

Innovations

Implementing Ethical Governance and Accountability Strategies for Equitable Education Policy in Mauritius

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Abstract: *This study discusses Mauritius' persistent challenge in enforcing fair education laws, where deficiencies in accountability, transparency, and stakeholder participation have reduced the efficacy of the laws. Based on Institutional Theory, which holds that external factors like social norms, legal requirements, and cultural expectations impact organizational behaviour in addition to internal efficiency, the study explores how ethical governance and accountability practices can improve educational equity. A combination of semi-structured interviews, document analysis, and structured questionnaires was used in a mixed-methods approach to collect information from community representatives, educators, administrators, and policymakers. Transparency, accountability, fair resource distribution, and stakeholder participation are ethical governance frameworks that significantly predict the effectiveness of education policies ($R = 0.684$; $R^2 = 0.468$; $F = 15.762$, $p < 0.001$), according to quantitative analysis. Transparency and accountability have the strongest effects. In order to improve policy outcomes, thematic analysis emphasized the significance of transparent information dissemination, strong monitoring systems, fair resource distribution, and participatory engagement. Research indicates that incorporating ethical governance practices promotes fair educational opportunities, institutional credibility, and trust. The study concludes that in order to attain equitable and sustainable educational results in Mauritius, policymakers should fortify accountability frameworks, institutionalize ethical standards, and promote inclusive stakeholder participation.*

Keywords: *Accountability, Ethical Governance, Equitable Education, Policy Effectiveness, Mauritius*

1. Introduction

Equality in education has emerged as a major issue in contemporary policy debates as nations contend with widening socioeconomic divides and the growing demand for transparent, accountable governance structures. According to international organizations like UNESCO (2021) and the OECD (2022), achieving high-quality educational outcomes requires fairness, inclusivity, and strict oversight. These principles have become increasingly important in developing and middle-income countries, where governance concerns often threaten equitable access to education (Baeck, 2020).

Education continues to be a vital lever for economic competitiveness, national cohesion, and social mobility in Mauritius. The system still faces problems with unequal resource allocation, unclear decision-making procedures, and ethical responsibility concerns despite its long-standing dedication to universal access and human capital development (Mauritius Ministry of Education, 2023). According to recent analyses, structural disparities are reinforced, especially for students from marginalized communities, by governance flaws such as low stakeholder participation, inconsistent monitoring frameworks, and inadequate mechanisms for preventing administrative misconduct (UNICEF, 2022).

There is still little scholarly discussion of how ethical governance techniques may be successfully operationalised within the Mauritian policy framework, despite the government's introduction of a number of changes targeted at improving transparency and educational fairness. This disparity is substantial because protecting fair access and guaranteeing that policies result in major effects depend on creating clear accountability mechanisms and bolstering ethical compliance. In order to close a significant vacuum in both policy discourse and empirical research, this study examines the use of ethical governance and accountability measures for promoting equitable education policy in Mauritius.

2. Empirical Review of Literature and Theoretical Framework

The literature study explores the interrelated underpinnings of accountability, equality, and ethical governance in education. It establishes the theoretical foundation required to comprehend how moral and responsible policy mechanisms might promote fair educational results by placing these ideas within international discussions and the particular Mauritian setting.

2.1 Ethical Governance in Educational Systems

Modern educational institutions have made ethical governance a top concern due to the need for transparency, justice, and integrity in institutional processes and policy creation. UNESCO (2021) states that the principles of justice, accountability, and responsible use of public resources form the conceptual

foundation of ethical governance. It highlights how moral leaders in education have a responsibility to act in the public good. Even though these concepts are widely accepted, scholars argue that their practical implementation is nevertheless inconsistent, particularly when resources are scarce.

Global frameworks that promote evidence-based decision-making and participatory governance, such as the OECD's integrity criteria and the UNESCO Education Sector Strategy, provide normative expectations for moral educational leadership (OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2023). Critics point out that these frameworks' application in poor or small island contexts is limited since they frequently presume governing skills that could not exist consistently across systems (Burnett, 2022). The necessity of balancing conflicting interests, addressing systemic injustices, and reducing political meddling is becoming more and more apparent in ethical decision-making processes in education policy. However, studies reveal that accountability systems are not properly integrated at operational levels, and integrity procedures in many education ministries are still poor (Transparency International, 2022).

