

The impact of people's participation on public policy satisfaction in Vietnam

Dampak partisipasi masyarakat terhadap kepuasan kebijakan publik di Vietnam

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Abstract

People's participation in public decision-making not only helps ensure transparency and accountability but also contributes to improving their satisfaction with government policies and operations. This study examines whether transparency in decision-making, trust in public agencies, access to information, and people's awareness of their rights and responsibilities play an important role in promoting their participation. The study also explores whether this participation directly affects people's satisfaction with public decisions and policies. This study uses mixed-method approach through the SEM linear regression model. The analysis of the results shows that transparency, trust, information accessibility and citizen awareness have a positive and significant impact on the level of their participation in public activities. However, increased participation does not necessarily lead to higher levels of satisfaction with public policies, especially when the participation process does not meet people's expectations or lacks transparency and efficiency. The study concludes that, to improve people's satisfaction, it is necessary not only to promote participation, but also to improve the quality of this process, ensuring that participation is substantive and has a clear impact on public decisions. As such, specific recommendations are made to improve public policy and enhance people's participation and satisfaction in the context of modern public governance.

Keywords: people's participation; people satisfaction; public policy; Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

Abstrak

Partisipasi masyarakat dalam pengambilan keputusan publik tidak hanya membantu memastikan transparansi dan akuntabilitas, tetapi juga berkontribusi untuk meningkatkan kepuasan mereka terhadap kebijakan dan operasi pemerintah. Studi ini mengkaji apakah transparansi dalam pengambilan keputusan, kepercayaan terhadap lembaga publik, akses terhadap informasi, dan kesadaran masyarakat terhadap hak dan tanggung jawab mereka memainkan peran penting dalam mendorong partisipasi mereka. Studi ini juga mengeksplorasi apakah partisipasi ini secara langsung memengaruhi kepuasan masyarakat terhadap keputusan dan kebijakan publik. Studi ini menggunakan pendekatan mixed-method melalui model regresi linier SEM. Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa transparansi, kepercayaan, aksesibilitas informasi, dan kesadaran warga negara memiliki dampak positif dan signifikan terhadap tingkat partisipasi mereka dalam kegiatan publik. Namun, peningkatan partisipasi tidak serta merta mengarah pada tingkat kepuasan yang lebih tinggi terhadap kebijakan publik, terutama ketika proses partisipasi tidak memenuhi harapan masyarakat atau kurang transparan dan efisien. Studi ini menyimpulkan bahwa untuk meningkatkan kepuasan masyarakat, perlu tidak hanya untuk mendorong partisipasi, tetapi juga untuk meningkatkan kualitas proses ini, memastikan bahwa partisipasi bersifat substantif dan memiliki dampak yang jelas pada keputusan publik. Dari sana, rekomendasi spesifik dibuat untuk meningkatkan kebijakan publik dan meningkatkan partisipasi dan kepuasan masyarakat dalam konteks tata kelola publik modern.

Kata Kunci: partisipasi masyarakat; kepuasan masyarakat; kebijakan publik; Pemodelan Persamaan Struktural (SEM)

Introduction

In today's complex context, when challenges such as climate change, economic crises and pandemics are taking place, building a transparent, effective and inclusive public governance model is essential. People's participation in public decision-making enhances transparency, accountability and satisfaction with public governance. Key factors influencing this participation include transparency, trust, access to information and public awareness. Transparency promotes trust by providing clear, accessible information about policies, reducing suspicions of corruption and encouraging active participation.

However, participation must be substantive, as formal participation can lead to dissatisfaction. Fair access to information is essential to ensure inclusive participation, and when people see tangible results, satisfaction increases. Trust in public institutions directly affects participation and satisfaction. When people believe that public institutions operate in their best interests, they participate more actively. Conversely, distrust or corruption reduces participation and satisfaction. Public perceptions of rights and responsibilities are also important — when people understand their roles, they contribute more responsibly and feel more ownership of decisions. Meaningful participation strengthens public governance and satisfaction. However, if participation is perceived as a formality or results fall short of expectations, dissatisfaction increases. In-depth research on factors such as transparency, trust, access, and public perception can help policymakers develop strategies to promote meaningful participation, increase trust, and build a more equitable and sustainable society.

