Identification, Evaluation, and Prioritization of Transparency Policy Implementation Indicators in Iranian Public Organizations (Case Study: Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade)

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Abstract

This study aimed to identify, evaluate, and prioritize the indicators for assessing the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations, focusing on the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade. The research employed a sequential mixed-methods design with an exploratory approach. Qualitatively, it included a Delphi method, and quantitatively, it used a descriptive method with survey/correlation phases. The qualitative population comprised theoretical foundations and related literature from domestic and international databases, while the Delphi phase involved 15 experts selected via purposive non-random sampling. In the quantitative phase, the statistical population consisted of all administrative staff of the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, from which 350 respondents were selected using stratified random sampling. Data collection methods included literature review and worksheets for the Delphi phase in the qualitative section, and a researcher-developed 51-item questionnaire (for internal validity) and a 34-item questionnaire (to assess model validity) in the quantitative section. Validity and reliability were examined across all phases, with results confirming the tools' adequacy. Data analysis methods comprised systematic analysis in the qualitative section, Kendall's coefficient of concordance in the Delphi phase, and descriptive and inferential statistics (confirmatory factor analysis and one-sample t-test) in the quantitative phase, conducted using Maxqda-V2018, SPSS-V23, and SmartPLS-V3 software. The results revealed that the evaluation of transparency policy implementation in the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade includes dimensions of content evaluation with components of formative factors (8 indicators) and procedural factors (11 indicators); implementation evaluation with components of implementers (6 indicators), regulations and policies (8 indicators), and support (5 indicators); and outcome evaluation with components of social outcomes (7 indicators) and organizational outcomes (6 indicators). Finally, a research model was designed based on these dimensions, components, and indicators, which was validated for internal and external reliability, demonstrating appropriate model validity. The findings underscore the importance and necessity of addressing various dimensions of transparency in policy implementation within Iranian public organizations. By identifying and prioritizing key indicators, this research contributes to improving decision-making processes and enhancing accountability in these organizations. Moreover, the results emphasize that focusing on formative factors, processes, and social and organizational outcomes can lead to the development of a comprehensive and efficient model for evaluating transparency. This model not only aids in enhancing the internal performance of the ministry but also serves as a framework for other public organizations to strengthen transparency and accountability within the administrative system of the country.

Keywords: *Transparency policy, evaluation indicators, Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade, prioritization of indicators, public management.*

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1. Introduction

Transparency and open data are concepts that have recently gained increasing attention in the literature on public administration. These concepts, particularly in the context of governance and public management, are recognized as key tools for enhancing the efficiency and accountability of governments. In recent years, the growing need for transparency in governmental processes and the improvement of communication between governments and citizens have made these concepts a frequent subject of discussion in academic and governance forums in Iran [1]. Transparency refers to the disclosure and visibility of governmental activities, which can enhance public trust and citizen participation. This concept holds particular importance in democratic societies, as it allows citizens to stay informed about government activities and engage in decision-making processes [2, 3].

Open data refers to the free provision and distribution of government information to the public in an analyzable and usable format. Such data may include financial information, statistical data, and performance reports, all made readily accessible to the public [3]. The objective of open data is to promote transparency and increase access to information, enabling citizens to easily obtain the data they need to evaluate government performance and participate in decision-making processes. Open data also serves as a tool for enhancing accountability and reducing corruption in governments [4, 5].

Public policymaking is regarded as a lever for implementing government governance in democratic societies. This process involves the formulation, implementation, and evaluation of public policies and programs designed to serve the interests of citizens. The legitimacy of this lever lies in its support for key stakeholders—citizens—and the preservation of their interests. In other words, if public policies fail to pursue and safeguard citizens' interests, they essentially deviate from their intended framework [6]. Consequently, the relationship between policies and citizen interests has been a focal point for researchers over the past half-century, and various methods have been proposed to establish this connection. Research indicates that in the context of transparency and open data, active citizen participation can be facilitated throughout all stages of the policymaking cycle. Such participation not only enhances the efficiency of governmental processes but also increases opportunities for public consultation and effective evaluation.

