

## DEVELOPMENT OF A SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY MODEL IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA BORDER VILLAGES

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### **Abstract**

*This research examined social accountability in village fund management in the Papua New Guinea border region, specifically in the villages of Skow Sae, Skow Mabo, and Moso. The study aimed to assess how information transparency and service monitoring impact community participation. Data were collected through in-depth interviews, document studies, and questionnaires, with 69 out of 150 questionnaires returned. The analysis uses the TETRAD tool to generate a questionnaire model that is then administered to respondents. This research sample employs a purposive method, specifically targeting respondents who possess knowledge and actively participate in the management of village funds. The findings revealed that effective service monitoring positively influences community participation, whereas information transparency does not always lead to increased participation. The research underscores the importance of collaborative efforts between village governments and communities to enhance social accountability and ensure fair resource distribution. Despite the model's limitations due to the small sample size, the study highlights the need for improved facilities, training, and digital platforms to support transparency and accountability in village governance.*

### **Keywords**

**Social Accountability, Border Village, Transparency, Monitoring, Community Participation**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Accountability in village fund management, particularly in state border areas like the US-Mexico border region, can be complex due to overlapping jurisdictions and accountability gaps (Sidik & Habibi, 2024). Studies on village funds in Indonesia highlight how, despite implementing reasonable governance measures, The benefits often favor the village ruling class, primarily capitalist peasants, resulting in limited power and resources for people experiencing poverty (Burns & Jollands, 2024). Moreover, research on transnational non-state governance arrangements underscores the significance of accountability structures, especially in settings where decision-makers are held accountable by consumers and activists rather than the intended beneficiaries in

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developing economies (Sofyani et al., 2023a). Understanding these dynamics is crucial to ensure transparency and equitable resource distribution in border regions, emphasizing the need for effective accountability mechanisms prioritizing all community members' welfare.

The issue of social accountability in village governments is still small (Diansari et al., 2022; Silitonga et al., 2022). Most accountability themes focus more on budget use policies (financial accountability) (Subiyantoro, 2023) (Wafa et al., 2023). Some existing programs still focus on public services and welfare improvement such as The Asia Foundation (TAF), this institution and its partners through the Social Accountability and Participation - Civil Registration and Vital Statistics (SAPP- CRVS) program which is part of KOMPAK (Kolaborasi Masyarakat untuk Pelayanan dan Kesejahteraan) see the importance of strengthening the social accountability mechanism of village governance.

Accountability plays an important role in rural development by ensuring transparent and responsible financial management of village funds (Frostenson & Johnstone, 2023). This transparency facilitates the allocation of funds to development projects that benefit the community, ultimately improving the welfare of local residents (Millar et al., 2024). In addition, accountability encourages community involvement in governance and empowerment, important for promoting good village governance and maintaining responsible budget discipline (Burns & Jollands, 2024). By promoting adherence to cultural values such as honesty and truth in financial management, accountability builds trust between government and society, leading to a sustainable and collaborative approach to development (Witvliet et al., 2023). Overall, accountability ensures effective use of resources, meets community needs, and promotes responsible and sustainable

development practices in rural areas.

To talk about governance is to describe a complex set of institutions that form a broad social agreement according to a particular system that can be understood as a socially constructed space. These institutions include organizations and rules, both formal and informal, through which priorities, responsibilities, constraints on agents' actions and costs and benefits are allocated. Assuming that the governance model in a region determines how policies are designed and implemented, therefore, there are five principles of good governance: (1) public and private participation; (2) openness regarding access and transparency of information; (3) shared responsibility among various levels and actors; (4) effectiveness; and (5) coherence and coordination between various policies. These principles are based on subsidiarity and proportionality.