Transparency is defined as “the degree to which an organization is willing to allow citizens to monitor its activities and participate in its policy processes” (Grimmelikhuijsen 2012). According to Meijer et al. (2012), transparency refers to public access to information. It is considered a key element in helping the public monitor and influence government decision-making processes, enhance accountability, promote democratic deliberation, and facilitate people’s participation, the cornerstone of good governance. Transparency is not just about making information public but also about ensuring that that information can be processed and understood by the public (Johnson 2021, Guillamón et al. 2023). Transparency is described as the ability of an organization to collect and disseminate accurate and relevant information and knowledge; providing open access to the entire community to all information related to all activities through public information management systems (Adil et al. 2022, Bavaresco et al. 2024). When government information is public and accessible, people are more likely to participate in decision-making and monitor government activities (Newig et al. 2018). This engagement can take many forms such as participating in public meetings, providing feedback or participating in community projects (Meijer et al. 2012). This encourages proactive people’s participation (OECD 2020). When information is transparent and accessible, people can monitor and evaluate government performance and participate proactively. Transparency is not only a value in itself but also a tool to promote democracy and accountability, which needs to be assessed in the specific context (Fung 2015, Pozen 2019).

Besides, Transparency becomes a control factor against mismanagement and corruption, and promotes good governance and accountability for protecting public interests and people’s rights (Jashari & Pepaj 2018). According to Zhao et al. (2023), transparency can be applied through digital tools, which help people better understand government decisions and actions, and promote people’s participation by providing new communication channels, such as online discussion forums, surveys, and feedback tools. Tools such as participatory budgets, open data platforms, and public feedback systems are examples of information transparency that help people stay informed and engaged in public affairs (World Bank 2020). According to Bauhr & Grimes (2014), transparency can reduce corruption by expanding the monitoring capabilities of people and social organizations. However, Norris (2011) and Bauhr & Grimes (2014) also warn that transparency can lead to discontent or resignation if people perceive that corruption is endemic and irreversible. Florini (2007) added that the right to know is a key element in creating a more open and just world. According to Cujbá’s (2022) research on transparency and people’s participation from the perspective of local governance, transparency plays an important role in enhancing local democracy, people should be informed by public authorities and motivated to participate in public decision-making. An independent study by the OECD (2020) found that representative participation processes, such as People Assemblies, Juries and Panels, are increasingly being used by public authorities to engage people directly in addressing the most pressing policy challenges.

Trust is an important factor to encourage people’s participation in public activities. Hardin (2002) has extensively researched trust and trustworthiness in communities, pointing out that social trust is an important foundation for cooperation and community participation. Fung (2015) and Levi & Stoker (2000) emphasized that people’s trust in government agencies and decision-making processes can greatly influence their level of participation. People’s participation in decision-making can increase

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trust when they see that their opinions are heard and have real impact. When people trust government, they tend to participate more actively in government activities and programs, and tend to participate more actively in decision-making and public services (OECD 2020, World Bank 2020). Trust increases when people feel that the government is competent, genuinely cares about the interests of the people, and maintains honesty (Lee & Schachter 2019). Trust in the political system is an important predictor of people’s offline and online political participation, suggesting that, in order to participate in activities such as elections, protests, or political meetings, people need to have a strong belief that the democratic system and processes will protect their interests (Bobbio 2019, Ariel et al. 2024).