Tiny Island Developing States (SIDS) like Mauritius, with their small bureaucratic structures, structural flaws, and susceptibility to political patronage, are particularly vulnerable to ethical governance. Even though these challenges are recognised, there is a dearth of empirical research in the literature that examines how ethical governance models could be adjusted to suit the unique sociopolitical circumstances of SIDS. This discrepancy emphasises the need for context-specific research on how ethical frameworks and accountability could help Mauritius achieve a more equitable education policy.

2.2 Educational Accountability Mechanisms

Accountability is an essential part of ethical governance in contemporary educational institutions, even though its conceptualization and operationalisation continue to generate scholarly debate. Accountability is the responsibility of educational actors to justify decisions, actions, and resource use to stakeholders (Lingard, 2020). But its elements of transparency, accountability, and enforcement are often used inconsistently, particularly in public education environments where political and bureaucratic goals conflict (Smith & Oduro, 2021).

Three prevalent types of educational accountability have been identified by research: community-based, professional, and administrative. Critics contend that administrative models run the risk of restricting educational practice and strengthening technocratic control, notwithstanding their emphasis on adhering to rules and performance metrics (Hall & Sives, 2019). Limited autonomy and diverse professional cultures often impede professional responsibility, which emphasises internal standards and peer assessment (Koya & Thomas, 2023). Although capacity,

representation, and power imbalances offer obstacles, community-based accountability seeks to empower local stakeholders (Jules, 2022).

Open data portals, performance audits, and school inspections are examples of monitoring and assessment systems that are marketed as instruments for enhancing transparency. However, research reveals enduring flaws, such as disjointed data systems, inadequate follow-up measures, and restricted public accessibility (Mungroo & Pillay, 2024). Particularly in tiny island developing nations like Mauritius, where resource restrictions and centralised government create extra vulnerabilities, these limitations undercut the transformational potential of accountability systems.

2.3 Social Justice and Equity in Education Policy

With academics highlighting the moral and structural requirements of guaranteeing equitable access, participation, and outcomes for all students, equity and social justice have taken centre stage in discussions about education policy today. Theoretical viewpoints define equity as redistributing opportunities, acknowledging learner variety, and actively participating in decision-making in addition to equitable treatment (Lingard, 2021; Nair, 2023). These viewpoints emphasise the need for education systems to address long-standing institutional, social, and economic disparities.

Significant challenges still exist despite international promises to provide equal service. Educational paths are still influenced by structural inequalities related to socioeconomic class, location, disability, and language (UNESCO, 2022). According to research, accountability systems that prioritise performance measures over more comprehensive systemic demands may inadvertently make inequality worse (Sayed & Ahmed, 2021). Resource limitations, historical inequality, and policy fragmentation exacerbate these obstacles in small island developing states (SIDS) like Mauritius (Teeroovengadum & Nunkoo, 2020).

The emphasis on inclusive curriculum, targeted financing, and participatory governance structures is growing in policy initiatives aimed at reducing inequities. Critical evaluations, however, indicate that poor ethical governance, little community involvement, and inadequate monitoring systems frequently cause equity-oriented initiatives to fail during implementation (Dimmock & Walker, 2020). This emphasises how equity must be linked to open accountability systems that can maintain change.

There are still gaps in our knowledge of how ethical governance and accountability interact to achieve equity in SIDS situations, despite the literature's strong conceptual underpinnings. There aren't many empirical studies on Mauritius, especially when it comes to how governance methods affect equal

outcomes. In order to create education policies that are justice-driven and contextually relevant, these gaps must be filled.

2.4 The Context of Mauritius Education

The educational system of Mauritius has experienced substantial changes, moving from a colonial framework to a more inclusive, state-driven approach that aims to strike a balance between access and quality (Seetanah, 2021). Although the main goal of early governmental attempts was to increase enrolment, historical disparities continued, especially along socioeconomic and geographical lines (Jugurnath & Ramasawmy, 2020). Centralised control by the Ministry of Education and its associated agencies, together with regulatory frameworks designed to guarantee uniformity and conformity across public and private institutions, are characteristics of governance structures (Gooroochurn & Subadar, 2022). Despite these frameworks, stakeholders report uneven communication and few opportunities for participation in decision-making processes, making it difficult to operationalise transparency and accountability (Bhojoo, 2023).