The adoption UU No 6 Tahun 2014 Desa in Indonesia has indeed brought significant changes to village governance, emphasizing transparency, accountability, and empowerment (Sofyani et al., 2023b). This law has reinforced the traditional rights of village communities, providing clearer rules, enhancing the authority of village chiefs, and establishing mechanisms for accountability through village deliberations. Moreover, it has facilitated inter-village cooperation, improved funding allocation, and introduced village information systems to promote transparency and efficiency in village management. While the law has aimed to strengthen village governance and empower communities to address development needs, there are still challenges in fully realizing its potential, such as the need to address gender equality issues and transform traditional gender structures (Syukri, 2023).

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The traditional rights of village communities play a crucial role in strengthening governance and empowering villages to meet their needs, reduce poverty, and promote social justice. Autonomous changes within traditional institutions, driven by local agents of change, have been observed to address governance challenges and sustain access to vital services (Vorbach & Ensor, 2022). Studies on the protection of traditional villages highlight the importance of strategic evolution and decision-making processes of stakeholders, emphasizing the impact of different influence factors on the protection of traditional villages (Li et al., 2022). Additionally, ongoing negotiations for a new international human rights instrument aim to protect the rights of traditional local communities, focusing on issues such as land tenure and resource protection (Bessa, 2015). Recognizing traditional communities as subjects of rights, rather than objects of tutelage, is essential for promoting social justice and addressing historical inequalities in pluri-ethnic societies (Kwarkye, 2021).

Deliberative democracy presents a promising model for aligning development with societal needs without undermining democracy. Research indicates that deliberative interactions among citizens can lead to opinion changes, mitigate polarization, and improve relations between opposing groups (Caluwaerts et al., 2023)<sup>[1]</sup>. Furthermore, deliberative processes, such as citizens' assemblies, have been shown to enhance the effectiveness of democratic systems in responding to complex challenges like climate change (Willis et al., 2022)<sup>[2]</sup>. Deliberation can also play a crucial role in legitimizing normative agendas in disciplines like ecological economics, contributing to sustainable transitions by fostering preference formation, normative evaluation, and legitimization (Wironen et al., 2019)<sup>[3]</sup>. Additionally, studies on village assemblies in rural

India highlight how deliberation can empower citizens to engage with elected officials, demand transparency, and address local development needs, albeit with gender disparities in participation and influence . Overall, embracing deliberative democracy can enhance policy formulation, increase citizen empowerment, and strengthen democratic accountability, making it a valuable approach for shaping development in line with societal requirements.

The practice of deepening democracy to overcome the failures of liberal democracy has begun to take shape in recent years. While electoral democracy offers accountability of power holders to the public through periodic election mechanisms, social accountability offers a mechanism for holding power holders accountable between election periods. In other words, social accountability is a series of actions and mechanisms outside elections, which citizens can use to hold power holders accountable (Arugay, 2022). To achieve a higher level of accountability, power holders must not only provide public services in accordance with policy promises during elections, but also be responsive to the requests of their citizens for the provision of better services while holding public office, while building a sense of citizenship and encouraging public service.

Departing from the origins of the concept of social accountability above, citizens and the state become important elements in the social accountability framework. Singh, (2020) offers an analytical framework for social accountability consisting of basic elements that mutually influence citizen action and state action, supported by three driving elements which become levers in the form of information, face to face, and citizen mobilization as described in the framework below. While citizen action is the focus of social accountability including the mechanisms inherent in it, state action is the state's response to citizen

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requests, both positive and negative. (Arugay, 2022). In an accountable and responsive state that involves citizens in decision making, information flows from citizens to the state and vice versa.

Various social accountability practices provide interesting lessons in improving public services. Social accountability mechanisms and tools are quite effective in improving the quality of public services including information dissemination, shopping tracking surveys, complaint mechanisms, community monitoring citizen scorecards and social audits (Caluwaerts et al., 2023). In summary, the social accountability framework above emphasizes the importance of collaboration between citizens and the state in identifying problems and formulating policies to improve services. The emphasis on encouraging bottom-up forms of accountability needs to be balanced with efforts to strengthen the legitimacy of public authorities (Arugay, 2022).