According to research by Pecorari & Cuesta (2024), political trust influences participation when combined with specific factors, but this relationship varies across types of participation and government agencies. Theories like “anonymous democracy” and “deliberative democracy” have been discussed, but neither is dominant in all cases. Increasing participation requires both significant changes and small interventions to make institutions more accessible to the public. Trust in the effectiveness of public services enhances political engagement, particularly in e-participation, where concerns about privacy and cybersecurity have grown (Wang et al. 2023). Trust in government is influenced by both personal experiences and broader political or cultural factors, like satisfaction with democracy (Christensen & Laegreid 2005, Grimmelikhuijsen 2012). Political beliefs strongly affect participation, and declining trust leads to lower electoral participation and democratic stability (Dalton 2006, Fung 2015). According to OECD (2020), trust is vulnerable, as seen post-financial crisis and COVID-19. Trust and participation are mutually reinforcing; involving people in decision-making strengthens their trust in government, fostering transparency and accountability (Kumagai & Iorio 2018, Campbell 2023). Properly implemented participation processes help build “process-based trust,” where people’s positive experiences strengthen trust in institutions (Kumagai & Iorio 2018).

Public information accessibility enables people to easily obtain necessary information and participate in public activities, ensuring that decision-making processes are transparent, inclusive, and open to diverse audiences by presenting information clearly and understandably. This includes the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to create online platforms and portals and it is also argued that information and communications technology (ICT) can create a culture of transparency and promote people’s participation (Christensen & Laegreid 2005, Bertot et al. 2010, Meijer et al. 2012). According to Mountasser & Abdellatif (2023), digital transformation has great potential to increase people’s participation and access to government data, thereby strengthening democracy and making governments more responsive to citizens, encouraging them to participate more actively in public affairs. Ruhlandt (2018) conducted a study on information accessibility and citizen participation in smart city governance (SCG), enhancing transparency, facilitating citizen and non-profit organizations to participate in decision-making through the provision of open and public data.

A study by Bobbio (2019) emphasizes the importance of information accessibility and people’s participation through public participation processes; specifically, these processes need to ensure that information is comprehensive, accessible, and tightly controlled. Chadwick (2003) adds that interaction between the state and people in the Internet age, through e-government, is also an important factor in enhancing people’s access and participation. Governments need to ensure that their services and information are accessible to all segments of society, including the digitally disadvantaged (United Nations 2020). Bauhr & Grimes (2014) also point out that access to information must be accompanied by mechanisms so that people can use that information effectively.

Research by Randma-Liiv & Lember (2022) shows that that institutions, political processes, and legal rules play an important role in facilitating democratic participation. They provide a platform for individual expression, information transfer, participation rights, and participant protection, ensuring that e-participation takes place within a transparent framework. This helps build trust and improve the quality of policy decisions through an inclusive consultation process. Research by Naranjo-Zolotov et al. (2019) shows that ease of access to information and support from authorities is a decisive factor in maintaining participation on e-participation platforms. Lack of clear information or support can

reduce people's motivation. From another perspective, WeResearch (2021) emphasizes the importance of ensuring public consultations are accessible to everyone. Notices should be posted across multiple channels in plain language, allowing everyone, including vulnerable groups, to contribute.

Awareness refers to the degree to which people are aware of opportunities and ways to participate in decision-making processes. Greater awareness leads to more active participation and improved people's satisfaction with government. This requires a strong communication strategy on the part of the government to increase public awareness of their rights and opportunities (Meijer et al. 2012). Awareness of public issues and government activities is an important factor in promoting civic engagement. When people have a good awareness of government policies and activities, they will be motivated to participate and contribute to the decision-making process (OECD 2020). According to the World Bank (2020) and Huda & Suharno (2023), people's awareness of their rights and responsibilities as well as the services and information provided by government helps people better understand the processes of participation, enhancing their participation. Transparency is said to increase public awareness of government activities and corruption.

However, perceptions of widespread corruption can lead to public distrust and resignation (Bauhr & Grimes 2014). Fishkin (1991) and Carpini & Keeter (1996) emphasize that, when people have good awareness of government policies and activities, they will be motivated to participate and contribute to the decision-making process. Direct democratic participation mechanisms, such as people's assemblies, can improve people's awareness and participation in political decision-making (Fung 2015). Awareness of democracy and people's rights is an important factor. Norris (2011) analyzes the enlightenment perception of democracy and the factors that influence this perception, such as historical experience of democracy and cultural values, which in turn influence satisfaction and people's participation.