While Mauritius has attained relatively high literacy and enrolment rates, comparisons with other small island developing nations indicate that problems with equal access and resource allocation are similar to global trends seen in comparable contexts (OECD, 2021). Crucially, there are gaps in our knowledge of how ethical governance and accountability systems affect educational fairness in practice since a large portion of the literature focuses on policy outcomes rather than implementation fidelity (Ramburn, 2022). Furthermore, the ability to inform strong, context-sensitive reforms is limited since present research seldom incorporates cross-sectoral approaches, such as the relationship between education, socioeconomic development, and governance culture (Seetanah, 2021). This collection of work highlights the need for research that offers practical insights for equitable education policy in Mauritius by examining the ethical aspects of governance and stakeholder trust in addition to evaluating policy frameworks.

2.5 Integrating Accountability and Ethical Governance for Equitable Policy

It is becoming more widely acknowledged that including ethical governance and accountability in education policy is crucial to fostering equal results. Transparency, honesty, and equity in decision-making are all part of ethical governance, and accountability systems guarantee that institutions, educators, and legislators are held responsible for their deeds and results (Brown & Adams, 2021). When these concepts are in harmony, they provide a framework that promotes fair access, resource distribution, and educational opportunities, especially in settings like Mauritius that have a history of inequality. International case studies provide

evidence of the efficacy of integrated approaches: Finland and Singapore serve as examples of how incorporating ethical supervision into accountability frameworks promotes public confidence and policy consistency while simultaneously lowering student performance disparities (OECD, 2020; Tan et al., 2022).

Despite these achievements, there are still gaps in the application of ethical governance to workable, context-sensitive methods, especially in tiny island developing states. Many policies place a superficial emphasis on accountability, emphasising compliance over integrating ethical consideration into institutional culture (Smith & Lee, 2019). Furthermore, models that operationalise these principles within local governance institutions are needed, as there is a dearth of empirical research examining the synergies between ethical frameworks and equity-focused results in Mauritius. To guarantee flexibility and responsiveness, best practices recommend that policy change incorporate stakeholder interaction, open monitoring, and iterative review (UNESCO, 2021).

Therefore, it would be beneficial for a conceptual model that guides ethical and equitable policy change in Mauritius to combine normative ethical principles with strong accountability mechanisms that are adapted to the island's institutional and sociocultural conditions. By connecting moral obligation with quantifiable results, such a model can act as a guide for the methodical and long-term advancement of fair education policy.

2.6 Theoretical Framework and Implications for the Study

The research examines the use of ethical governance and accountability approach within the Mauritian educational system using Institutional Theory as a guiding theoretical framework. According to institutional theory, organisational behavior is impacted by external factors such as social conventions, legal obligations, and cultural expectations in addition to internal efficiency concerns (Scott, 2014). This paradigm makes it easier to comprehend how governance methods are adopted by educational institutions, administrative bodies, and legislators in response to formal legislation and public expectations of justice, fairness, and openness (Meyer & Rowan, 2017).

The application of Institutional Theory to Mauritius enables a critical analysis of the institutionalization of ethical governance principles in practice and policy, including accountability, transparency, and integrity. It emphasises how formal frameworks, like laws and ministerial orders, interact with informal norms, including society expectations and educators' professional ethics. By providing insights into why certain policies succeed or fail based on alignment with institutional forces, this theoretical lens also makes it possible to examine compliance mechanisms and accountability techniques (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983).

Nevertheless, the literature currently in publication shows a dearth of empirical research examining the precise ways in which institutional forces influence equal educational results in small island developing states. Although governance frameworks are frequently described in research, there is little critical assessment of how well they address disparities in student outcomes, resource allocation, and access (Altbach et al., 2020). Furthermore, there is a conceptual gap for policy implementation techniques that strike a balance between top-down laws and bottom-up stakeholder participation due to the understudied relationship between ethical governance and community engagement.

Adopting Institutional Theory has two implications: it reveals structural hurdles to fairness that could be missed when concentrating just on administrative or technical improvements, and it offers a systematic lens to assess policy adoption and institutionalization processes. As a result, this paradigm makes sense given the study's objective of examining moral governance and accountability tactics to advance fair education in Mauritius.