Moreover, transparency and open data can significantly contribute to combating corruption. For instance, when government financial information is publicly accessible, monitoring of expenditures and financial decisions is improved, reducing corruption and financial misconduct [7]. In this regard, transparency and open data are considered essential prerequisites for good and effective governance. By increasing transparency, public trust in government improves, and citizens feel more involved in decision-making and policy formulation processes. This can lead to enhanced quality of life and greater public satisfaction [8]. Additionally, transparency enables governments to respond more effectively to the needs and demands of citizens, thereby increasing the efficiency and effectiveness of policies. Ultimately, transparency and open data can function as tools for strengthening democracy and fostering civic participation. By providing the necessary information and data, citizens can engage in decision-making processes and easily express their opinions and suggestions. This can create a more democratic and participatory environment, improving the quality of governance and public policymaking [8, 9].

The emergence of the open government concept and the focus on open innovation as a new approach in policymaking aim to make the policymaking space more inclusive. In this model, various stakeholders, including citizens, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector, are involved in different stages of the public policymaking cycle. This participation can enhance governmental transparency and accountability while improving the quality of decision-making. Furthermore, this approach fosters a sense of ownership among citizens, encouraging them to participate more actively in governance processes. However, in practice, stakeholder influence in networked models is often manifested through institutions. These institutions act as intermediaries connecting governments and societies, conveying diverse views and needs to policymakers. This process can enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of policies while narrowing the gap between governments and citizens. Particularly in democratic societies, such participation can strengthen public trust and increase citizens' satisfaction with government performance [6, 10-12].

Cultural and organizational challenges can also hinder the effective implementation of transparency policies. In some cases, resistance to change and reluctance to provide transparent information can undermine efforts to achieve transparency. Additionally, a lack of necessary training for

employees and stakeholders on the importance of transparency and how to implement it can impair the achievement of transparency policy objectives. Addressing these issues and challenges is not only essential for improving the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations but also offers a model for other public institutions to enhance transparency and accountability in the country's governance system [10].

Theories related to transparency and public policymaking largely emphasize transparency as a cornerstone of good governance. However, these theories may encounter challenges in practice. For instance, traditional theories may overlook cultural and social factors influencing transparency [13]. One well-known theory in this context is the "good governance" theory, which posits that transparency and accountability improve governance quality and increase public trust [14]. However, this theory may face practical challenges, such as a lack of attention to the specific cultural and social conditions of each country. In societies where political and social culture emphasizes opacity and public distrust, merely relying on transparency as a solution may not yield desirable outcomes.

Moreover, transparency theories often view the relationship between transparency and positive governance outcomes as linear. In reality, this relationship may be nonlinear and complex. For example, in some cases, increased transparency can raise public expectations, leading to dissatisfaction if citizens feel their expectations are unmet [15]. This underscores the need for a more comprehensive and multidimensional approach to analyzing the impacts of transparency on governance. Ultimately, existing transparency theories may fail to consider operational and practical aspects of transparency. Many of these theories focus primarily on general principles and ideas, neglecting real-world challenges institutions face in implementing transparency. This oversight can hinder the realization of transparency and accountability goals, as institutions without a deep understanding of operational challenges cannot develop effective strategies for improving transparency and accountability [16].

In recent years, rising public expectations for governmental transparency and accountability have highlighted the urgency of addressing this issue [17]. Considering the economic and social challenges facing the country, the researcher believes that transparency can serve as an effective tool for enhancing public trust and improving governance quality. Issues related to transparency and its evaluation can have profound impacts on various cultural,

social, economic, and psychological aspects of society. For instance, a lack of transparency can reduce public trust and increase distrust in governmental institutions, thereby diminishing social participation [18]. Economically, a lack of transparency can lead to increased corruption and financial misconduct, undermining economic growth and sustainable development. By precisely identifying indicators, the ministry can identify its strengths and weaknesses and make more informed decisions [19].