The study by Shaik Khatibi et al. (2021) emphasizes that public awareness of climate change risks can help improve engagement in decision-making and related policies. Revez et al. (2022) show that to achieve sustainable development goals, there needs to be a major change in public awareness and participation, and social consensus to address the challenges of transformation strategies. Odoom et al. (2024) show that lack of awareness about the importance and objectives of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) reduces people's commitment and participation in related policies. From a smart city perspective, studies by Bastos et al. (2022) and Van Twist et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of promoting people's participation in smart city decisions by establishing mechanisms that allow them to participate, challenge decisions, ensure a more democratic process through education on rights and responsibilities, provide transparent information, and create channels for them to effectively express their dissatisfaction. From a knowledge management perspective, research by Kassa & Ning (2023) shows that the application of knowledge management (KM) helps to raise citizens' awareness by improving the quality of information and public services, helping them access accurate and timely information and promoting active participation in public management and decision making. Hong & Lee (2023) emphasize the importance of citizen awareness and participation in public service delivery, and introduce the SG-PSIM model to optimize this participation through smart technology, helping to collect opinions more effectively, ensuring public services are relevant to people's needs and enhancing transparency and trust in government decisions.

From the theoretical overview presented above, it can be seen that people's participation in public policy decision-making and implementation is influenced by many factors, including transparency, trust, accessibility, and people's awareness. Transparency helps people monitor and influence government decisions by providing public and understandable information, thereby encouraging them to actively participate in community activities and public policies (Meijer et al. 2012, Guillamón et al. 2023). Trust in government is also a determinant of participation, because when people believe in the competence, care, and honesty of the government, they tend to actively participate in government activities and decision-making (Lee & Schachter 2019, OECD 2020).

Accessibility of public information also promotes participation, as when information is presented clearly and easily understood, people are more likely to access and participate in policy decisions

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(Naranjo-Zolotov et al. 2019, Mountasser & Abdellatif 2023). Finally, awareness of government rights, responsibilities, and activities plays an important role in promoting people’s participation. When people are well-informed about public issues, they are more motivated to participate and contribute to decision-making processes (Fung 2015, OECD 2020). People’s participation in e-participation systems also influences their satisfaction with public and government services in the context of digital transformation. The ability to access information effectively through feedback and complaint systems such as 311 and MajiVoice not only improves public services but also increases satisfaction by resolving problems quickly and transparently (Meijer et al. 2012, Peixoto 2017). Satisfaction with these systems depends on many factors such as information quality, service support and emotional attachment to the locality; when people feel satisfied in both technical and emotional aspects, it promotes active participation and creates a positive feedback loop between participation and satisfaction (Zolotov et al. 2018).

The relationship between people’s participation and satisfaction with public services is complex and context-dependent, for example, in Peru, limited participation in local governance due to a discouraging environment has led to low satisfaction, suggesting the need for governance reforms and increased public participation to build trust and promote sustainable urban development (Castañeda-Sánchez et al. 2023). Similarly, research shows that participation in public governance can promote social innovation, but satisfaction is only improved when participation aligns with the goals of both the government and the public (Schmidhuber et al. 2019). Furthermore, people’s satisfaction with public services is determined not only by the level of participation but also by the type of participation and the specific context. For example, in smart cities, participation only increases satisfaction when citizens feel that their opinions are truly considered in the decision-making process (Xu & Zhu 2020).