2.6.1 Conceptual Framework



Figure 1: The conceptual framework offers a methodical way to comprehend how moral governance and accountability techniques affect the results of Mauritius' egalitarian education policies.

3. Methodology

The study used a mixed-methods research methodology to examine how ethical governance and accountability mechanisms are being implemented for Mauritius' equitable education policy. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods allowed for a thorough analysis of the viewpoints and experiences of stakeholders. In order to ensure representativeness across gender, age, educational attainment, occupational responsibilities, and geographical settings, stratified and purposive sampling were used to choose a wide range of participants, including legislators, educators, administrators, and community leaders.

Semi-structured interviews and document analysis of government guidelines and policy papers were used to gather qualitative data. To find recurrent trends and emerging themes of accountability, transparency, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder involvement, thematic analysis was carried out. Structured questionnaires were used to collect quantitative data, and Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate reliability and ensure internal consistency. Triangulation was used to integrate the results, which improved the study's validity by enabling qualitative insights to be supported by quantitative patterns.

Obtaining informed consent, upholding confidentiality, and guaranteeing voluntary participation were all strictly adhered to. The methodological approach supported the study's objective of assessing tactics to advance fair and open education policy in Mauritius by offering solid data on how institutional frameworks and stakeholder involvement influence the adoption of ethical governance practices.

4. Results and Discussion

The discussion of findings examines stakeholders' perspectives on implementing ethical governance and accountability mechanisms to promote equitable education policy in Mauritius. By emphasising how socioeconomic, demographic, and professional characteristics affect perceptions of transparency, fairness, and stakeholder participation, it offers insights into the effectiveness, inclusivity, and practical implications of governance interventions across diverse educational contexts.

Table 1: Socio-Economic and Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency (n = 250)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	123	49.2
	Female	127	50.8
Age (years)	20–29	57	22.8
	30–39	63	25.2
	40–49	65	26.0
	50+	65	26.0
Education Level	Certificate/Diploma	49	19.6
	Bachelor's Degree	111	44.4
	Master's Degree	69	27.6
	PhD	21	8.4
Occupation	Policymaker	41	16.4
	Educator/Teacher	101	40.4
	Administrator	63	25.2
	Community Representative	45	18.0
Years of Experience	0–5	47	18.8
	6–10	63	25.2
	11–15	65	26.0
	16+	75	30.0
Region	Urban	123	49.2
	Rural	127	50.8

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

4.1 Discussion of Findings and Respondents' Implications

The respondents' socioeconomic and demographic traits offer important insights into the makeup of the stakeholders engaged in putting ethical governance and accountability mechanisms for fair education policy into practice in Mauritius. With 49.2% of respondents being men and 50.8% being women, the sample was nearly evenly divided by gender. This balanced representation is consistent with current recommendations for gender inclusion in policy decision-making processes (UNESCO, 2021). This gender balance guarantees that both men's and women's opinions are considered while developing moral and just educational systems.

With 22.8% of respondents in the 20–29 age group, 25.2% in the 30–39 age group, and 26% in the 40–49 and 50+ age groups, the age distribution showed that

respondents were fairly equally distributed throughout age groups. This variety implies a blend of new and seasoned specialists, which is beneficial for incorporating cutting-edge concepts with tried-and-true methods in the execution of policy (OECD, 2020). The development of inclusive governance structures that meet present and future educational demands depends on intergenerational interaction, which is facilitated by such an age difference.

The majority of respondents (44.4%) had a bachelor's degree, followed by master's degrees (27.6%), certificates or diplomas (19.6%), and doctorates (8.4%). The study's conclusions are more credible because of the participants' high degree of formal education, which demonstrates their ability to interact with difficult ethical and governance concerns (Friedman, 2022).

Educators (40.4%), administrators (25.2%), legislators (16.4%), and community members (18%) made up the diverse occupational representation, which ensured that a range of viewpoints from the education sector were recorded. This variety is further enhanced by years of experience, with 30% having worked in the field for more than 16 years, demonstrating the existence of seasoned actors who can direct moral policy practices. In order to address equity issues and guarantee that policy initiatives are contextually applicable throughout Mauritius, regional representation was balanced between urban (49.2%) and rural (50.8%) areas (World Bank, 2021).

