Olowu, 2018; World Bank, 2022).

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Transparency and accountability are universally acknowledged as key pillars of good governance, public trust, and sustainable development. In local government administration, these principles are essential for ensuring efficient service delivery and responsive governance. However, in Nigeria, especially at the local government level, these ideals are often not effectively practiced. Oredo Local Government Area (LGA), despite being a prominent urban council in Edo State, continues to face significant development challenges, including persistent infrastructure decay, poor healthcare services, and high youth unemployment. These issues persist despite regular statutory allocations and internally generated revenue, suggesting that financial resources are not being effectively managed or monitored (Nathan, 2025; Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2021).

One of the core problems is the limited transparency in public financial management within Oredo Local Government Area. There is a notable absence of open

and participatory budgeting, insufficient publication of financial records, and minimal access to procurement information. These gaps make it difficult for the public to scrutinize how funds are allocated and spent. Citizens often lack the opportunity or channels to question or provide input on local policies, projects, or expenditures. This opacity undermines the public's ability to hold local government officials accountable, resulting in a cycle of mismanagement, inefficiency, and a breakdown in service delivery (Ojo, 2019; Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020).

Consequently, institutional mechanisms that should ensure accountability such as legislative oversight, internal audits, community town hall meetings, and performance evaluations are either weak or not effectively implemented. The absence of functional checks and balances allows public officials to act with impunity and reduces the pressure to deliver on mandates. When citizens are excluded from decision-making processes and denied access to information, democratic participation is weakened, and public confidence in governance erodes (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021; Arowolo, 2018). This has translated into numerous stalled or poorly executed projects, despite public funds being expended.

Although several studies have examined broader issues of governance and corruption in Nigeria's public sector, there is a lack of empirical studies focused specifically on the transparency and accountability practices within local government councils like Oredo. Much of the existing literature addresses national and state-level

administrative challenges without adequately contextualizing how governance failures manifest at the local level, which is closest to the grassroots population (Okeke & Nwagwu, 2019; Okorie & Egbe, 2025). This generalization in scholarship leaves a critical gap in understanding the specific bottlenecks and institutional weaknesses unique to Oredo.

Similarly, while national institutions such as SERVICOM and EFCC are often referenced in accountability discourse, their influence rarely extends effectively to the grassroots, especially in urban councils like Oredo Local Government Area where local political elites dominate decision-making. Studies such as those by Ogundipe & Ajayi (2025) and Oluwabusayo, Akintoye & Rufus (2024) emphasize the importance of community monitoring and participatory governance, but few apply these insights in the context of specific Local Government Area in Edo State. This represents a substantial gap in localized policy and academic engagement, which this study aims to address.

Moreover, past research has not sufficiently explored how the lack of access to information and civic engagement affects citizens' perception of local governance or their willingness to participate in developmental efforts. Transparency is not merely a matter of publishing documents but ensuring that citizens understand and are empowered to act on that information (Olowu, 2018; Matthew et al., 2020). Without focused investigations into these social and institutional dynamics in places like Oredo, governance reforms will remain detached from the realities on the ground.

Therefore, this research is designed to fill a critical gap in the literature by providing a detailed analysis of transparency and accountability mechanisms in Oredo Local Government Area. It seeks to investigate how public officials manage resources, the extent of citizen involvement in governance, and the institutional barriers to accountability.

1.3 Research Questions

From the foregoing, the following research questions are listed to guide the study.

- 1) To what extent does public sector transparency and accountability influences Oredo local development process in Edo State?
- 2) What is the effect of public sector transparency and accountability on developmental project plan in Oredo Local Government in Edo State?
- 3) How does poor public sector transparency and accountability impact negatively on the grass-root development in Oredo local government in Edo State?
- 4) How does Challenges of Public Sector Transparency and Accountability Impact Negatively on National Development in Edo State?

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to examine “public sector transparency and accountability on the developmental process of Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State”. The specific objectives are to:

- 1) examine if public sector transparency and accountability influences Oredo local development process in Edo State.
- 2) evaluate the effect of public sector transparency and accountability on developmental project plan in Oredo Local Government in Edo State.
- 3) ascertain whether poor public sector transparency and accountability impact negatively on the grass-root development in Oredo local government in Edo State.
- 4) identify the challenges of public sector transparency and accountability impact negatively on national development in Edo State?

1.5 Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses will be stated in accordance with the specific objectives.

The hypotheses are stated in null form:

- 1) Public sector transparency and accountability has no relationship with Oredo local development process in Edo State.
- 2) Public sector transparency and accountability has no relationship with developmental project plan in Oredo Local Government in Edo State.
- 3) Poor public sector transparency and accountability has no relationship with grass-root development in Oredo local government in Edo State.

1.6 Scope of the Study

The study focuses on the impact of public sector transparency and accountability in the developmental process of Oredo Local Government in Edo State. The study will be

limited to the Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State. The study will be based on survey methodology on the bases of which questionnaire will be used to source data for the empirical analysis.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This research work will be of immense relevance to the public sector staff of Edo State government. It will go a long way in enlightening them on the concept of public sector transparency and accountability as key to national development. This research work will as well be of benefit to students and researchers because it will broaden their scope on the information based on the relationship between accountability and national development, it will also be relevant to policy makers on the best policy to adopt in making Oredo in Edo State and the nation at large a well development place for the wellbeing of the citizens. The study will be relevant to department of finance to financial control system and also it will help them improve on transparency and accountability in revenue generations and minimizes expenditures.

1.8 Definition of Terms

The following are conceptualization of terms as used in the study. The descriptions may help readers to appreciate its application in the study;

Public Sector: In general terms, the public sector consists of governments and all publicly controlled or publicly funded agencies, enterprises, and other entities that deliver

public programmes, goods, or services. The public sector is the part of the economy composed of both public services and public enterprises.

Transparency: This involves the practice of being open, honest, and straightforward about various activities of the public sector organizations.

Accountability: This means taking responsibility for any action when there is need.

Challenges: This refers to obstacle that works against accountability in the public sector. It can be seen as constrains that does not allow continuous and steady accountability in public sector.

National Development: Refers to the capacity of the state government to raise the standard of living of its residents. It can be achieved by providing individuals with basic livelihood requirements and supplying them with employment, etc. It also means to promote sustainable and stable development of the country and to improve the people's quality of life.

1.9 Organization of Chapters

The study consist of five chapters

Chapter one contains the introduction following by statement of the problem, research questions and objective of study

Chapter two contains the literature review and theoretical framework

The chapter three contains the research methodology

The chapter four is the presentation of data from the survey.

Chapter five contains the summary of findings, conclusion and recommendations

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study is anchored on the symbiotic relationship between transparency, accountability, and local development within the public sector. In public administration literature, transparency refers to the openness of government operations and the accessibility of relevant information to the public, especially regarding decision-making, budgeting, procurement, and service delivery (Arowolo, 2018; Kechi-Nkiri & Eyam, 2019). Accountability, in contrast, implies an obligation by public officials to explain and justify their actions and decisions, particularly in relation to the stewardship of public resources and the delivery of outcomes (Mohamed, 2021; Adeyemi, 2019). Both principles are essential for strengthening governance and achieving sustainable grassroots development.

In Nigeria, the relevance of transparency and accountability is increasingly emphasized in policy debates and reform initiatives. However, as various scholars have observed, institutional mechanisms that promote these values remain weak, fragmented, or poorly enforced (Ezeajughu, 2021; Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2021). This is particularly problematic at the local government level, where governance interacts most directly with citizens, yet where oversight and participation are often limited. Oredo Local Government, as a microcosm of Nigeria's broader public sector challenges, provides an

ideal context to examine how transparency and accountability or the lack thereof affect development outcomes at the grassroots.

The framework underlying this study assumes that when local governments operate transparently by publishing budgets, disclosing procurement details, and allowing for civic scrutiny they enhance public trust and reduce avenues for corruption (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021; Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020). This trust, in turn, encourages citizen participation and feedback, which strengthens democratic governance and ensures that development projects are relevant, timely, and sustainable. Without transparency, residents are left in the dark about how their resources are managed, weakening both engagement and confidence in public institutions (Hamid, 2019; Mekar, 2025).

Accountability operates as the enforcement arm of transparency. It ensures that decisions and policies are not only visible but subject to scrutiny and sanction. Bovens' (2007) accountability model suggests that for public officials to be accountable, there must be clear standards of performance, mechanisms for monitoring, and consequences for failure. In the context of Oredo Local Government Area, this means instituting routine audits, empowering civil society watchdogs, ensuring legislative oversight, and holding leaders to their campaign and administrative promises. Studies have shown that in the absence of these mechanisms, service delivery is often delayed, poorly executed, or abandoned altogether (Nathan, 2025; Maliki & Asaju, 2025).