In the context of health policy reform in Hong Kong, participation can increase trust in the government; however, this relationship is not always strong and depends on the transparency of the process (He & Ma 2020). Although increasing people’s participation in public affairs is often seen as a positive step toward improving policy satisfaction, it does not always guarantee the desired outcomes, emphasizing the importance of designing participation mechanisms that are transparent, inclusive, and responsive to people’s needs and expectations (Nabatchi & Leighninger 2015, United Nations 2020). In addition, strong legal frameworks and participatory governance, such as through referendums, can enhance people cooperation and compliance, contributing to higher satisfaction with public services (Tyran 2001). In addition, satisfaction with e-participation is also influenced by expectations and emotional attachment to the locality, suggesting that greater participation does not always translate into higher satisfaction (Zolotov et al. 2018). This view is further supported by studies showing that although improving public services can achieve baseline levels of satisfaction, they do not necessarily lead to higher satisfaction (Collins et al. 2019, Metwally & Samir 2024).

The relationship between people’s participation and satisfaction with public policies is complex, influenced by various factors beyond just participation levels, such as the quality of participation, decision outcomes, government responsiveness, and expectation management. Superficial or ineffective participation can lead to dissatisfaction. Increased participation may also raise expectations, and, if these are unmet, conflicts may arise, further lowering satisfaction. This study surveys people in Vietnam to explore how participation impacts their satisfaction, aiming to clarify the direct or indirect relationship and suggest strategies to enhance both participation and satisfaction in public policies.

Research Method

The study employed a mixed-method approach, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods to thoroughly investigate the research topic. Initially, qualitative research was conducted by synthesizing theories and findings from previous studies to propose hypotheses and develop a research model. This process was further enhanced through discussions with 10 experts who are managers and policymakers at both central and local government levels. These discussions aimed to calibrate and refine the research scales and models, ensuring they are better suited to the specific research context.

Following the qualitative phase, quantitative research was carried out to quantify the impact of various factors on people's participation and their satisfaction with public policies in Vietnam. The quantitative analysis involved several basic techniques such as statistical analysis, Cronbach's alpha reliability assessment, exploratory factor analysis (EFA), confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The survey data were collected from 250 individuals across various provinces and cities in Vietnam, yielding 226 valid samples over a data collection period from March 2024 to May 2024. The quantitative findings provided a detailed reflection of the factors affecting public satisfaction with policies.

The sample size used in the study was determined based on the requirements of exploratory factor analysis. Referring to the guidelines of Bollen (1989), Trong & Ngoc (2008) and Hair et al. (2010), the sample size should be at least five times the number of variables in the factor analysis. Given that there were 25 observed variables in this study, a minimum sample size of 125 was required. To ensure a sufficient number of valid samples, the study initially chose a larger sample size of 250, anticipating that more than 50% of the total samples collected would be valid. The research sample was selected randomly, with most participants being workers and freelance laborers residing in boarding houses across 18 provinces and cities in Vietnam. The use of a mixed-method approach allowed for a comprehensive examination of the research topic, combining the depth of qualitative insights with the breadth and generalizability of quantitative data. This approach enabled the study to capture a more nuanced understanding of the factors influencing people's participation in public activities and their satisfaction with public policies.

Table 1.
Descriptive statistical results

Variable	Content	Frequency (person)	Rate (%)
Gender	Female	105	46.5
	Male	121	53.5
Academic level	Elementary/ High school	184	81.4
	Bachelor degree	32	14.2
	Post-graduate	10	4.4
Age	Under 25	53	23.5
	From 25 to 35	76	33.6
	From 35 to 45	68	30.1
	Over 45	29	12.8
Job	Worker	112	49.6
	Free labor	72	31.9
	Office staff	24	10.6
	Student	18	7.9

Source: SPSS 20 analysis results

The study sent out 250 questionnaires (50 online and 200 in person), receiving 226 responses (26 online and 200 in person). The income survey form was checked for validity and reliability to eliminate unsatisfactory answer sheets, including blank answer sheets, inappropriate answer sheets, and answer sheets with only 1 answer for most of the questions. For online answer sheets, the study used statistical functions on Excel software to select. With direct paper answer sheets, selective research was carried out using the manual ballot counting method. After screening, the remaining answer sheets were 226, which were coded and analyzed using SPSS 20 software.