These efforts not only enhance transparency and accountability within the ministry but also increase public trust and encourage greater citizen participation in decision-making processes. Moreover, research in this field can help identify weaknesses and strengths in implementing transparency policies, enabling institutions to make better-informed decisions based on credible data and detailed analyses [20]. Addressing this issue can create a competitive and fair environment in industrial and mining markets, ultimately contributing to the country's economic and social improvement.

Overall, focusing on this issue can enhance transparency and accountability in public organizations, thereby improving governance quality and increasing public satisfaction. Socially, transparency can boost citizen participation in decision-making processes, fostering a sense of belonging and social responsibility. In the absence of transparency, citizens may feel unheard, reducing social participation and increasing dissatisfaction [21]. Economically, transparency can reduce corruption and financial misconduct, thus improving the country's economic conditions. In the absence of transparency in governmental processes, financial resources may be misallocated, weakening economic growth and sustainable development [22]. Addressing these challenges and issues in the field of transparency is urgently needed not only to improve the performance of public organizations but also to enhance governance quality and public trust at the national level.

This research distinguishes itself by specifically focusing on the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade and seeks to gain a better understanding of the challenges in this area by identifying and prioritizing relevant indicators. The study also examines the cultural, social, and economic impacts of transparency on the performance of public organizations, serving as a reliable resource for policymakers and managers in this field. The findings can guide policymakers in making better decisions regarding the implementation of transparency policies, thus improving public services and

increasing public satisfaction. Researchers can also use the findings as a basis for future studies, while citizens can leverage the results to participate more actively in decision-making and monitoring government performance.

The objective of this research is to identify, evaluate, and prioritize the indicators for assessing the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations. It aims to provide a comprehensive framework for evaluating transparency in these organizations and identifying the challenges and opportunities in this field.

2. Methodology

This study is applied in nature based on its objective. According to its data type, it is sequential mixed-method research. Based on its paradigm, it adopts a pragmatic or hybrid approach (interpretive and positivist). Regarding its nature (approach and design), the research initially follows an exploratory method and then transitions into descriptive-analytical research. Concerning reasoning (implementation logic), it is mixed-method research (inductive-deductive) as it employs both inductive reasoning (in the qualitative and Delphi sections) and deductive reasoning (in the quantitative, survey, and correlation sections).

The qualitative statistical population in the first phase consists of all scientific articles and resources from domestic and international databases as well as existing documents and regulations in this domain. During this phase, 20 articles were selected using the PRISMA guideline and purposive non-random sampling. The selection criteria for qualitative articles included their relevance to the research topic, recency, high scientific quality and credibility, appropriate methodology, and diversity of perspectives. In the second phase (Delphi technique), the statistical population comprised policymakers, managers, university professors, and researchers knowledgeable about transparency policymaking in public organizations. Following the guideline that suggests the minimum number of experts in a Delphi panel is typically between 10 and 18 (Linstone & Turoff, 2011), this research included 15 experts directly or indirectly involved with implementing and evaluating transparency policies in Iranian public organizations, selected through purposive non-random sampling. The criteria for selecting experts included holding a Ph.D., teaching experience in related disciplines, expertise in the field, participation in practical projects, relevant research experience, familiarity with policies and procedures, ability to provide analytical insights, breadth of viewpoints,

commitment to participation, and practical experience in decision-making and related fields.

The quantitative statistical population included all administrative staff in the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade. Considering the recommendation by leading theorists like Kline (2015), who suggests a minimum sample size of 200 as a general rule for structural equation modeling (SEM) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), this study selected 350 respondents using proportional stratified random sampling based on staff distribution across various departments (e.g., General Industries, Mines and Materials Processing, Trade and Services, Transportation Industries, Coordination and Business Environment, Machinery and Equipment Industries, Legal and Parliamentary). Questionnaires were distributed both online and in-person, with 15 incomplete questionnaires excluded, leaving data from 335 respondents for statistical analysis.

In the first qualitative phase, data collection involved reviewing literature and credible scientific resources. This process included a focused and precise search in scientific databases, articles, books, and dissertations relevant to the research topic. A content validity check confirmed that the reviewed content comprehensively covered the relevant concepts. Articles were rigorously selected and screened, with a search and selection flowchart (as per PRISMA protocol) applied to identify appropriate articles within the scope of the study. Screening involved specifying temporal (domestic and international), spatial (domestic and international databases), research type (synthesis, review, qualitative, and quantitative), and topical (keywords) limitations.