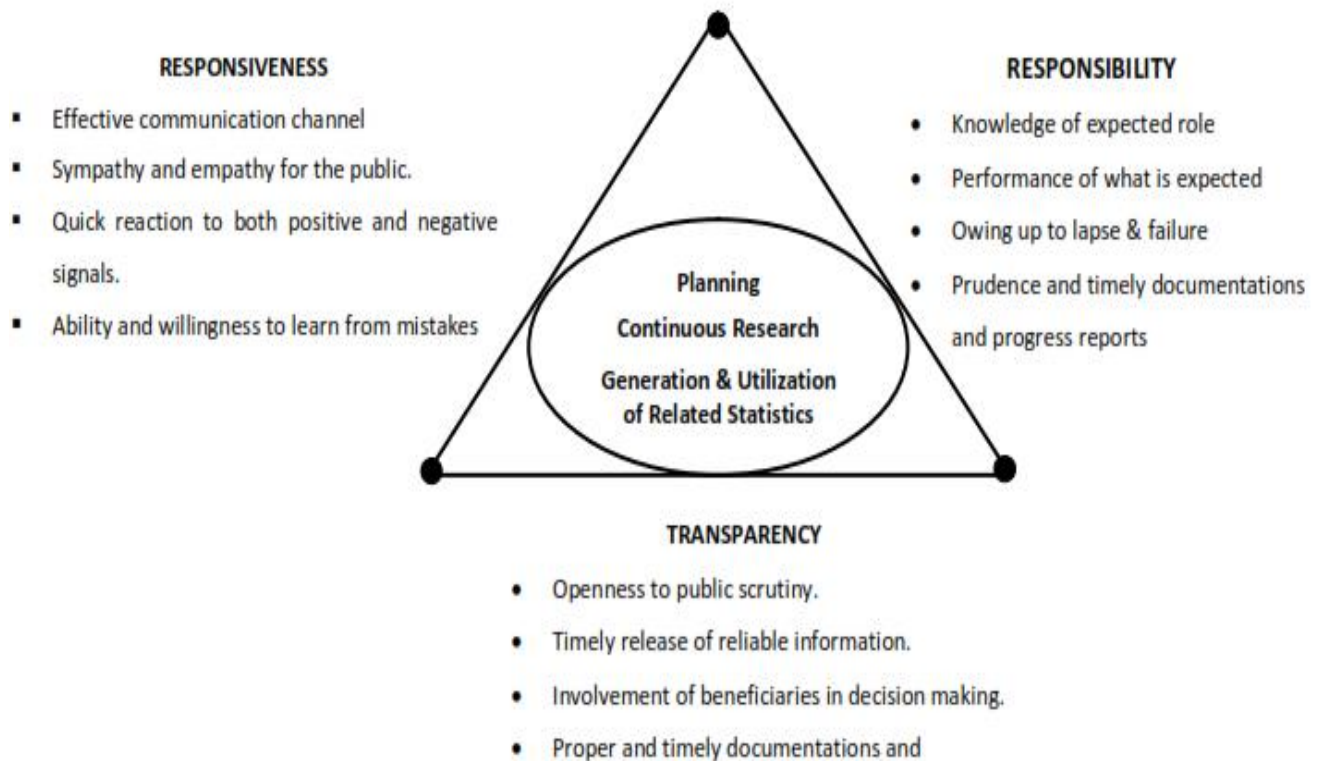
Consequently, the conceptual framework for this study incorporates the theory of Good Governance as promoted by global institutions like the World Bank (2022) and United Nations Development Programme (2025). This theory emphasizes that development cannot be achieved in a vacuum; it requires institutions that are efficient, participatory, and responsive to public needs. Key dimensions of good governance—transparency, accountability, participation, and rule of law—are interconnected. For instance, the UNDP (2025) notes that in the absence of transparent budgeting and procurement processes, development efforts tend to be elite-driven and disconnected from the actual needs of local communities.

In practical terms, the conceptual framework proposes that the development process in Oredo Local Government Area is shaped by the level of transparency and accountability present in its governance structures. If local authorities are transparent and accountable, then development projects whether in infrastructure, health, education, or sanitation are more likely to be completed, publicly monitored, and tailored to community priorities. Conversely, when these elements are missing or dysfunctional, development becomes haphazard, politicized, or abandoned (Okpala & Osanebi, 2020; Nwachukwu & Uzochukwu, 2021).

This framework also reflects diagonal accountability as discussed by Mechkova et al. (2019), which emphasizes the role of citizens, media, and civil society in demanding explanations from government actors and intervening when institutional checks are weak.

In Oredo, where formal accountability systems may be compromised by political interference or administrative inefficiencies, these diagonal mechanisms (e.g., town hall meetings, media investigations, community watchdog groups) could play a vital role in bridging the governance gap and enhancing transparency at the grassroots level. The conceptual framework of this study envisions transparency and accountability not as isolated concepts, but as mutually reinforcing components of a responsive and efficient local government system. It assumes that their presence can significantly improve developmental outcomes in Oredo Local Government Area, while their absence perpetuates inefficiency, public disillusionment, and underdevelopment. By empirically testing this framework in the context of Oredo Local Government, this research aims to offer evidence-based insights that can inform local governance reforms and enhance the delivery of public services in Edo State and beyond.

Accountability Triangle



2.1.1 Concept of Transparency

Transparency is the comprehensiveness, clarity, reliability, timeliness, and relevance of an entities reporting on the past, present jand future state of its finances, activities and programmes. Transparency implies openness, allowing others to know what is going on and what has been done previously (Hamid, 2019). It entails given an unobstructed access to information that is timely, adequate, relevant, reliable and comprehensive for economic and social evaluations and decisions. It provides legislatures,

investors, markets, citizens and public with the information they need to hold organizations accountable.

Transparency therefore requires accurate documentation and storage of information on organization's activities, to permit easy retrieval and continuous release of detailed and reliable information to the public for various decisions and judgements. A transparent organization is like a transparent container that hides nothing by allows its contents to be visible to all and sundry. Transparency requires organizations to created avenues and be prepared to share information with their general public (Hamid, 2019). Transparency in this regard puts an organization in the open to its constituents, keeps the people informed about organization activities leaving them not in doubt through effective dissemination of information. Transparency is characterized by the following:

- (a) A disclosure system
- (b) Access to information.
- (c) Openness to public participation
- (d) Absence of undue secrecy

Transparency is therefore an instrument of accountability. Because it allows access to information it therefore reinforces accountability.

2.1. Concept of Transparency

Transparency is widely acknowledged as a foundational principle of good governance and public administration. It refers to the openness and clarity with which government institutions conduct their activities, make decisions, and disseminate information to the public (Arowolo, 2018). Transparency ensures that citizens have access to relevant and timely information about government operations, enabling them to make informed judgments and hold public officials accountable. This openness is particularly essential at the local government level, where decisions directly impact the daily lives of citizens.

In the Nigerian context, transparency has emerged as a major concern due to pervasive corruption, lack of disclosure in financial transactions, and poor implementation of public projects (Ezeajughu, 2021). Many local governments operate behind closed doors, with limited access to budgetary information, procurement records, or performance reports. Kechi-Nkiri and Eyam (2019) observe that such opacity contributes to mismanagement, inefficiency, and the erosion of public trust. When people are denied access to information, they are also denied the opportunity to participate meaningfully in governance.

According to Mohamed (2021), transparency is not just about making documents available but also about ensuring that such information is understandable, relevant, and timely. In other words, transparency should be citizen-centered. In many cases, local

governments may release reports or financial statements, but these documents are often complex, incomplete, or not publicly disseminated. This form of “token transparency” fails to promote genuine accountability or foster citizen participation. Instead, it creates a false impression of openness while concealing critical governance processes (Mohamed (2021).

At the heart of transparency lies the principle of public access to information. This entails legal and institutional frameworks that mandate government agencies to release data and proactively engage with the public. In Nigeria, the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act of 2011 represents a major step toward institutionalizing transparency. However, the implementation of this law at the local level has been limited, particularly in regions such as Oredo Local Government Area where bureaucratic bottlenecks and political resistance often hinder open governance (Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020; Hamid, 2019).

Transparency also has a direct impact on the quality of governance and development outcomes. Maswadeh and Mahmoud (2021) argue that transparency reduces the risk of corruption, enhances budget efficiency, and improves public service delivery. In the absence of transparency, funds meant for community development projects are often diverted or misused, leading to abandoned projects, poor infrastructure, and widespread public dissatisfaction. Therefore, transparency serves both a preventive and enabling function in local governance.