The study took random data, evenly distributed on gender variables: female (46.5%) and male (53.5%). Regarding educational level, the data focused on the Primary/High school level (81.4%). Regarding age, the data show that the majority of people surveyed are long-time workers with a lot of experience, focusing on the group from 25 - 35 years old (33.6%). Regarding employment, the survey focused on workers, who are deeply affected by public policy (49.6%). Detailed results are presented in Table 1.

Table 2.
Scales of factors in the research model

No	Factor	Encode	Scale	Source
1	Transparency	TP1	People feel that the government provides enough information about the process and outcomes of policy decisions.	Norris (2011); Grimmelikhuijsen (2012); Meijer et al. (2012); Bauhr (2014); Fung (2015); Jashari (2018); Newig et al. (2018); Pozen (2019); OECD (2020); Johnson (2021); Adil et al. (2022); Cujbă (2022); Guillamón (2023); Zhao et al. (2023); Bavaresco et al. (2024).
		TP2	Information from the government helps me understand the impact of policies on my community.	
		TP3	People see that the government is transparent in explaining the reasons and purposes of new policies.	
		TP4	People feel they have enough opportunities to express their views and opinions about government policies.	
		TP5	Information and data from the government help me become more confident when participating in civic activities.	
2	Trust	TR1	People trust that their opinions are heard and have real impact when participating in government decision-making processes.	Levi (2000); Christensen & Laegreid (2005); Hardin (2002); Dalton (2006); Grimmelikhuijsen (2012); Fung (2015); Kumagai (2018); Bobbio (2019); Lee (2019); OECD (2020); World Bank (2020); Wang et al. (2023); Campbell (2023); Ariel et al. (2024); Pecorari (2024).
		TR2	People feel the government delivers public services effectively and meets people's needs.	
		TR3	People trust opportunities to participate through digital transformation platforms in public service delivery and e-government.	
		TR4	People are concerned about privacy and cybersecurity when participating in activities on digital platforms.	
		TR5	The level of people's trust in government agencies greatly affects people's participation in political activities and public services.	
3	Accessibility	AC1	People feel that public information from the government is provided in a way that is easy to understand and accessible.	
		AC2	People can easily access and search for public information needed to participate in public activities.	Christensen & Laegreid (2005); Chadwick (2003); Bertot et al. (2010); Meijer et al. (2012); Bauhr (2014); Ruhlandt (2018); Bobbio (2019); Naranjo-Zolotov et al. (2019); United Nations (2020); WeResearch (2021); Randma-Liiv (2022); Mountasser (2023).
		AC3	Government online platforms and portals make it easy for people to participate in decision-making and community activities.	
		AC4	Governments use information and communications technology (ICT) effectively to create a culture of transparency and promote people's participation	
		AC5	People feel that all walks of life, including the digitally disadvantaged, can easily access and use government information and public services.	