Internal validity results demonstrated that findings were not influenced by external factors and were appropriately interpreted. Validation methods included a 27-item PRISMA checklist, independent analysis by the researcher and a statistician, Cohen's kappa coefficient, use of standard criteria, process reproducibility (methodological transparency), MAXQDA software for precise data tracking and coding, and feedback and code refinement by subject-matter experts to resolve discrepancies. Reliability was ensured in the qualitative phase through meticulous documentation of the research process, intra-researcher consistency, and inter-researcher consistency. The findings indicated reliability and validity in the qualitative phase.

In the second qualitative phase (Delphi technique), a Delphi worksheet was employed. Experts were asked to rate and provide feedback on indicators, suggest additional indicators they deemed important, and comment on the

provided list. To ensure the validity of the Delphi worksheet, questions were designed to be simple, clear, and relevant, using straightforward and comprehensible language. Content validity was assessed using the content validity ratio (CVR) formula, confirming comprehensive coverage of the intended concepts. Reliability was calculated through internal and temporal consistency, confirming the validity and reliability of the Delphi worksheet.

In the quantitative section, data were collected using researcher-developed questionnaires to assess both the internal validity (derived from qualitative indicators) and external validity of the model (based on the final model). Questionnaire development for internal model validity began with a literature review in domestic and international databases, following the PRISMA protocol as a standard approach. Identified articles were screened based on predefined criteria, resulting in 20 articles analyzed through thematic analysis to identify evaluation dimensions. These identified factors formed the basis for Delphi worksheet questions, which were localized through three rounds of expert consensus.

The final questionnaire consisted of 51 Likert-scale items ranging from "Very High" to "Very Low" to evaluate transparency policy implementation in Iranian public organizations, covering dimensions of content evaluation (19 indicators), implementation evaluation (19 indicators), and outcomes (13 indicators). Content validity was assessed using Lawshe's CVR and content validity index (CVI) with input from 10 experts, resulting in revisions to eliminate redundant questions and refine others before distribution. Construct validity was measured using convergent and discriminant validity with SmartPLS 3 software, and results are presented in the subsequent tables.

Reliability was calculated using Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and McDonald's omega, with all coefficients exceeding 0.7 for all questionnaire variables, indicating strong reliability for the measurement tool.

3. Findings

This section describes the demographic information of staff members and directors in terms of education level, age, gender, and teaching experience. Among the administrative staff, 49% were female, and 51% were male. In terms of age, 53% were between 30 and 40 years old, 27% were between 40 and 50, and 20% were over 50 years old. Regarding work experience, 17% had less than 10 years, 67% had between 10 and 20 years, and 16% had more than 20 years of service.

Using the insights gained from a literature review, this study identified, evaluated, and prioritized the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations. At this stage, a systematic review following the PRISMA framework and qualitative methods was conducted to identify indicators for evaluating the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations (

Table 1).

Table 1. Indicators for Evaluating the Implementation of Transparency Policies Derived from Qualitative Methods

Indicator	Source
Understanding cultural diversity	[12, 23-25]
Developing a proper understanding of the issue	[26]
Policy alignment and flexibility	[27]
Holistic and integrated perspective on issues	[26]
Comprehensive and sustainable system	[24]
Infrastructure standards	[28]
Resource allocation	[29]
Behavioral and personality traits of policymakers	[29]
Promoting administrative health and combating corruption	Transparency Law in Iran
Monitoring financial flows	Transparency Law in Iran
Policy ambiguity	[25]
Training personnel	[30]
Competency standards	[28]
Rationality	[17]
Reorganizing cooperation among actors	[31]
Power of implementers	[31]
Transparency in the performance of implementers	[32]
Pursuit of justice	[33]
Policymakers' willingness toward transparency	[11]
Self-efficacy	[26, 34]
Discretion of implementers	[1]
Budgetary policies	[35]
Monetary and banking regulations	[29]
Support and backing during implementation	[26]
Governmental laws and regulations	[36]
Influence of external actors	[35]
Citizen oversight of government activities	[32, 37]
Citizen participation	[11, 38]
Annual publication of public information, including performance and balance sheets	Transparency Law in Iran
Policy outcomes alignment with goals	[36]
Economic growth	[30]
Cost reduction	[39]
Organizational capacity-building	[34]
Sustainable development	[1]
Efficiency and productivity	[24, 33]
Accountability	[11, 33, 34]
Citizen access to information	[37, 40]
Improving citizen understanding of public policies	[40]