Moreover, transparency strengthens social accountability by empowering citizens and civil society organizations to monitor government performance. When residents of a local government area like Oredo can access data on spending, project execution, and administrative decisions, they are better equipped to question irregularities and demand redress. Mekar (2025) emphasizes that transparency facilitates civic engagement, which in turn reinforces the democratic legitimacy of local authorities. It enables a feedback loop between the governed and those who govern.

Despite its benefits, achieving transparency in local government administration is often constrained by entrenched interests, limited technical capacity, and poor record-keeping. According to Ibrahim and Yusuf (2021), many local government councils in Nigeria do not maintain proper documentation or fail to digitize and publish their operations. In such settings, lack of transparency is both a symptom and a cause of institutional weakness. Therefore, efforts to promote transparency must be accompanied by systemic reforms such as staff training, digitization of records, and enforcement of disclosure laws. Transparency is an indispensable pillar of effective and accountable governance. Its practice ensures that government actions are open to public scrutiny, which in turn reduces corruption, builds trust, and fosters sustainable development. For local governments like Oredo Local Government Area, transparency must move beyond rhetoric and become institutionalized through enforceable laws, accessible information systems, and active citizen engagement. As this study will further explore, the degree of

transparency in governance processes significantly influences the developmental trajectory of communities at the grassroots.

2.1.3 Transparency and Accountability

Transparency and accountability are two interrelated concepts central to the effective functioning of any democratic governance structure. Transparency refers to the openness of government institutions in providing access to information regarding their operations, decisions, and resource allocations (Arowolo, 2018). Accountability, on the other hand, involves the obligation of public officials to justify their actions, decisions, and expenditures to the public and relevant oversight bodies. These two principles work synergistically: transparency enables accountability, while accountability reinforces transparency by deterring opacity and mismanagement (Ezeajughu, 2021; Mohamed, 2021).

In the Nigerian public sector, the lack of transparency often leads to weakened accountability, especially at the local government level. According to Oladunjoye and Dada (2020), many local governments operate without public disclosure of their budgets, contracts, or audit reports, thus making it difficult for citizens and watchdog institutions to monitor their activities. This institutional secrecy breeds inefficiency, misappropriation of funds, and a general lack of trust in governance systems. For example, in Oredo Local Government Area, limited access to fiscal and operational data has been a major barrier to holding officials accountable for developmental outcomes.

Transparency enhances accountability by making public sector decisions visible and subject to scrutiny. Kechi-Nkiri and Eyam (2019) argue that when public officials are aware that their actions are being monitored, they are more likely to act in the public interest. Regular disclosure of financial reports, procurement records, and project implementation updates are essential mechanisms through which citizens, civil society organizations, and oversight agencies can hold local governments accountable. In this way, transparency serves not only as a deterrent to corruption but also as a tool for participatory governance (Hamid, 2019).

Moreover, accountability mechanisms such as performance audits, citizen feedback forums, and legislative oversight are more effective when paired with transparent information systems. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2021) note that without accurate and accessible data, even well-intentioned accountability frameworks become ineffective. In many Nigerian Local Government Areas, including Oredo, the absence of real-time data on project performance, budget utilization, and administrative decisions has severely hampered developmental progress. This suggests that achieving local development goals requires both transparent governance practices and robust accountability frameworks.

Transparency and accountability also play a crucial role in improving service delivery and promoting efficient use of resources. Maswadeh and Mahmoud (2021) emphasize that these principles contribute to better planning, resource allocation, and monitoring of development projects. When public officials are transparent and held

accountable, there is a reduced likelihood of project abandonment, inflated costs, or misaligned priorities. As seen in parts of Edo State, improved transparency in local council operations has led to better citizen engagement and more impactful community projects (Mekar, 2025). Transparency and accountability are mutually reinforcing pillars that form the backbone of responsive and inclusive governance. Their integration in public sector management is vital for ensuring that developmental resources are used efficiently, policies reflect community needs, and citizens have a voice in governance. For local government areas like Oredo, prioritizing these values is not only a matter of institutional reform but a necessary condition for sustainable grassroots development.

2.1.4 Development Process

The development process refers to a series of planned, strategic, and coordinated actions aimed at improving the quality of life, economic prosperity, and social welfare of a population. It involves not only the construction of infrastructure and provision of public services but also the advancement of education, healthcare, employment, and governance. As Todaro and Smith (2015) suggest, development transcends economic growth alone and includes improvements in equity, sustainability, and the empowerment of marginalized populations. For any society, particularly in developing countries like Nigeria, the development process is closely tied to institutional strength, policy coherence, and effective leadership.

In the context of local governance, the development process begins with identifying the needs of the community and planning interventions that address those needs. Local government areas, such as Oredo in Edo State, are constitutionally responsible for facilitating grassroots development through the execution of community-based projects like road construction, healthcare delivery, education support, and market infrastructure (Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020). However, the success of these processes often depends on the integrity of planning mechanisms, stakeholder involvement, and the level of public sector transparency and accountability.

A critical element of the development process is participatory governance, which ensures that citizens are actively involved in setting development priorities and monitoring implementation. Arowolo (2018) emphasizes that inclusive development cannot occur in isolation from the people it seeks to serve. When community voices are integrated into planning, the resulting projects are more responsive and sustainable. Conversely, when public officials exclude citizens from decision-making, it often leads to project failure, misallocation of resources, and distrust in government.

Transparency and accountability play a central role in every stage of the development process, from planning and budgeting to execution and evaluation. Without transparent procedures and accountable governance, development projects are prone to corruption, inefficiency, and abandonment. Mohamed (2021) points out that weak public accountability in Nigerian local governments often results in underutilized resources and

duplication of efforts. This is evident in some wards of Oredo Local Government Area, where developmental efforts are sometimes skewed by political interests rather than objective community needs.

Moreover, the development process is hindered when institutions lack the capacity to track, evaluate, and report on progress. Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) frameworks are essential for assessing the effectiveness of development projects and guiding future planning. Kechi-Nkiri and Eyam (2019) argue that effective M&E is only possible in an environment of transparency, where relevant data are accessible, and stakeholders are informed. In Oredo, the absence of detailed public records on budget performance and project status hampers community oversight and weakens development accountability. Equity and sustainability are also vital principles in the development process. True development ensures that all groups especially vulnerable and marginalized populations benefit equitably. As noted by the World Bank (2022), inclusive development is one that reduces inequality and enhances access to basic services for everyone. In many parts of Nigeria, however, development is uneven, with rural and semi-urban areas like parts of Oredo receiving less attention due to poor accountability practices and patronage politics.

Infrastructural development, such as road networks, water supply, and electricity, is commonly used as a yardstick for assessing local government performance. However, the development process must be viewed more holistically, incorporating social,

economic, and institutional reforms. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2021) stress that a strong development process requires deliberate investment in human capital, public institutions, and transparent governance systems. Without these, even the most visible infrastructural projects can fail to produce meaningful long-term outcomes. The development process is a multi-faceted and dynamic journey that requires coordination, citizen participation, and good governance. For local governments like Oredo in Edo State, success in development depends largely on how transparent, accountable, and inclusive their public sector institutions are. When development is people-centered, transparent, and backed by strong institutions, it becomes more effective, equitable, and sustainable. Thus, enhancing the development process in Oredo Local Government Area requires reforms that prioritize accountability, capacity building, and active citizen engagement.

2.1.5 Public Sector Transparency and Accountability and Development Process

Transparency and accountability are key ingredients of effective governance and essential for achieving development at all levels of government. In Oredo Local Government Area (LGA), the extent to which these principles are applied significantly influences the local development process. Transparency in public administration ensures that information about government activities is readily available and accessible, while accountability ensures that public officials are held responsible for the management of resources and service delivery outcomes (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021; Mohamed, 2021).

Where transparency exists, citizens can track budget allocations, monitor project implementation, and participate meaningfully in decision-making. This participatory process enables better identification of community needs, more efficient use of public funds, and improved service delivery (Olowu, 2018). In Oredo, however, there have been widespread complaints about the inaccessibility of financial reports and limited involvement of citizens in local governance. Such opacity undermines the potential for inclusive development and fuels distrust between the government and its constituents (Ibrahim & Yusuf, 2021).

The developmental process in many local governments in Nigeria is often stunted due to a lack of transparency in the execution of projects and allocation of funds (Arowolo, 2018; Adeyemi, 2019). In Oredo Local Government Area, poor record-keeping and limited disclosure of project details prevents residents from knowing what is being done with public funds. As a result, many development initiatives are either abandoned or poorly executed due to lack of oversight and community engagement (Ojo, 2019). Moreover, accountability mechanisms such as audits, legislative reviews, and citizen feedback platforms are either weak or ineffective in the Local Government Area. This has made it difficult to track the outcomes of development projects or sanction officials for poor performance. For instance, Emmanson & Ajayi (2021) noted that reforms in public sector entities between 2015–2020 have had minimal impact in areas where local councils are shielded from public scrutiny.