No	Factor	Encode	Scale	Source
4	Awareness	AW1	People are well aware of opportunities and ways to participate in government decision-making processes.	Fishkin (1991); Carpini (1996); Norris (2011); Meijer et al. (2012); Bauhr (2014); Fung (2015); OECD (2020); World Bank (2020); Shaik Khatibi et al. (2021); Bastos et al. (2022); Revez et al. (2022); Hong (2023); Huda (2023); Kassa (2023); Van Twist et al. (2023) Odoom et al. (2024).
		AW2	People have enough information about government policies and activities to actively participate in the decision-making process.	
		AW3	People clearly understand their rights and responsibilities in participating in public activities and decision-making processes.	
		AW4	Government provides adequate information and materials to help people better understand democratic participation processes.	
		AW5	People know how to use the information provided by the government to effectively participate in policy activities.	
5	People's Participation	PP1	People are fully and clearly informed about policy content on the websites of central and local governments, press agencies, and media.	Tyran (2001); Meijer et al. (2012); Fung (2015); Nabatchi & Leighninger (2015); Peixoto (2017); Zolotov et al. (2018); Collins et al. (2019); Lee (2019); Naranjo-Zolotov et al. (2019); Schmidhuber et al. (2019); He (2020); OECD (2020); United Nations (2020); Xu (2020); Castañeda-Sánchez et al. (2023); Guillamón et al. (2023); Mountasser (2023); Metwally and Samir (2024).
		PP2	People believe that your participation in direct policy development in local government and neighborhood groups will be heard and have real influence.	
		PP3	People can easily access and use government online platforms to learn about policies and provide feedback.	
		PP4	People learn about opportunities to participate in government policy decision-making, such as attending public meetings or providing feedback.	
		PP5	People are fully and clearly informed about policy contents at the local government and residential groups, and can easily participate in giving comments and amending inappropriate policies.	
6	People's Satisfaction	PS1	People are satisfied with the government in providing transparent information about policy decisions and processes.	Peixoto (2017); Zolotov et al. (2018); Collins et al. (2019); He (2020); Schmidhuber et al. (2019); United Nations (2020); Xu (2020); Castañeda-Sánchez et al. (2023); Metwally (2024).
		PS2	People believe that governments and policymakers act for the common good of society.	
		PS3	People can easily and effectively access information through government feedback and complaint systems.	
		PS4	People feel their feedback is valued and the participation process is transparent.	
		PS5	The government's digital transformation projects in administrative reform are designed and implemented in a transparent and responsible manner, ensuring people's participation.	

Source: Compiled by author

Table 2 presents the results of the scale of factors in the research model, based on the criteria presented in the theoretical overview of the research, including: Transparency, Trust, Accessibility, Awareness, People's Participation and People's Satisfaction. Detailed results are presented in Table 2.

Results and Discussion

In this section, divided into several sub-chapters, several things are explained, including: (1) assessing the reliability of influencing factors through Cronbach's alpha and EFA analysis; (2) Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results; (3) model analysis results of SEM showing the relationship between factors.

Assessing the reliability of influencing factors through Cronbach's alpha and EFA analysis

Assessing Cronbach's alpha reliability is the first step in implementing the SEM structural model, with 30 variables of six factor groups included in the analysis: Transparency (TP), Trust (TR), Accessibility (AC), Awareness (AW), People's Participation (PP), and People's Satisfaction (PS); all variables meet the requirements (total variable correlation coefficients are greater than 0.3). Along with that, all Cronbach's alpha coefficients are 0.6 or higher (Hair et al. 2010, Taber 2018); ranging from a low of 0.790 (Transparency) to a high of 0.920 (People's Satisfaction). Detailed results are presented in Table 3.

Table 3.
Summary of Cronbach's alpha coefficient

Factor	Number of initial variables	Cronbach's alpha	Number of valid variables
Transparency	5	0.790	5
Trust	5	0.861	5
Accessibility	5	0.848	5
Awareness	5	0.832	5
People's Participation	5	0.806	5
People's Satisfaction	5	0.920	5

Source: SPSS 20 analysis results

Thus, after evaluating Cronbach's alpha reliability, the study had 30 suitable variables belonging to six factors to include in the EFA factor analysis to explore the scale structure of the six factor groups: Transparency (TP), Trust (TR), Accessibility (AC), Awareness (AW), People's Participation (PP), People's Satisfaction (PS). EFA analysis discovered one bad variable of the model, PP1 belonging to Transparency, leading to the variables of the model not converging according to the given group of factors. Therefore, the author removed the PP1 variable and then ran the model again. In the second EFA analysis results, the model achieved convergence according to the factor group, ensuring the model's reliability. The results are presented in Table 4.

EFA factor analysis with KMO coefficient reached 0.742, greater than than 0.5 (Hair et al. 2010, Cleff 2019). This confirms that the EFA results are completely suitable for exploring the structure of the scales. Along with that, the Bartlett test achieved a Chi-square value of 3195.136 with Sig. coefficient less than 5%, showing that the results of EFA factor analysis are completely statistically significant.