Departing from the explanation above, this research proposes a theory of change in social accountability which is used as an analytical tool in this research. The research aims to improve the quality of (1) a more organized community with increased capacity to interact with government; (2) increasing the environment that supports the implementation of social and citizen accountability in the form of village government policies; (3) development and use of social accountability mechanisms that can be used by vulnerable groups, including participation of vulnerable groups in budget planning, citizen journalism, collaborative monitoring, and complaint handling mechanisms.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

This research uses inductive approach in implementing social accountability. To answer the objectives of this research, several villages were selected that directly border

Papua New Guinea. The location of the village is in Jayapura City. The villages are Skow Sae, Skow Mabo and Moso which are located in the Muara Tami district. The Muara Tami district, located on the eastern part of Jayapura city, is a strategic border area between Indonesia and Papua New Guinea (PNG) due to its multifaceted significance in terms of security, economy, and social dynamics. The district's strategic importance is underscored by its role in maintaining territorial integrity and state sovereignty, which necessitates special supervision and management (Subagiyo et al., 2017) (Fitri et al., 2017). Despite its potential, the area has historically been underdeveloped, partly due to a past paradigm that treated it as a peripheral region. The current border security situation, while vulnerable, remains conducive to mobilization, which can enhance economic opportunities (Subagiyo et al., 2017).

The data collection methods used in this research were in-depth interviews, document studies and distributing questionnaires. Interviews were conducted with community groups, vulnerable groups, village officials, service providers. Village officials, community leaders, religious leaders and youth are an important part of obtaining data. The primary data collected was analyzed qualitatively by elaborating on the findings in the villages to identify patterns of similarities and differences. Quantitative analysis uses TETRAD to create a questionnaire model given to respondents. This research sample uses a purposive approach, namely respondents who know and are involved in managing village funds.

Tetrad analysis is a valuable tool for model development in various fields, such as structural equation modeling (SEM). In SEM, Confirmatory Tetrad Analysis (CTA) has been integrated into Generalized Structured Component Analysis (GSCA) to evaluate

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models without relying on the assumption of multivariate normality (Ryoo & Hwang, 2017)<sup>1</sup>. CTA allows researchers to assess the fit of their models by examining the relationships between observed variables and latent constructs. This approach provides a more robust analysis compared to traditional methods that assume normality. Additionally, CTA can handle non-normal data distributions and provide more accurate estimates of model parameters. By incorporating CTA into GSCA, researchers can improve the validity and reliability of their structural equation models.

Specifically for citizen journalism, the data collection method is carried out using in-depth interviews to obtain an overview of; (1) interaction between residents and village government, residents – including women, vulnerable groups, people with disabilities; (2) the steps taken in producing and distributing the information created; and (3) expectations and follow-up actions they will take.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our research team distributed questionnaires to the villages of Skow Sae, Skow Mabo, Skow Yambe and Mosso, a collaborative effort that spanned one month. In total, we distributed 150 questionnaires, with each village receiving 50. From these, we were able to process 69, a testament to our collective dedication. The following are the details of the distribution and return of the questionnaires, a team effort that was crucial to our research:

Table 1. Distribution and return of the questionnaires

Description	Total	Percentage
Questionnaires distributed	150	100
Unreturned questionnaires	81	54
Returned questionnaire	69	46

Source: Data processed 2024



The number of questionnaires distributed to respondents was 150 copies. However, the number that can be used for analysis is 69 copies, while 81 copies cannot be used in analysis because many are incomplete. During the data collection process, we were well-received by all respondents. They were very open when answering interviews and filling out questionnaires. The high response rate contributed to the success of our study, allowing us to gather valuable insights from a significant portion of the sample. Their willingness to participate greatly enhanced the quality and reliability of our data analysis. Overall, the positive attitude of the respondents towards the study helped in achieving a comprehensive understanding of the research topic. The cooperation and engagement of the participants played a crucial role in ensuring the success of our data collection efforts.