The absence of transparency also discourages development partners and investors from supporting local initiatives. In contrast, areas with open and accountable governance often attract partnerships and grants that stimulate socio-economic growth (World Bank, 2022). Oredo Local Government Area's development prospects, therefore, depend heavily on how effectively transparency and accountability are institutionalized in its governance structure (Okpala & Osanebi, 2020). Therefore, public trust in the local government is eroded when there is no visible evidence of financial prudence or service delivery. Trust is a vital factor in mobilizing local resources and encouraging community participation in development efforts. Without trust, even well-intended policies and plans may face resistance or apathy from the grassroots (Nathan, 2025).

The extent of transparency and accountability also influences the responsiveness of government to emerging challenges such as environmental degradation, unemployment, and health crises. Where governance is opaque and unresponsive, such issues linger without proper intervention. In contrast, transparent local governments tend to be more proactive and adaptive in responding to citizens' needs (Oluwabusayo, Akintoye & Rufus, 2024). The development process in Oredo Local Government is heavily influenced by the degree to which transparency and accountability are prioritized. Without deliberate efforts to institutionalize these principles, the Local Government Area will continue to lag in grassroots development, despite receiving regular revenue allocations and public resources (Ogundipe & Ajayi, 2025).

2.1.6 Public Sector Transparency and Accountability on Developmental Project Planning

Effective developmental project planning requires accurate data, community input, and proper coordination all of which are facilitated by transparency and accountability. In the absence of these principles, planning becomes arbitrary, poorly targeted, and inefficient. In Oredo Local Government Area, the planning of developmental projects is often affected by a lack of public involvement and insufficient disclosure of financial and administrative information (Okeke & Nwagwu, 2019). Transparency in the planning phase allows for better priority setting and helps ensure that projects align with the actual needs of the people. However, when citizens are not informed or consulted, development projects may be misaligned with local realities, resulting in wasted resources and abandoned infrastructures (Mohamed, 2021; Okorie & Egbe, 2025). The role of community voices is critical in project planning, particularly in multi-ethnic and socio-economically diverse areas like Oredo.

Oredo Local Government Area's lack of open budget hearings and planning forums limits community contributions to the decision-making process. As highlighted by Ogundipe & Ajayi (2025), such a planning deficit often results in duplication of efforts, conflict over land use, and inadequate service coverage. Furthermore, without accountability, officials have little incentive to ensure that project plans are feasible, cost-effective, or properly implemented. Empirical studies show that areas with strong

transparency frameworks tend to record better outcomes in project delivery due to reduced corruption and efficient monitoring (Matthew et al., 2020). When planning processes are opaque, projects may be over-invoiced or routed through political interests rather than technical assessments. Oredo has experienced such issues in past years, with reports of inflated contracts and abandoned projects (Nathan, 2025).

Moreover, accountability ensures that those responsible for planning and executing development projects are answerable for their performance. When officials know they will be held to account, they are more likely to act in the public interest and follow due process (Ezeajughu, 2021). In contrast, a lack of sanctions for planning failures leads to impunity and systemic waste. The lack of transparency also affects project monitoring and evaluation. If plans are not clearly documented and publicly available, it becomes difficult for stakeholders to assess progress or intervene in cases of mismanagement (Mekar, 2025). In Oredo Local Government Area, monitoring tools are either absent or rarely used, making project tracking a major challenge for both government and civil society actors.

Consequently, limited transparency in planning hinders opportunities for collaboration with NGOs, private sector players, and donor agencies. Development partners require clarity, accountability, and openness to align their support with local needs and systems (World Bank, 2022). In the absence of these, Oredo may continue to miss out on key partnerships that could enhance its development agenda. In essence,

transparent and accountable public sector practices are not only essential for sound financial management but also crucial for the planning, prioritization, and implementation of sustainable development projects in Oredo Local Government Area.

2.1.7 Poor Public Sector Transparency and Accountability and Grassroots Development

Grassroots development is most effective when the local population is informed, involved, and empowered in the governance process. Unfortunately, poor public sector transparency and accountability severely undermine this in Oredo Local Government Area. When information is not disclosed, and public officers are not held responsible for their actions, grassroots communities are often the most affected (Hamid, 2019; Ojo, 2019). One of the primary consequences of poor accountability is the misallocation or embezzlement of public resources meant for community development. Funds intended for schools, roads, healthcare, and youth programmes are either diverted or poorly spent. In Oredo, this has led to dilapidated infrastructure, inadequate primary health centers, and poorly equipped schools (Oladunjoye & Dada, 2020).

Poor transparency also results in low citizen participation. When people are unaware of what the government is doing or how decisions are made, they become disengaged from governance processes. This weakens the feedback loop necessary for responsive governance and creates a gap between citizens and duty bearers (Olowu, 2018). Over time, this leads to apathy and mistrust in public institutions. Moreover, the

absence of accountability mechanisms allows local officials to act with impunity. Development projects are either delayed, abandoned, or implemented without quality assurance. This is particularly evident in Oredo Local Government Area, where numerous community projects are left incomplete with no clear explanation to residents (Maliki & Asaju, 2025). The lack of consequences encourages a cycle of inefficiency and waste.

Poor transparency also fosters corruption, which directly hampers grassroots development. When public officials are not required to publish budgets, procurement details, or expenditure reports, it becomes easier to misappropriate funds. This deprives local communities of basic services and economic opportunities, worsening poverty and inequality (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021; Matthew et al., 2020). The effects are especially severe in rural and marginalized communities within Oredo, where citizens rely heavily on government interventions for survival. Without transparent governance and accountable leadership, these communities remain underdeveloped and underserved. Access to clean water, electricity, and education remains a challenge for many residents despite the availability of public funds (Olaoye, Ogbebor & Elelu, 2021).

Also, poor governance practices can discourage citizen-led initiatives. In places where community leaders or youth groups attempt to advocate for better services, they are often ignored or intimidated when there is no institutional support for transparency and accountability. This creates a climate of fear and silence that stifles grassroots

innovation and development (Ezeajughu, 2021). Poor transparency and accountability in Oredo Local Government have a deeply negative impact on grassroots development. Addressing these governance flaws is essential for inclusive growth, community resilience, and sustainable development outcomes across Edo State.

2.1.8 Challenges of Transparency and Accountability in Nigeria

Transparency and accountability are crucial components of good governance and effective public administration. However, in Nigeria, numerous systemic, structural, and institutional challenges hinder their full implementation, especially at the grassroots level such as in local government areas. These challenges have continued to undermine development outcomes, weaken public trust, and perpetuate corruption and inefficiency.

- i. **Weak Institutional Frameworks:** Nigeria's public institutions often lack the autonomy, capacity, and resources necessary to enforce transparency and accountability measures effectively. As Adeyemi (2019) and Nathan (2025) observe, most anti-corruption agencies and internal audit units are either underfunded or subject to political interference. This makes it difficult to monitor, investigate, or sanction corrupt practices across different levels of government, particularly in local councils like Oredo Local Government Area.
- ii. **Poor Implementation of Legal Frameworks:** While Nigeria has adopted laws and policies to promote transparency such as the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act implementation remains weak at the local government level. Ibrahim and Yusuf

(2021) note that many public institutions either ignore or frustrate FOI requests, thereby hindering citizen access to critical government data. In many Local Government Areas, there are no accessible online portals or official communication channels through which budgets, contracts, and project updates can be monitored.

- iii. **Political Interference and Patronage Politics:** Transparency and accountability often clash with political interests. Political elites may manipulate budgetary allocations, influence procurement processes, or interfere with oversight functions for personal or party gains. As highlighted by Ojo (2019) and Hamid (2019), the prevalence of patronage politics in Nigeria's public sector enables elected officials to prioritize loyalty over merit, which fosters an environment of impunity and reduces the effectiveness of accountability mechanisms.
- iv. **Lack of Civic Engagement and Awareness:** Many Nigerian citizens are either unaware of their rights to demand transparency or lack the tools and platforms to engage meaningfully in governance. Emmanson and Ajayi (2021) argue that low levels of public enlightenment contribute to a weak demand for accountability, particularly at the local level. This is evident in places like Oredo Local Government Area, where limited community involvement in budget discussions and project monitoring allows poor governance to go unchecked.
- v. **Corruption and Financial Mismanagement:** Corruption remains a major obstacle to transparent governance in Nigeria. Oladunjoye and Dada (2020) and Maswadeh

and Mahmoud (2021) highlight how systemic corruption leads to inflated contracts, ghost workers, and diversion of public funds, especially in local government areas where oversight is minimal. Financial records are often manipulated or concealed, making it difficult to track expenditures or measure project outcomes.