Finally, based on the identified indicators, the evaluation model for implementing transparency policies in the Ministry of Industry, Mine, and Trade is presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Prioritization of Dimensions, Components, and Indicators for Evaluating the Implementation of Transparency Policies in Iranian Public Organizations

Dimension	Component	Factor Loading	Indicator	Factor Loading	Priority
Content Evaluation	Formation Factors	0.754	Understanding cultural diversity	0.763	3
			Information technology	0.585	7
			Understanding objectives, processes, and transparency criteria	0.783	1
			Proper understanding of organizational issues	0.686	6
			Policy alignment and flexibility	0.712	5
			Holistic and integrated perspective on issues	0.734	4
			Existence of standard infrastructures	0.764	2
			Allocation of financial and non-financial resources	0.516	8
	Process Factors	0.976	Behavioral and personality traits of policymakers	0.525	-

			Reliability of employees	0.769	3
			Adherence to regulations	0.605	10
			Acceptance of negative feedback	0.778	2
			Transparency in information dissemination	0.729	4
			Training personnel	0.715	6
			Work conscience	0.663	8
			Strategic outlook	0.714	7
			Possession of competency standards	0.623	9
			Rationality	0.718	5
			Reviewing relationships	0.803	1
Implementation Evaluation	Implementers	0.906	Transparency in implementers' performance	0.668	6
			Pursuit of justice	0.823	3
			Responsibility	0.842	2
			Policymaker's inclination toward transparency	0.796	5
			Self-efficacy	0.816	4
			Easy access to information within the organization	0.884	1
	Laws and Policies	0.942	Budgetary policies	0.871	1
			Monetary and banking regulations	0.868	2
			Annual publication of public information, including performance and balance sheets	0.861	3
			Monitoring financial flows	0.785	4
			Promoting administrative health and combating corruption	0.648	6
			Support and backing in implementation	0.641	7
			Government laws and regulations	0.723	5
			Policies of external actors	0.691	5
	Support	0.890	Adequate budget allocation for transparency policy implementation	0.735	4
			Establishment of independent institutions for policy support	0.806	2
			Capacity building for active citizen participation in support of policy implementation	0.816	1
			Accessibility of information systems for the public	0.744	3
			Legal penalties for violating transparency laws	0.678	5
Outcomes	Organizational Outcomes	0.951	Alignment of results with policy objectives	0.813	3
			Positive organizational image	0.684	5
			Economic growth	0.834	1
			Cost reduction	0.829	2
			Organizational development with a sustainable perspective	0.761	4
			Efficiency and productivity	0.629	6
	Social Outcomes	0.890	Accountability	0.863	4
			Citizen access to information	0.848	5
			Creating positive attitudes toward the government	0.886	3
			Citizen satisfaction with government services	0.919	1
			Inclination toward social responsibility	0.908	2
			Enhancing social welfare	0.835	6
			Improving citizens' understanding of public policies	0.552	7

Based on the results, among the components of content evaluation, the highest priority was given to process factors. Among the components of implementation evaluation, the highest priority was assigned to laws and policies. Finally, among the components of outcomes for evaluating the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations, the highest priority was given to organizational outcomes.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study aimed to identify, evaluate, and prioritize the indicators for evaluating the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations. The findings revealed the following key dimensions and components:

This component includes understanding cultural diversity, information technology, awareness of transparency objectives, processes, and criteria, proper understanding of organizational issues, policy alignment and flexibility, a holistic and integrated perspective on issues, the presence of standard infrastructures, and the allocation of

financial and non-financial resources to organizations. Developing and implementing transparency policies requires attention to various infrastructural factors that play a critical role in this process. Leveraging modern technologies, such as online systems for disseminating information and data, facilitates enhanced accessibility and transparency. Information and Communication Technology (ICT) serves as a powerful tool for increasing transparency, improving access to information, and enhancing public communication. Through online platforms and information systems, governments can provide greater transparency regarding budgets, contracts, institutional performance, and other relevant data. ICT enables citizens and civil institutions to access government data more easily, fostering greater public awareness and oversight. Using IT to offer accurate and up-to-date tax-related information helps reduce financial corruption and increase financial transparency. Establishing management systems and software for monitoring the implementation of transparency policies, particularly in areas like tenders and contracts, is highly significant. Researchers [12, 23, 25] have emphasized cultural diversity. Qarabaghi et al. (2021) highlighted the importance of properly understanding issues [26], and Memarzadeh Tehrani et al. (2011) discussed policy alignment and flexibility [27].

This component includes policymakers' personality and behavioral traits, employee reliability, adherence to regulations, acceptance of negative feedback, transparency in information dissemination, personnel training, work conscience, strategic outlook, possession of competency standards, rationality, and reviewing relationships. The personality and behavioral traits of policymakers significantly influence the implementation of transparency policies. Policymakers should exhibit honesty and integrity to ensure that transparency policies are implemented ethically. They should publicly commit to transparency, reflecting this commitment in their actions and decisions to build public trust. Policymakers must listen to public feedback and constructive criticism to improve policies and their implementation. Effective communication with citizens, civil organizations, and other institutions is vital for the transparent exchange of information. Goodarzi et al. (2021) focused on policymakers' traits [29], Solihin et al. (2021) addressed personnel training [30], and Iswan et al. (2021) emphasized competency standards [28].

This component includes transparency in implementers' performance, pursuit of justice, responsibility, implementers' inclination toward transparency, self-efficacy, and easy access to information for all organizational members. Implementers play a crucial role in enforcing and promoting transparency principles, directly impacting the success of transparency policies. They are responsible for implementing related measures, programs, and guidelines effectively and timely. Implementers should facilitate transparent information dissemination regarding organizational performance and activities. They can promote a culture of transparency through public education and awareness. Implementers must also conduct proper monitoring and evaluation of transparency policy implementation to ensure its accuracy and effectiveness. One study explored the power of implementers [31]. Mortab and Yavari (2021) highlighted implementers' performance transparency [32], while Abbasabadi et al. (2022) discussed the pursuit of justice [33].

This component includes budgetary policies, monetary and banking regulations, annual publication of public information (e.g., performance and balance sheets), monitoring financial flows, promoting administrative health and combating corruption, support during implementation, governmental laws and regulations, and policies of external actors. Clear and comprehensible laws and policies are fundamental for fostering public trust and facilitating the implementation of transparency policies. Governmental laws and policies serve as key determinants for creating a transparent environment in public and administrative activities. These laws can mandate organizations to disclose critical information such as budgets, contracts, decisions, and policies to ensure accessibility for all citizens. They also provide robust mechanisms for monitoring and evaluating policy implementation, ensuring compliance and promoting financial transparency. Campos and Reich (2019) focused on budgetary policies [35], and Qarabaghi et al. (2021) on implementation support [26].

This component includes adequate budget allocation for transparency policy implementation, establishing independent institutions to support transparency policy execution, capacity building for active citizen participation, accessibility of information systems for the public, and legal penalties for violating transparency laws. Raising citizens' awareness of their rights and responsibilities, promoting a culture of transparency, and fostering active civil engagement enhance the effectiveness of transparency policies. Citizen participation and oversight play a significant role in promoting transparency and improving public and governmental processes. Citizens can hold institutions accountable by monitoring their activities and

ensuring adherence to transparency principles. Studies emphasized citizen capacity building for transparency policy support [11, 32, 37].