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics on Respondents' Perceptions

Variables	Strongly Agree (%)	Agree (%)	Neutral (%)	Disagree (%)	Strongly Disagree (%)
The effectiveness of policies is increased by ethical governance	42	38	12	6	2
Mechanisms for accountability guarantee fair results.	39	41	10	6	4
Equitable distribution of resources	35	37	15	9	4
Policy results are strengthened by stakeholder participation.	41	36	12	7	4

Source: Field Survey, 2025

These opinions are presented in Table 2 for a number of important criteria, such as accountability, transparency, equitable resource distribution, and

stakeholder involvement. With 42% strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing, the majority of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that ethical governance frameworks improve policy effectiveness, indicating a general understanding of the significance of ethics in decision-making (OECD, 2020). There was little opposition to the ethical governance standards, as just 12% of respondents were indifferent, 6% disagreed, and 2% strongly objected.

In terms of accountability procedures, 41% agreed, and 39% strongly agreed, that effective reporting and monitoring systems are necessary for fair educational results. This is consistent with UNESCO (2021), which highlights the need for openness and methodical accountability in fostering the implementation of fair policies. Despite the high level of consensus, there are still areas of ambiguity that would need focused capacity-building initiatives, as shown by the remaining respondents who were either indifferent (10%) or disagreed (8%).

With 35% strongly agreeing and 37% agreeing that present governance systems properly assure justice in educational resource allocation, perceptions on equitable resource distribution showed a significantly more cautious approach. Fifteen percent of respondents were neutral, nine percent disagreed, and four percent strongly disagreed. These findings demonstrate how difficult it is to provide inclusion in both urban and rural settings and to eliminate regional inequities (World Bank, 2021).

Lastly, regarding stakeholder participation, 36% of respondents agreed, and 41% strongly agreed that participatory techniques improve policy results, bolstering the idea that multi-stakeholder cooperation is necessary for long-term educational change (Friedman, 2022). High levels of agreement across factors show that ethical governance and accountability techniques are generally seen favourably, indicating that Mauritian stakeholders are aware of and dedicated to promoting an open and equal educational system.

4.4 Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁): There is no significant relationship between the implementation of ethical governance frameworks (including transparency, accountability, fairness in resource allocation, and stakeholder participation) and the effectiveness of education policy outcomes in Mauritius.

Hypothesis 2 (H₀₂): There is a significant relationship between the implementation of ethical governance frameworks (including transparency, accountability, fairness in resource allocation, and stakeholder participation) and the effectiveness of education policy outcomes in Mauritius.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.684	0.468	0.462	0.517
a. Predictors: (Constant), Transparency, Accountability, Fairness in Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Participation				
b. Dependent Variable: Effectiveness of Education Policy Outcomes				

Interpretation

The model summary for the regression analysis carried out to investigate the degree to which ethical governance frameworks-which include accountability, transparency, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder involvement-predict the efficacy of education policy outcomes in Mauritius is shown in Table 3.

A relatively significant positive association between the set of variables and the efficacy of education policies was shown by the model's R value of 0.684. An R Square of 0.468 indicates that the use of ethical governance approaches accounts for around 46.8% of the variance in education policy outcomes. This implies that factors about governance have a significant impact on the efficacy of policies.

With 46.2% of the variance explained even after accounting for model complexity, the Adjusted R Square of 0.462 demonstrates that the explanatory power is still strong after accounting for the number of predictors in the model. A very strong model fit is shown by the Standard Error of the Estimate (0.517), which shows comparatively minor differences between expected and actual data.

Table 4: ANOVA:

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	12.485	4	3.121	15.762	0.000
	Residual	20.031	95	0.211		
	Total	32.516	99			
a. Predictors:(Constant), Effectiveness of Education Policy Outcomes						
b. Dependent Variable: Transparency, Accountability, Fairness in Resource Allocation, Stakeholder Participation						

Interpretation

The success of education policy results is the dependent variable, and the ANOVA table assesses whether the independent variables-transparency, accountability, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder participation-collectively predict the dependent variable.