- vi. **Inadequate Technological Infrastructure:** Digital transparency initiatives such as e-governance systems are either absent or poorly maintained in many Nigerian local government areas. Mekar (2025) emphasizes that the lack of reliable data management systems prevents the automation and publication of government records. In places like Oredo, the absence of online dashboards or digital archives restricts both media and citizen access to real-time information.
- vii. **Bureaucratic Inefficiencies and Poor Record-Keeping:** The Nigerian public sector is often plagued by red tape, outdated procedures, and inefficient filing systems. According to Ezeajughu (2021), this makes it difficult to trace government decisions, assess project implementation, or obtain reliable reports. These inefficiencies delay service delivery and provide cover for irregularities in public spending.
- viii. **Low Political Will for Reform:** Finally, the absence of strong political will to institutionalize transparency and accountability continues to be a significant challenge. As Olowu (2018) notes, many public officials benefit from the opaque nature of governance and thus resist reforms that would expose their activities to public

scrutiny. Without committed leadership and pressure from civil society, transparency initiatives often remain superficial or short-lived.

2.1.9 Challenge of Accountability of Public Employees

The challenge of accountability of public employees in Nigeria, particularly at the local government level, stems from weak oversight mechanisms, inadequate performance evaluation systems, and entrenched corruption. In Oredo Local Government Area, this often results in the mismanagement of public funds, low productivity, and a lack of transparency in the delivery of essential services, some of challenges are:

- i. Political Interference and Patronage System:** One of the foremost challenges to public employee accountability in Nigeria is political interference. Many public servants are appointed based on political loyalty rather than merit, making them more accountable to political godfathers than to institutional frameworks or the public. This patronage system breeds a culture of impunity, where public employees prioritize the interests of political sponsors over service delivery (Hamid, 2019).
- ii. Weak Internal Oversight Mechanisms:** Many public institutions lack strong internal control systems to monitor employee performance and compliance with regulations. According to Olowu (2018), audit departments are often underfunded or marginalized, making it difficult to conduct regular checks or enforce

disciplinary actions against erring staff. This weakness undermines institutional accountability and encourages unethical behavior.

- iii. Lack of Clear Performance Evaluation Standards:** Public sector employees often operate without well-defined performance metrics. In contrast to the private sector, where performance is routinely measured and linked to outcomes, the public service in Nigeria often lacks transparent evaluation systems. Ezeajughu (2021) notes that promotions and incentives are sometimes granted arbitrarily, weakening motivation for accountability and excellence.
- iv. Ineffective Disciplinary Processes:** Even when wrongdoing is identified, disciplinary actions are rarely carried out effectively or transparently. Delays in administrative processes, influence from higher authorities, or internal cover-ups often hinder justice. Emmanson & Ajayi (2021) point out that the public service disciplinary system lacks teeth, reducing its deterrent effect on potential offenders.
- v. Poor Record-Keeping and Documentation:** Proper accountability depends on reliable documentation. However, in many public offices in Nigeria, record-keeping is manual, inconsistent, or manipulated. As noted by Mekar (2025), this results in a lack of data transparency and makes it difficult to verify claims, trace actions, or establish responsibility for poor performance or misconduct.
- vi. Low Ethical Standards and Professionalism:** A culture of indifference toward ethical standards is prevalent in some public offices. The absence of ongoing

ethics training and weak enforcement of civil service codes reduces the professional integrity of public servants. Ibrahim and Yusuf (2021) argue that ethical lapses go unaddressed partly due to weak leadership and lack of role models in public service.

- vii. **Inadequate Public Engagement and Oversight:** When the public is not actively involved in demanding accountability, public employees may feel no pressure to perform diligently. Civic awareness and watchdog efforts are limited, especially at the grassroots. Citizens in areas like Oredo Local Government may lack the tools or knowledge to hold public employees accountable (Nathan, 2025).

2.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework provides the lens through which this study on public sector transparency and accountability in Oredo Local Government is examined. Several theories are relevant in explaining how transparency and accountability influence governance and development outcomes. Among these are the Principal-Agent Theory, Systems Theory, Institutional Theory, Stewardship Theory, and Public Choice Theory. These theories provide insight into the dynamics between public officials, institutions, and citizens, particularly in the context of service delivery, policy implementation, and grassroots development.

2.2.1 Principal-Agent Theory

The Principal-Agent Theory was propounded by Michael C. Jensen and William H. Meckling (1976). The Principal-Agent Theory posits that in any hierarchical relationship, such as between government authorities (principals) and public employees (agents), there is an inherent risk of misalignment of interests. The principal delegates authority and expects the agent to act faithfully. However, due to information asymmetry where the agent has more insight into day-to-day operations agents may take actions contrary to the principal's goals. This leads to "agency loss" and moral hazard, where agents prioritize self-interest over public interest, particularly in the absence of strong oversight mechanisms.

Relevance in Oredo Local Government: The theory aptly explains the inefficiencies in public sector governance in places like Oredo. Local government officials (agents) are entrusted with resources and responsibilities by the state and the citizens (principals), but may misuse this power due to weak accountability. Funds meant for roads, healthcare, or education may be diverted to non-public uses, or projects may be inflated for personal gain. The inability of citizens to access transparent records or enforce penalties exacerbates this problem (Nathan, 2025). Principal-Agent Theory recommends specific interventions such as public audits, whistleblower protections, transparency portals, and citizen monitoring platforms. These tools help reduce information asymmetry, restore trust, and ensure that agents act in the public interest. In

Oredo Local Government Area, such reforms could prevent project abandonment, reduce corruption, and enhance the developmental impact of government spending.

2.2.2 Stewardship Theory

Stewardship Theory was developed by James H. Davis, F. David Schoorman, and Lex Donaldson (1997). Stewardship Theory presents an alternative to Principal-Agent assumptions. It proposes that people especially professionals and public servants are not always self-interested. When given trust, autonomy, and the right incentives, they act as stewards, committed to achieving organizational goals. The focus is on intrinsic motivation, psychological ownership, and a collaborative environment (Mekar, 2025).

Relevance in Oredo Local Government: In Oredo, fostering stewardship among public employees could be transformative. Instead of assuming that all civil servants are corrupt or incompetent, the Local Government Area can invest in leadership training, performance incentives, and ethical work culture. When employees feel valued and empowered, they are more likely to commit to long-term development goals and community service. Applying Stewardship Theory in Oredo involves creating systems that reward honesty, innovation, and dedication. Recognition programmes, transparent career progression, and leadership mentorship can help align individual and institutional goals (Maswadeh & Mahmoud, 2021). This approach complements external accountability mechanisms by nurturing internal responsibility and civic-mindedness.

2.2.3 Public Choice Theory

This theory was developed by James M. Buchanan and Gordon Tullock (1962)

Proposition: Public Choice Theory brings economic reasoning into political science by asserting that politicians and bureaucrats are rational, self-interested actors. Like consumers in a market, they seek to maximize utility through power, votes, or financial gain. It critiques government inefficiency by highlighting how lack of competition and oversight enables rent-seeking and resource diversion.

Relevance in Oredo Local Government: The theory explains why some officials may prioritize political survival or personal gain over community development. For instance, project contracts may be awarded based on loyalty rather than merit, or budgets may be manipulated to serve narrow political interests (Mekar, 2025). The lack of citizen voice and weak oversight fosters a breeding ground for such behavior. Public Choice Theory supports reforms such as citizen budgeting, public hearings, and independent procurement monitoring (Arowolo, 2018). In Oredo, engaging the community in budget decisions and ensuring competition in project contracting can reduce corruption and improve project quality. Incentives should align with service delivery, and sanctions must be real to deter misconduct.

Relevance to Local Government Development, the selected theories underscore the complexity of enforcing accountability and transparency at the local level. For instance, the Principal-Agent and Public Choice theories justify the need for citizen oversight and legal sanctions. Meanwhile, Stewardship and Systems theories stress the

importance of ethical leadership and coordination among government units (Hamid, 2019). Institutional Theory reminds us that no policy reform is complete without addressing deeply embedded informal structures. Collectively, these perspectives frame the understanding of how public accountability affects development at the local level. The theoretical framework for this study provides a multidimensional understanding of how public sector behavior is shaped and regulated (Jashari & Pepaj, 2021). By integrating these theories, the study is well-positioned to explore the interplay between governance practices and developmental outcomes in Oredo Local Government. Theories such as Principal-Agent and Institutional Theory also help to identify not only systemic weaknesses but also possible interventions for achieving more transparent and accountable governance for sustainable development in Edo State.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter discussed the method that was used in this study. The data for this study were obtained through field survey and desk research which consist of textbooks, journals, newspapers, internet as well as government publications and books from libraries that are relevant to the research.