Table 2. Respondent Description

Village	Village Aparatus	Students	Self-Employed	Farmer/Fisherman	State Civil Aparatus	Total
Skow Mabo	2	1	5	6	5	19
Skow Sae	1	1	7	11	4	24
Skow Yambe	2	1	4	5	2	14
Mosso	1	0	9	2	0	12
<i>Total</i>	6	3	25	24	11	69

*Source: Data processed 2024*

Table 2 shows that the largest number of respondents came from Skow Sae village, and the fewest came from Mosso village. The most dominant types of work are self-employed and farmers/fishermen. This description provides an explanation that agriculture and marine fisheries are the livelihoods of border communities.

### **Causality Relationship Between Observed Variables**

The next step to look for modeling is to look at the output from Tetrad. This will provide insights into the relationships between variables and help identify potential causal

structures. It is important to carefully analyze the results and consider how they align with existing knowledge and theories in order to draw meaningful conclusions. By comparing the output from Tetrad with existing research and literature, researchers can validate their findings and strengthen the robustness of their models. Additionally, seeking feedback from peers or experts in the field can offer valuable perspectives and enhance the overall credibility of the analysis.

From the output result of searching for causal relationships with Tetrad IV, the following causality results are obtained:

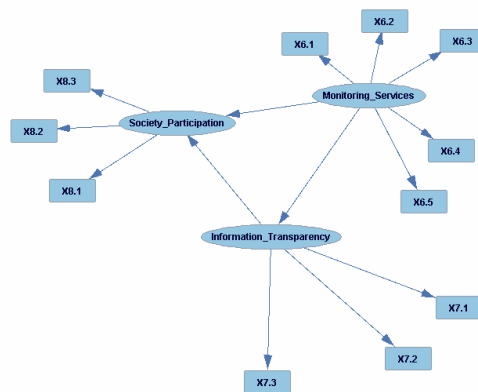


Figure 1. Variable Causality Relationship

The Tetrad output results make the social accountability model of border villages into a structural model. Variables society participation, monitoring services and information transparency. The exogenous variables from the inductive approach are the transparency information variable and the monitoring supervision variable, while the endogenous variable is society participation. The structural model demonstrates how transparency of information and monitoring supervision directly impact society participation in border villages. This analysis provides a clear understanding of the relationship between these variables and highlights the importance of effective social

accountability mechanisms in these communities. The findings suggest that increased transparency and monitoring can lead to higher levels of community engagement and participation in decision-making processes. By promoting information transparency and effective supervision, border villages can foster a more accountable and engaged society.

This output is explained by stakeholder theory. Stakeholder theory, as originally conceptualized by R. Edward Freeman, has indeed found extensive application beyond business management, including in the realm of village development (Mahajan et al., 2023). This theory underscores the necessity of identifying and engaging all parties who have an interest in or are influenced by a project or program. By considering the perspectives and needs of various stakeholders, organizations can make more informed decisions that benefit not only themselves but also the broader community. This inclusive approach can lead to more sustainable and socially responsible outcomes in development initiatives. Furthermore, Freeman's stakeholder theory emphasizes the importance of fostering open communication and building strong relationships with all stakeholders involved. By prioritizing transparency and collaboration, organizations can create a more conducive environment for achieving shared goals and addressing complex challenges in village development.

In the context of village development, stakeholders encompass village governments, local communities, NGOs, the private sector, and external donors. The literature robustly supports the notion that active stakeholder involvement in the planning, execution, and evaluation phases of village development projects significantly enhances the effectiveness and sustainability of these initiatives. For instance, the EU Rural Development Programme in Italy demonstrated that stakeholder empowerment and

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mixed collaboration partnerships can lead to more effective rural development, although the distribution of power among stakeholders can vary significantly, influencing the overall outcomes (Ahmed & Aassouli, 2022). Similarly, the principles of Stakeholder Capitalism have been shown to foster environments conducive to achieving Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly through promoting partnerships and consensus, which are crucial for sustainable village development (Swartz et al., 2013).