1. **F-value and significance:** The p-value (Sig.) of 0.000 and F-statistic of 15.762 are both below the traditional alpha threshold of 0.05. This suggests that there is statistical significance in the regression model. Put differently, the variance in the efficacy of education policies is substantially explained by the sum of the independent variables.
2. **Residual vs. Regression:** The variance in policy effectiveness explained by the use of ethical governance is displayed by the Regression Sum of Squares (12.485). The variance that the model cannot account for is represented by the Residual Sum of Squares (20.031).
3. **Implications for hypotheses:** The statistical significance of the ANOVA results supports Hypothesis 2 (H02), which states that the efficacy of education policy outcomes in Mauritius is significantly correlated with the use of ethical governance frameworks.

In contrast, Hypothesis 1 (H01) is rejected.

Table 5: Coefficients

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.214	0.182	–	6.67	0.000
	Transparency	0.268	0.061	0.342	4.39	0.000
	Accountability	0.231	0.058	0.319	3.98	0.000
	Fairness in Resource Allocation	0.194	0.072	0.228	2.69	0.008
	Stakeholder Participation	0.257	0.065	0.301	3.95	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: Effectiveness of Education Policy Outcomes						

Interpretation

According to the regression results, the success of education policies is strongly predicted by all aspects of ethical governance, including accountability, openness, equitable resource allocation, and stakeholder engagement ($p < 0.01$). The biggest impacts are shown in transparency and accountability, which are followed by stakeholder involvement and equitable resource distribution. There is a definite positive correlation between ethical governance frameworks and successful educational policy results in Mauritius, since all variables are statistically significant, rejecting H01 and supporting H02.

4.5 Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

The results of structural equation modelling offer a solid empirical foundation for evaluating how ethical governance practices influence the outcomes

of education policy in Mauritius. The statistical correlations between important aspects of governance and the efficacy of policies are shown in this part, providing data that highlights the need to make decisions based on ethical principles to progress egalitarian education.

Table 6: Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

Path (Predictor → Outcome)	Standardised Estimate (β)	Critical Ratio (CR)	P-Value	Decision
Transparency → Policy Effectiveness	0.41	4.86	< 0.001	Significant
Accountability → Policy Effectiveness	0.37	4.22	< 0.001	Significant
Fairness in Resource Allocation → Policy Effectiveness	0.29	3.67	< 0.001	Significant
Stakeholder Participation → Policy Effectiveness	0.34	4.01	< 0.001	Significant
Ethical Governance Framework (Overall) → Policy Effectiveness	0.52	6.14	< 0.001	Significant

Interpretation

The results of the SEM show that the success of education policies in Mauritius is favourably and significantly impacted by all elements of ethical governance, including accountability, openness, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder involvement. Strong ethical practices improve equitable and effective policy results, as evidenced by the overall ethical governance framework's biggest influence. These findings show a distinct and statistically significant link between the application of ethical governance and increased efficacy of education policies, supporting H02 and rejecting H01.

4.5 Discussion of Findings and Implications for Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Results

The SEM findings show that all aspects of ethical governance-transparency, accountability, equitable resource distribution, and stakeholder involvement-have a major beneficial impact on the efficacy of Mauritius' educational policies. These results are consistent with recent research on governance, which highlights that open decision-making procedures promote trust and improve institutional performance (Ahrens & Ferry, 2020). Evidence that well-defined roles and

monitoring procedures lead to more consistent and equal policy results is also seen in the substantial effect of accountability (Dong & Peng, 2022).

Research demonstrating that fair distribution of educational resources lowers structural inequities and improves system efficiency supports the idea that fairness in resource allocation is a critical factor in determining the efficacy of policies (UNESCO, 2021). The success of policies is strongly predicted by stakeholder engagement, supporting claims that inclusive governance improves the legitimacy and responsiveness of educational changes (Mensah & Agyemang, 2020). The highest predictive power is shown by the ethical governance framework as a whole, indicating that integrated governance practices have a synergistic impact on policy implementation. These results suggest that to achieve fair and long-lasting educational outcomes in Mauritius, ethical governance mechanisms must be strengthened. To guarantee constant policy change, policymakers should strengthen accountability frameworks, increase participation processes, and institutionalize ethical norms.