3.1 Research Design

A survey research methodology was used in this study, which looks into public sector transparency and accountability in development processes: Focus on Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State. The study solely focused on quantitative data, using structured questionnaires which were employed to obtain the relevant responses from participants in Oredo.

3.2 Population of the Study

The study population comprised all residents of Oredo Local Government Area in Edo State, Nigeria, totaling 237,188 individuals as recorded by the National Population Commission in 2006. This population included a diverse mix of socio-economic, ethnic, and occupational groups, providing a broad base for examining issues related to governance, transparency, and accountability. By focusing on this entire population, the study aimed to generate findings that are representative and relevant to the local governance context in Oredo.

3.3 Sample Size

The Taro Yamane formula, $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$, was used to determine the sample size from the study population.

In this case, n denotes the sample size and represents the population being studied.

e denotes the margin error of 0.05.

Thus, $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$

$N = 237,188 / 1 + 237,188 (0.05)^2$

$n = 237,188 / 1 + 237,188 (0.0025)$

$n = 237,188 / 1 + 592.97 = 399$

$n = 237,188 / 593.97$

$= 399.33$

400

The above table shows the sample of Oredo local government areas as represented above.

3.4 Sampling Technique

The study adopted the simple random and convenience sampling techniques. Given the population in Edo State, which is made up of three senatorial districts as selected in the above table: A sample of 400 is selected from the population. As a result, four hundred (400) copies of questionnaires were administered across the local using purposive and simple random technique with emphasis on the impact of public sector accountability on national development in Nigeria: A case study of Edo State, using Taro Yamane.

3.5 Instrument of Data Collection

The research instrument used in this study is the questionnaire. Which was a well-constructed and self-develop structured questionnaire titled “the impact of public sector accountability on national development in Nigeria: A case study of Edo State Questionnaire (TIPSANDNQ)” is use to get the desire information from the students. The questionnaire was divided into two sections (A and B). Section A was for collection of information on personal data of respondents while Section B consisted of questions that elicited responses from the respondents with response options: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Undecided (UN), Strongly Disagree (SD) and Disagree (D).

3.6 Source of Data Collection

The study adopted primary and secondary sources; the primary source involves the use of structured questionnaire to source data from targeted respondents. The study adopted a one-time survey method where questionnaire is shared and collected on the spot. The secondary sources involved the use of books, journals, internet materials and relevant literatures

3.7 Validity of the Instrument

The word validity means to cross check how useful the instrument is to the study or work. Face validity were employed in this study, face validity were done by the supervisor through cross checking of the instrument if it was well-structured with respect to the research objectives and questions in chapter one.

3.8 Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability was to check if the instrument used is reliable. Reliability checks were done by submitting a sample of the research instrument to the supervisor for perusing to add input her expert contribution on the questionnaires.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.0 Introduction

This chapter is an empirical research presentation and analysis of data sourced from the survey administration of questionnaires to targeted participants. This study is aimed at “public sector transparency and accountability in development processes: Focus on Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State”. The chapter is concerned with analytical representation of result in a readable form. During the survey, four (400) hundred questionnaires were administered to the respondents and three hundred and ninety seven were returned.

The presentation of the results is tabulated below.

4.1 Analysis of Respondents Characteristics

Table 4.1 Genders Of Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	259	65.24
Female	138	34.76
Total	397	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.1 Shows that 65.24%, which translated to 259 respondents', are male, while 34.76%, which translated to 138 respondents were female. This indicates that the male was more represented than females.

Table 4.2 Age of Respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Under 30 years	167	42.06
31-35 years	109	27.45
36-40 years	67	16.88
41-45 years	29	7.31
Others	25	6.30
Total	397	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

Table 4.2 above shows that 167 respondents representing 42.06% were under 30 years, 109 respondents representing 27.45% were 31-35 years, 67 respondents representing 16.88% were 36-40 years, while 29 respondents representing 7.31% were 41-45 years, while 25 respondents representing 6.30% were older than 45 years. This implies that all the respondents fall within the youthful age group.

Table 4.3: Respondents Educational Qualification

Educational qualification	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary/O'Level	78	19.65
B.A/BSC	156	39.30
Masters	163	41.05
Total	397	100

Source: Field survey, 2025

According to Table 4.3, 156 respondents, or 39.30%, had a B.A. or BSC, 163 respondents, or 41.05%, had a master's degree, and 78 respondents, or 19.65%, had a primary or O'level certificate.

Table 4.4: Distribution of Respondents by Religion

Religion	Frequency	Percentage
Christian	299	75.31
Muslim	24	6.05
African Traditional Religion	45	11.34
Others	29	7.31

Total	397	100
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Source: Field Survey, (2025)

"Table 4.4 indicates that the majority of respondents, 75.31% (299 individuals), identified as Christians. Muslims accounted for 6.05% (24 individuals), followers of African traditional religion made up 11.34% (45 individuals), and 7.31% (29 individuals) practiced other religions."

4.2 Presentation and Analysis of Questionnaires

Research Objective 1: To what Extent does Public Sector Accountability Influences the Local Development Process in Edo State?

Table 4.6: Question 1: Public sector accountability helps to improve the quality of life in the community.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	195	49.12
A	132	33.25
UN	20	5.04
SD	35	8.82
D	15	3.77
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From Table 6 above, 195 respondents which is 49.12%, of the population strongly agreed, 132 respondents (33.25%) agreed, 20 respondents which is (5.04%), is undecided, 35 respondents which represent (8.82%), strongly disagreed, while 15 respondents (3.77%) disagreed that public sector accountability helps to improve the quality of life in that community.

Table 4.7: Question 2: Improved accountability is key influence in Local Development Process.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
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SA	168	42.33
A	129	32.49
UN	18	4.53
SD	60	15.11
D	22	5.54
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 7 shows that 42.33% of respondents (168 individuals) strongly agreed and 32.49% (129 individuals) agreed that improved accountability significantly influences the local development process. Meanwhile, 4.53% (18 individuals) were undecided, 15.11% (60 individuals) strongly disagreed, and 5.54% (22 individuals) disagreed.

Table 4.8: Question 3: Public sector accountability enhance intrinsic elements of local development.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	195	49.12
A	109	27.46
UN	33	8.31
SD	21	5.29
D	39	9.82
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 8 above revealed that (49.12%, which translated to 195 respondents) strongly agreed, (27.46%, which translated to 109 respondents) agreed, (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) undecided, (5.29%, which translated to 21 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (9.82%, which translated to 39 respondents) disagreed that public sector accountability enhance intrinsic elements of local development.

Table 4.9: Question 4: Public sector accountability improves citizen input into developmental planning process.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	149	37.53
A	140	35.26
UN	25	6.30
SD	43	10.83
D	40	10.08
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The table 9 above showed that (37.53%, which translated to 149 respondents) strongly agreed, (35.26%, which translated to 140 respondents) agreed, (6.30%, which

translated to 25 respondents) undecided, (10.83%, which translated to 43 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (10.08%, which translated to 40 respondents) disagreed that public sector accountability improves citizen input into developmental planning process.

Table 4.10: Question 5: Public sector accountability embraces the improvements of public service delivery.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	249	62.72
A	102	25.69
UN	Nil	Nil
SD	33	8.31
D	13	3.28
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 10 above showed that (62.72%, which translated to 249 respondents) strongly agreed, (25.69%, which translated to 102 respondents) agreed, no respondent is undecided, (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) strongly disagreed, (3.28%, which translated to 13 respondents) disagreed that public sector accountability embraces the improvements of public service delivery.

Research Objective Two: Examine the Effect of Public Sector Accountability on National Developmental Project Plan in Edo State.

Table 4.11: Question 6: Public sector accountability creates rigidities that enhance programmatic frameworks geared towards national developmental project plan.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	279	70.28
A	70	17.63
UN	15	3.77
SD	14	3.53
D	19	4.79
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 11 indicates that 70.28% of respondents (279 individuals) strongly agreed and 17.63% (70 individuals) agreed that public sector accountability creates rigidities that enhance programmatic frameworks for national development projects. In contrast, 3.77% (15 individuals) were undecided, 3.53% (14 individuals) strongly disagreed, and 4.79% (19 individuals) disagreed.