Empirical evidence from the Business Roundtable's 2019 statement reveals that companies pledging to deliver value to all stakeholders, rather than focusing solely on shareholders, experienced positive stock market reactions, indicating that inclusive stakeholder engagement can unlock additional value and support long-term success (Valentinov, 2023). Furthermore, the integration of stakeholder theory with classical institutional economics highlights the potential for overcoming institutional conflicts and trade-offs, thereby facilitating the orderly and reasonable organization of social provisioning processes, which is essential for village development (Stoelhorst & Vishwanathan, 2024). The stakeholder theory of corporate governance also emphasizes the importance of devising coalitional contracting solutions to collective action problems, which can be directly applied to managing village development projects to ensure that all stakeholders' interests are adequately represented and protected (Bridoux & Stoelhorst, 2022). The recent "stakeholder turn" in strategy research further underscores the relevance of stakeholder theory in developing strategies that acknowledge both the economic and moral dimensions of relationships within and around organizations, which is critical for the holistic development of villages (Marcon Nora et al., 2023).

### **aEstimation of Causality Relationships Between Variables**

To find out the value of each indicator for the Tetrad variable, it can also be chaired in the editor's tabular menu. Results of Tetrad

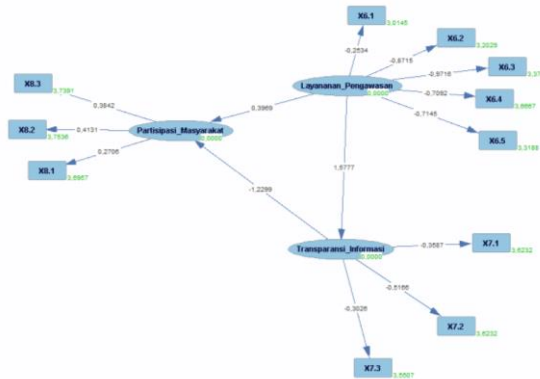


Figure 2. Parameter value

The community participation service variable is influenced by the public service and supervision variables with a constant value of 0.396. The positive relationship between public services and supervision on community participation provides an explanation that the better the service and supervision, the more community participation will increase. Community participation in the oversight of public services has been shown to yield positive outcomes across various sectors, including health, education, and environmental services. Effective community engagement in health services governance, for instance, can lead to improved service quality and access, as evidenced by the collaborative governance structures in Uasin Gishu County, Kenya, although challenges such as drug stockouts and funding delays can impede performance (Sitienei et al., 2021).

Systematic reviews of citizen engagement programs in low- and middle-income countries reveal that direct engagement between service users and providers often results in enhanced service delivery and quality, particularly in healthcare, though

complementary interventions are necessary to address systemic bottlenecks (Waddington et al., 2019). In high and upper-middle-income countries, community participation has been linked to positive health outcomes, community empowerment, and improved organizational processes, highlighting the complex interplay of social and cultural factors in achieving these benefits (Haldane et al., 2019). In Zambia, the UPTAKE project demonstrated that accountability, trust-building, and the engagement of existing community resources are critical to the success of participatory public health programs, such as family planning and contraceptive services (Silumbwe et al., 2020). Furthermore, the importance of structured community involvement is underscored by the need for institutions that communities can identify with and take pride in, as well as the necessity of formal mechanisms to sustain long-term commitment to public services (Sharp, 2003).

Public services and monitoring of information transparency have a positive effect of 1.577 and a significant value of 0.00. The transparency of village information and the supervision of village public services have been shown to positively impact various aspects of village governance and community trust. For instance, the reform of village-level power supervision in China has significantly improved the supply of public goods and increased villagers' satisfaction with economic and social services, particularly in economically weaker regions. This improvement is attributed to enhanced public participation and the restraint of village cadres' behaviors, although excessive supervision can sometimes inhibit these benefits (Zheng et al., 2023).