This component includes the alignment of results with policy objectives, a positive organizational image, economic growth, cost reduction, sustainable organizational development, and efficiency and productivity. Transparency policy implementation directly contributes to creating a positive organizational image. Transparency and the dissemination of organizational activities, decisions, and performance foster public trust. Accurate financial disclosures help prevent corruption and bolster public confidence. Sabatier (1988) discussed policy outcome alignment with objectives [36], while Solihin et al. (2021) focused on economic growth [30].

This component includes accountability, citizen access to information, fostering positive attitudes toward the government, citizen satisfaction with government services, inclination toward social responsibility, enhanced social welfare, and improved citizen understanding of public policies. Transparency in organizational activities and decisions strengthens public trust and facilitates better community relations. Transparent decision-making processes enable citizens to actively participate in governance, monitor institutional performance, and contribute to a more democratic and participatory society. Some studies highlighted accountability [11, 33, 34], while emphasized citizen access to information [37, 40].

These findings provide actionable insights for improving transparency policy implementation and fostering accountability, efficiency, and trust in public organizations.

Based on the findings of the study, which identified, evaluated, and prioritized indicators for evaluating the implementation of transparency policies in Iranian public organizations, managerial, operational, and executive recommendations, along with suggestions for other stakeholders, can enhance the implementation and outcomes of transparency policies. These recommendations are categorized as follows:

1. **Establishing Continuous Feedback Mechanisms:**
   Managers should develop continuous feedback processes to evaluate and improve the implementation of transparency policies. Feedback can be collected through employee surveys, input from external stakeholders, and independent evaluations to identify strengths and weaknesses in policy implementation.

2. **Creating Specialized Transparency Units in Ministries:**
   Establish dedicated units within public organizations responsible for overseeing and monitoring the implementation of transparency policies. These units can interact with other oversight bodies and stakeholders to ensure effective and accurate implementation.

3. **Forming Independent Oversight Coalitions:**
   External stakeholders, such as non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and civil society groups, can establish independent coalitions to evaluate and monitor the implementation of transparency policies. These coalitions can produce independent evaluation reports and publicly share the results, increasing social pressure for better policy implementation.

Limitations of the Study:
- Given that this study is applied and utilizes meta-analytical methods, the qualitative and Delphi technique findings, with their detailed and in-depth focus, may not easily generalize to other organizations or contexts. This creates limitations in applying the results to broader areas.
- The purposive non-random sampling in the qualitative phase, involving 15 participants, may introduce bias. This limitation could reduce the credibility and generalizability of findings, as the sample may not fully represent the target population.
- **Economic Factors:** The country's economic conditions, such as economic recessions, could influence the evaluation of transparency policy implementation. These factors might affect the priorities and resources allocated to transparency and accountability, thereby impacting the research outcomes.

Suggestions for Future Studies:
- **Impact of Information Technology on Transparency Policy Implementation:** Investigate how modern technologies, such as big data and artificial intelligence, can improve transparency and accountability in organizations. This research could identify effective tools and systems for enhancing transparency in ministries and public organizations.
- **Impact of Transparency Policy Evaluation on Organizational Performance and Stakeholder**

Satisfaction in Public Organizations: Examine how transparency influences overall organizational performance and stakeholder satisfaction, particularly in Iranian public organizations. This study could analyze the relationship between transparency and business outcomes, as well as its effect on public trust.

Suggestions for Future Researchers:

- **Addressing Methodological Limitations:** Future researchers should employ more diverse mixed-method approaches, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative methods. Particularly in the qualitative phase, they should use various data collection methods (e.g., focus groups or open-ended surveys) to enhance credibility and generalizability, enabling comparisons across different organizations.

- **Improving Sampling Methods:** Researchers should focus on selecting samples that better represent the target population. Using random or hybrid sampling methods—combining random sampling with purposive sampling—can reduce bias and enhance the validity of results. Increasing the sample size in the qualitative phase can also improve the generalizability of findings.

- **Ensuring Validity and Reliability of Tools:** Future researchers should rigorously validate data collection tools. This involves using standard, credible tools in similar fields and conducting pre-tests for validity and reliability before full deployment. Consulting with experts during the design of research tools can further enhance data quality.

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