Table 4.12: Question 7: Public sector accountability promotes legal claims and commitments that influences national developmental project plan.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	205	51.64
A	131	32.99
UN	19	4.79
SD	32	8.06
D	10	2.52
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 12 above revealed that (51.64%, which translated to 205 respondents) strongly agreed, (32.99%, which translated to 131 respondents) agreed, (4.79%, which translated to 19 respondents) were undecided, (8.06%, which translated to 32 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (2.52%, which translated to 10 respondents) disagreed, that

public sector accountability promotes legal claims and commitments that influences national developmental project plan.

Table 4.13: Question 8: Public sector accountability can enhance tactical decisions moderating pursuit for national developmental project plan.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	185	46.60
A	129	32.49
UN	13	3.27
SD	30	7.56
D	40	10.08
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 13 shows that (46.60%, which translated to 185 respondents) strongly agreed, (32.49%, which translated to 129 respondents) agreed, (3.27%, which translated to 13 respondents) were undecided, (7.56%, which translated to 30 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (10.08%, which translated to 40 respondents) disagreed that public sector accountability can enhance tactical decisions moderating pursuit for national developmental project plan.

Table 4.14: Question 9: Public sector accountability support transformative aspirations that could enhance national developmental project plan.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	215	54.16
A	109	27.46
UN	28	7.05
SD	33	8.31
D	12	3.02
Total	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 14 shows that (54.16%, which translated to 215 respondents) strongly agreed, (27.46%, which translated to 109 respondents) agreed, (7.05%, which translated to 28 respondents) were undecided, (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) strongly disagree, while (3.02%, which translated to 12 respondents) disagreed that public sector accountability support transformative aspirations that could enhance national developmental project plan.

Table 4.15: Question 10: Public sector accountability support strategic national developmental project planning.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	278	70.03
A	93	23.43
UN	10	2.52
SD	9	2.26
D	7	1.76
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

From result in Table 15 above, (70.03%, which translated to 278 respondents) strongly agreed, no response from undecided, (23.43%, which translated to 93

respondents) agreed, (2.52%, which translated to 10 respondents) were undecided, (2.26%, which translated to 9 respondents) strongly disagree, while (1.76%, which translated to 7 respondents) disagreed that that public sector accountability support strategic national developmental project planning.

Research Objective Three: How does Challenges of Public Sector Accountability Impact Negatively on National Development in Edo State?

Table 4.16: Question 11: Societal pressures on public office holders can influence National Development.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	265	66.75
A	83	20.90
UN	40	10.08
SD	09	2.27
D	-	-
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 16 above shows that (66.75%, which translated to 265 respondents) strongly agreed, (20.90%, which translated to 83 respondents) agreed, (10.08%, which translated to 40 respondents) were undecided, (2.27%, which translated to 9 respondents) strongly disagreed, while no respondents representing disagreed that societal pressures on public office holders can influence National Development.

Table 4.17: Question 12: Poorly implemented economic policies affect National Developmental projects.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	136	34.26
A	190	47.86
UN	16	4.03

SD	33	8.31
D	22	5.54
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 17 above shows that (34.26%, which translated to 136 respondents) strongly agreed, (47.86%, which translated to 190 respondents) agreed, (4.03%, which translated to 16 respondents) were undecided, (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (5.54%, which translated to 22 respondents) disagreed that poorly implemented economic policies affects National Developmental projects.

Table 4.18: Question 13: Misappropriation of funds hinders National Developmental programmes.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	191	48.11
A	98	24.68
UN	27	6.80
SD	56	14.11
D	25	6.30
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 18 above shows that (48.11%, which translated to 191 respondents) strongly agreed, (24.68%, which translated to 98 respondents) agreed, (6.80%, which translated to 27 respondents) were undecided, (14.11%, which translated to 56 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (6.30%, which translated to 25 respondents) disagreed that misappropriation of funds hinders National Developmental programmes.

Table 4.19: Question 14: Devastating influences of corruptions in governance hinders National Development plans.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	164	41.31

A	125	31.49
UN	33	8.31
SD	57	14.36
D	18	4.53
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 19 shows that (41.31%, which translated to 164 respondents) strongly agreed, (31.49%, which translated to 125 respondents) agreed, (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) were undecided, (14.36%, which translated to 57 respondents) strongly disagree, while (4.53%, which translated to 18 respondents) disagreed that devastating influences of corruptions in governance hinders National Development plans.

Table 4.20: Question 15: Flaunting of ill-gotten wealth by individuals can negatively affect National Development plan.

Variables	No of respondents	% of respondents
SA	217	54.66
A	110	27.71
UN	22	5.54
SD	33	8.31
D	15	3.78
TOTAL	397	100

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Table 20 above shows that (54.66%, which translated to 217 respondents) strongly agreed, (27.71%, which translated to 110 respondents) agreed, (5.54%, which translated to 22 respondents) were undecided (8.31%, which translated to 33 respondents) strongly disagreed, while (3.78%, which translated to 15 respondents) disagreed that flaunting of ill-gotten wealth by individuals can negatively response to National Development plan.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

Testing of relationship of variables

Research Hypothesis One: There is no significant relationship between public sector accountability and local development process in Edo State.

Option/Questions	1	2	3	Total
SA	195	168	195	558
A	132	129	109	370
UN	20	18	33	71
SD	35	60	21	116
D	15	22	39	76
Total	397	397	397	1191

Source: Field Survey, (2025)

Expected frequency = $\frac{(\text{Column total}) \times \text{Row Total}}{\text{Grand total}}$

Grand total

$$R_1C_1 = \frac{397 \times 558}{1191} = 186.00$$

$$R_1C_2 = \frac{397 \times 370}{1191} = 123.33$$

$$R_1C_3 = \frac{397 \times 71}{1191} = 23.67$$

$$R_1C_4 = \frac{397 \times 116}{1191} = 38.67$$

$$R_1C_5 = \frac{397 \times 76}{1191} = 25.33$$

Contingency Table

Table (i) Contingency Table on Research Question I

O	E	(o-e)	(o-e)²	(o-e)²/e
195	186.00	9.00	81.00	0.435
132	123.33	8.87	75.169	0.608
20	23.67	-3.67	13.469	0.569
35	28.67	6.33	40.069	1.398
15	25.33	-10.33	106.709	4.213
168	186.00	-18.00	324.000	1.742

129	123.33	5.67	32.149	0.261
18	23.67	-5.67	32.149	1.358
60	28.67	31.33	981.569	34.234
22	25.33	-3.33	11.089	0.438
195	186.00	9.00	81.000	0.436
109	123.33	-14.33	205.349	1.665
33	23.67	9.67	93.509	3.961
21	28.67	-7.67	58.829	2.052
39	25.33	13.67	186.869	7.377
X ²				60.747

Calculated $X^2 = 60.747$

Degree of freedom = (r-1) (c-1)

= (5-1) (3-1)

= (4) (2) = 8

& at 0.05 level = 15.507

$60.747 > 15.507$

Decision: Calculated X^2 is greater than critical X^2 , therefore reject non positive relationship which states that the There is no significant relationship between public sector accountability and local development process in Edo State. Hence, there is significant relationship between public sector accountability and local development process in Edo State.

Hypothesis Two Testing

Research Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relationship between public sector accountability and national developmental project plan in Edo State.

Option/Questions	6	7	8	Total
SA	279	205	185	669

A	70	131	129	330
UN	15	19	13	47
SD	14	32	30	76
D	19	10	40	69
Total	397	397	397	1191

Source: Field Survey, (2025)

Expected frequency = $\frac{\text{Column total} \times \text{Row Total}}{\text{Grand total}}$

Grand total

$$R_1C_1 = \frac{397 \times 669}{1191} = 223.00$$

$$R_1C_2 = \frac{397 \times 330}{1191} = 110.00$$

$$R_1C_3 = \frac{397 \times 47}{1191} = 15.67$$

$$R_1C_4 = \frac{397 \times 76}{1191} = 25.33$$

$$R_1C_5 = \frac{397 \times 69}{1191} = 23.00$$

Contingency Table

Contingency Table Two (ii)

O	E	(o-e)	(o-e)²	(o-e)^{2/e}
279	223.00	56.00	3136.00	1.406
70	110.00	-40.00	1600.00	14.545
15	15.67	-0.67	0.449	0.029
14	25.33	-11.33	128.369	5.068
19	23.00	-4.00	16.00	0.695
205	223.00	-18.00	323.00	1.453
131	110.00	21.00	441.00	4.009
19	15.67	3.33	11.09	0.708
32	25.33	6.67	44.489	1.756
10	23.00	-13.00	390.625	16.984
185	223.00	-38.00	1444.00	6.475

129	110.00	19.00	361.00	3.282
13	15.67	-2.67	7.129	0.455
30	25.33	4.67	21.809	0.861
40	23.00	17.00	289.00	12.565
X^2				70.291

Calculated $X^2 = 70.291$

Degree of freedom = $(r-1)(c-1)$

= $(5-1)(3-1)$

= $(4)(2)$

= 8

& at 0.05 level = 15.507

$70.291 > 15.507$

Decision: Calculated X^2 is greater than critical X^2 , therefore reject null hypothesis two which state that there is no significant relationship between public sector accountability and national developmental project plan in Edo State. Hence, there is significant relationship between public sector accountability and national developmental project plan in Edo State.