Similarly, in Indonesia, the implementation of Village Law No. 6 of 2014, which granted village governments more autonomy and budgetary control, has been linked to increased transparency, reduced corruption perception, and higher community trust. This

suggests that transparency in governance can mitigate corruption and bolster trust among villagers (Sofyani et al., 2023c). Furthermore, regular inspections in Chinese villages have been found to boost public approval of village leadership by improving social welfare and economic development, as well as securing political and financial support from higher authorities, which helps village leaders better represent and mediate villagers' interests (Grimmelikhuisen, 2010). However, the relationship between transparency and trust is complex. An experiment on the transparency of local council minutes revealed that more information could lead to a lower perceived competence of the council, possibly due to a gap between public expectations and the chaotic reality of decision-making processes (Grimmelikhuisen, 2010; Hajdukiewicz & Turpie, 1998).

However, information transparency has a negative effect on community participation with a value of -1.223 and a significance value of 0.00. The results of this test explain that transparency of village information does not inherently negatively affect the participation of village communities; rather, it can enhance participation if implemented effectively. Transparency is a crucial element of good governance, as evidenced by the positive association between transparency and low corruption perception, which in turn fosters higher community trust in village governments (Sofyani et al., 2023d). However, the effectiveness of transparency in promoting participation depends on several factors. For instance, the 2009 Mining Law in Indonesia failed to ensure adequate access to information and meaningful participation for local communities, highlighting that mere transparency without proper mechanisms for participation and accountability can be insufficient (Putri, 2023). Additionally, the use of participatory village maps in the Musrenbang process demonstrated that transparency through clear geospatial data could

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improve communication and collaboration among stakeholders, although power disparities still hindered full inclusivity and participation (Akbar et al., 2021). Moreover, the lack of human resources, facilities, and infrastructure in village governments can impede the effective implementation of transparent policies, thereby affecting community participation negatively. In a broader context, the analysis of institutional websites in Spain revealed that insufficient and non-journalistic information on local government activities can limit citizen participation, suggesting that transparency must be coupled with accessible and reliable information to be effective (Simelio-Solà et al., 2021).

The weakness of the resulting model is that the TETRAD IV output produces a Chi-Square value of 136.0167 with a p-value of 0.000. Therefore, this model still needs to be improved by increasing the number of respondents. The required p-value is more than 5%. Therefore, this research model is not suitable for further research. Statistically, it is stated that a larger sample size is expected to provide better results. With a large sample, the mean and standard deviation obtained have a high probability of resembling the mean and standard deviation of the population. This is because the sample size is related to statistical hypothesis testing.

## **CONCLUSION**

This research concludes that the social accountability model for village funds in the Papua New Guinea border region, especially in the villages of Skow Sae, Skow Mabo, and Moso, shows that community participation is strongly influenced by information transparency and service monitoring. With better service monitoring, community participation increases, but information transparency only sometimes increases direct community participation. This research emphasizes the importance of collaboration



between village governments and communities to increase social accountability and support the fair and transparent distribution of resources.

The main limitation of this study is the relatively small sample size, which affects the validity of the resulting social accountability model. With only 69 questionnaires returned out of 150 distributed, the results obtained may not be fully representative of the wider population. Apart from that, other factors such as limited human resources, facilities and infrastructure in village government also limit the effectiveness of implementing transparency and community participation in daily practice.

To increase the social accountability of village funds in border areas, facilities are needed that support collaboration between the village government and the community. This includes training for village and community officials on the importance of transparency and accountability, providing digital platforms for monitoring and reporting, and facilitating discussion forums involving all stakeholders. In addition, improving village infrastructure and human resources will greatly support the implementation of an effective and sustainable social accountability model.

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