4.7 Thematic Results: Respondents' Perspectives

There was broad agreement, according to an analysis of respondents' viewpoints, about the critical role that ethical governance plays in improving the efficacy of Mauritius' education policy. Four main subthemes were found through thematic analysis: stakeholder involvement, accountability, transparency, and equitable resource distribution.

In the field of education, transparency has been identified as a crucial component in building clarity and trust. Respondents emphasised that policy adherence was much increased and uncertainty was decreased when policy objectives and decision-making procedures were clearly communicated. "When information is openly shared, schools and educators can align their practices more effectively with national policy goals," stated one participant. This is consistent with OECD (2021) results, which highlight how transparent governance methods improve institutional legitimacy and make policy implementation easier.

The respondents emphasised the need for systems to track performance and hold authorities accountable for the results of policies. According to respondents, accountability frameworks fostered a culture of responsibility and promoted adherence to rules. This viewpoint is supported by literature, which contends that fair service delivery and a decrease in corruption depend on responsible governance systems (World Bank, 2020).

It was emphasised that fair educational opportunities depend on resource distribution. Policies that allocate resources according to need rather than seniority or influence, according to participants, resulted in more equitable student results. According to one responder, "closing performance gaps requires ensuring that

disadvantaged schools receive the necessary resources." UNESCO (2022), which connects improved educational attainment and social justice to equitable resource allocation, supports this view.

According to respondents, active involvement of educators, parents, and local communities in the creation and execution of policies is essential. Diverse viewpoints have been shown to increase educational efforts' acceptability and relevance. According to Bruns et al. (2018), participatory methods enhance accountability and efficacy in the creation of policies.

All of these results suggest that by encouraging fairness, openness, and shared accountability, the implementation of thorough ethical governance frameworks enhances the efficacy of education policies. This corroborates the SEM findings, demonstrating that strong ethical standards encourage long-term and successful educational achievements in Mauritius.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that the use of ethical governance and accountability mechanisms significantly improves Mauritius's education policy. The findings indicate that policy results are positively and statistically significantly impacted by stakeholder participation, accountability, transparency, and equitable resource allocation. While accountability processes provide accountability and legal compliance, openness fosters trust and clarity, enabling educators and schools to align with national goals. Equitable resource allocation addresses structural disparities, and inclusive stakeholder engagement strengthens the legitimacy and responsiveness of educational improvements.

These elements work together to provide an integrated framework for ethical governance that maximises the efficacy of policy. The findings highlight the need for policymakers to uphold strong accountability frameworks, strengthen participatory procedures, and institutionalise ethical norms to advance equitable and sustainable education throughout the Mauritian environment.

5.1 Policy Recommendations

The following policy recommendations are put forth for the application of ethical governance and accountability strategies to support fair education in Mauritius in light of the study's results.

In order to ensure that policy objectives, resource allocations, and assessment criteria are publicly available, policymakers should first institutionalise transparent decision-making processes at all levels of the educational system. The percentage of schools that publish yearly performance reports, the frequency of public briefings on policy changes, and the availability of online policy documentation are a few examples of measurable indicators.

Second, robust accountability frameworks, such as regular reporting, performance reviews, and oversight of academic institutions and administrative divisions, have to be reinforced. Indicators for this include the number of corrective actions taken following performance reviews, the proportion of schools that are subject to annual compliance audits, and stakeholder satisfaction scores with accountability processes.

Third, fair resource distribution must be methodically prioritised, with systems in place to guarantee that schools in underprivileged areas receive the appropriate amount of money, faculty, and educational resources. The distribution of skilled teachers across areas, increases in performance measures in previously under-resourced schools, and the ratio of financing per student between urban and rural schools are examples of measurable results.

Fourth, school boards, parent committees, and community advisory councils are examples of institutionalised engagement platforms that should aggressively promote stakeholder participation. Attendance rates at policy consultations, the variety of stakeholder representation, and the pace at which community-suggested projects are implemented are a few examples of indicators.

Lastly, in order to improve the comprehension and application of ethical governance principles, ongoing capacity-building initiatives should be set up for educators, administrators, and legislators. Adoption of suggested governance practices in school operations, pre- and post-training competence tests, and the number of professional development sessions held each year are all ways to gauge progress.

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