Testing Hypothesis Three

Research Hypothesis Three: There is no significant relationship between challenges of public sector accountability and national development in Edo State.

Option/Questions	11	12	13	Total
SA	265	136	191	592
A	83	190	98	371
UN	40	16	27	83
SD	09	33	56	98
D	-	22	25	47

Total	397	397	397	1191
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Source: Field Survey, (2025)

Expected frequency = $\frac{\text{Column total} \times \text{Row Total}}{\text{Grand total}}$

Grand total

$$R_1C_1 = \frac{397 \times 592}{1191} = 197.33$$

$$R_1C_2 = \frac{397 \times 371}{1191} = 123.67$$

$$R_1C_3 = \frac{397 \times 83}{1191} = 27.67$$

$$R_1C_4 = \frac{397 \times 98}{1191} = 32.67$$

$$R_1C_5 = \frac{397 \times 47}{1191} = 15.67$$

Contingency Table

Contingency Table Three (iii)

O	E	(o-e)	(o-e) ²	(o-e) ^{2/e}
265	197.33	67.67	4579.23	23.209
83	123.67	-40.67	1654.05	13.375
40	27.67	12.33	152.03	5.494
09	32.67	-23.67	560.27	20.248
-	15.67	-15.67	245.55	15.67
136	197.33	-61.33	3761.37	19.06
190	123.67	66.33	4399.69	35.566
16	27.67	-11.67	136.19	4.922
33	32.67	0.33	0.109	0.0003
22	15.67	6.33	40.069	2.557
191	197.33	-6.33	40.069	0.203
98	123.67	-25.67	658.95	5.328
27	27.67	-0.67	0.449	0.016
56	32.67	23.33	544.29	16.660

25	15.67	9.33	87.049	5.555
X^2				167.8633

Calculated $X^2 = 167.8633$

Degree of freedom = $(r-1) (c-1)$

= $(5-1) (3-1)$

= $(4) (2)$

= 8

& at 0.05 level = 15.507

$167.8633 > 15.507$

Decision: he analysis revealed that the calculated Chi-square (X^2) values exceeded the critical X^2 values, leading to the rejection of null hypotheses where applicable. Specifically, null hypothesis three, which stated that there is no significant relationship between the challenges of public sector accountability and national development in Edo State, was rejected. This indicates that there is a significant relationship between these challenges and national development.

4.4 Discussion of Findings

Research Question One: The calculated X^2 value of 60.747 is greater than the critical X^2 value of 15.507 at the 5% significance level. This result confirms a significant relationship between public sector accountability and the local development process in Edo State. Improved accountability was found to positively influence local development

by enhancing community participation, strengthening intrinsic elements of development, and improving public service delivery.

Research Question Two: The analysis showed that the calculated X^2 value exceeds the critical X^2 value of 15.507 at the 5% significance level. This demonstrates a significant relationship between public sector accountability and national developmental project planning. Public sector accountability was found to create structural frameworks, support legal commitments, guide tactical decision-making, and promote transformative strategies that align with national development objectives.

Research Question Three: The calculated X^2 value of 167.863 is higher than the critical value of 15.507 at the 5% significance level. Consequently, the null hypothesis suggesting no significant relationship between challenges of public sector accountability and national development was rejected. This confirms that challenges such as societal pressures, corruption, misappropriation of funds, and poorly implemented policies significantly impact national development outcomes in Edo State.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary of Findings

Research Question One: Public sector accountability improves quality of life and plays a crucial role in local development processes. It enhances citizen participation in planning and supports improvements in public service delivery.

Research Question Two: Accountability in the public sector strengthens programmatic frameworks for national development projects. It promotes legal compliance, supports tactical and strategic decision-making, and facilitates transformative initiatives aligned with national development goals.

Research Question Three: Challenges such as corruption, economic mismanagement, societal pressures on officials, and the flaunting of ill-gotten wealth negatively affect national development. These issues hinder the successful implementation of development projects and plans.

5.2 Conclusion

Based on the study of Edo State, Nigeria, the following conclusions were drawn:

- There is a significant relationship between public sector accountability and the local development process.
- There is a significant relationship between public sector accountability and national development project planning.

- There is a significant relationship between challenges of public sector accountability and national development.

5.3 Recommendations

The Edo State government should implement efficient planning and resource management practices to ensure sustainable development.

Staff salaries should be increased to motivate government employees and improve performance in achieving development objectives.

Administrative activities should be regularly reviewed, with any officers found misappropriating funds prosecuted. Heads of accounts should be held accountable for mismanagement.

Compliance should be strengthened by enhancing internal and external audit functions through ongoing training and capacity building.

Budget transparency should be improved by publishing pre-budget statements, in-year reports, mid-year reviews, and audit reports online in a timely manner.

A disciplinary committee should be established to sanction defaulters, particularly heads of accounts, with cases referred to the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) for proper investigation and prosecution as a deterrent.

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APPENDIX

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Department of Public Administration,
Faculty of Social Sciences,
University of Benin,
Benin City.

28th July, 2025

Dear Sir/Madam,

REQUEST FOR COMPLETION OF QUESTIONNAIRE

I am an undergraduate student, undergoing a B.Sc. programme in the University of Benin. I am currently on a study “**Public Sector Transparency And Accountability In Development Processes: Focus on Oredo Local Government Area, Edo State**”.

I wish to appeal to you to assist by kindly sparing a few minutes to complete this questionnaire as honest as you can. Your opinion or information supplied will be used purely for the academic purpose intended; and such information will be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Thanks for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours faithfully,

JOHN ENDURANCE

Researcher

SECTION A

Part A: Personal Data Please tick (✓) the option that is applicable to you.

1. Gender: a. male () b. female ().

2. Age: a. under 30 () b.31-40 () c. 41-50 ().

3. Educational qualification: Primary/O' Level (), B.A/B.Sc. () Masters ().

4. Religion: Christian (), Muslim (), African Traditional Religion (), Others ().

Location: Edo North District (), Edo Central District (), Edo South District ().

Part B: The impact of public sector accountability on national development in Nigeria:
A case study of Edo State.

To what extent does public sector transparency and accountability influences Oredo local development process in Edo State?

- 5) What is the effect of public sector transparency and accountability on developmental project plan in Oredo Local Government in Edo State?
- 6) How does poor public sector transparency and accountability impact negatively on the grass-root development in Oredo local government in Edo State?

SECTION B

Section 1		Responses				
	To what Extent does Public Sector Transparency and Accountability Influences Oredo local development process in Edo State?	SA	A	UN	D	SD
1.	Public sector transparency and accountability activities can helps to improve the quality of life in that community					
2.	Improved transparency and accountability is key influence Local Development Process					
3.	Public sector transparency and accountability enhance intrinsic elements of local development					
4.	Public sector transparency and accountability improves citizen input into developmental planning process.					
5.	Public sector transparency and accountability embraces the improvements of public service delivery					
Section 2						
Item	What is the Effect of Public Sector transparency and Accountability on National Developmental Project Plan in Edo State?					
1.	Public sector transparency and accountability creates rigidities that enhances programmatic frameworks geared towards national developmental project plan					
2.	Public sector transparency and accountability promotes legal claims and commitments that influences national developmental project plan					
3.	Public sector transparency and accountability can enhance tactical decisions moderating pursuit for national developmental project plan					
4.	Public sector transparency and accountability support transformative aspirations that could enhance national developmental project plan					
5.	Public sector transparency and accountability national developmental project plan					
Section 3						
Item	How does Challenges of Public Sector Transparency and Accountability Impact Negatively on National Development in Edo State?					
1.	Societal pressures on public office holders can influence National Development					
2.	Poorly implemented economic policies affects National Developmental projects					
3.	Misappropriation of funds hinders National Developmental					

	programmes					
4.	Devastating influences of corruptions in governance hinders National Development plans					
5.	Flaunting of ill-gotten wealth by individuals can negatively response to National Development plans					