Table 4.
Results of EFA factor analysis

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
PS2	.905					
PS1	.897					
PS4	.868					
PS3	.864					
PS5	.817					
TR2		.861				
TR3		.810				
TR5		.793				
TR1		.772				
TR4		.768				
AC2			.863			
AC3			.800			
AC1			.793			
AC5			.781			
AC4			.706			
AW2				.861		
AW5				.790		
AW4				.749		
AW3				.744		
AW1				.721		
TP1					.825	
TP4					.810	
TP2					.760	
TP3					.724	
TP5					.560	
PP2						.814
PP4						.811
PP3						.719
PP5						.572
KMO = 0.742; Bartlett's Test of Sphericity = 3195.136; df = 406; sig. = 0.000						
Eigenvalues	4.277	3.700	2.959	2.859	2.581	2.075
Variance (%)	14.749	12.757	10.202	9.860	8.900	7.156
Cumulative (%)	14.749	27.056	37.708	47.568	56.468	63.624

Source: SPSS 20 analysis results

Moreover, the results of EFA factor analysis show that the breakpoint is at the 6th line with an eigenvalue of 2.075, greater than 1; this confirms that the variables included in the analysis are arranged into six factor groups and the total variance extracted at the 6th line is 63.624%, greater than 50% (Hair et al. 2010, Goretzko et al. 2019) and shows that the variability of the data is explained up to 63.624%. Not only that, the factor rotation results show that the 29 variables included in the analysis are specifically arranged into six factor groups: Transparency (TP), Trust (TR), Accessibility (AC), Awareness (AW), People’s Participation (PP), People’s Satisfaction (PS) according to specific results in Table 4.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) results

Using the results of EFA factor rotation, the author entered CFA factor analysis and obtained the coefficients Chi-square/df = 1.228, which is less than 3; GFI = 0.886, which is greater than 0.8; TLI = 0.969 which is greater than 0.9; CFI = 0.973 which is greater than 0.9; and RMSEA = 0.032 which is less than 0.08. This shows that the CFA analysis results fit the data well and all standardized weights are greater than 0.5, so all variables are suitable or, in other words, the concepts achieve convergent validity (Kline, 2015; Xia & Yang, 2018). Detailed results are presented in Table 5 and Figure 1.

Table 5.
Criteria for evaluating CFA analysis results according to standardized coefficients

Indicator	Value
Chi-square/df	1.228
P-value	0.02
GFI	0.886
TLI	0.969
CFI	0.973
RMSEA	0.032

Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

Using the results of CFA analysis, the author calculates the composite reliability indices and the total variance extracted of all factors; As a result, the combined reliability coefficients of the factors are greater than 0.7 and the total variance extracted (TVE) of Trust, Accessibility, Awareness and People’s Satisfaction is greater than 0.5; however, the total variance extracted of Transparency and People’s Participation are less than 0.5. TVE is lower than 0.5 and this is interpreted as meaning that the latent factor only explains part of the variance of the observed variables (Fornell & Larcker 1981, Huang et al. 2013). Detailed results are presented in Table 6.

Table 6.
Summarize the composite reliability value and total variance extracted factors

Factor	Composite Reliability	Total Variance Extracted
Transparency	0.789	0.440
Trust	0.867	0.569
Accessibility	0.858	0.552
Awareness	0.840	0.515
People’s Participation	0.730	0.417
People’s Satisfaction	0.926	0.718

Source: Author’s calculation results

According to Fornell & Larcker (1981) and Huang et al. (2013), a Cronbach’s alpha coefficient greater than 0.7 is enough to conclude convergent validity. The concepts achieve discriminant value because the correlation coefficients for each pair have Sig. coefficients less than 5%, which means the pairwise correlation coefficient of the concepts is different from 1 at the 95% confidence level.

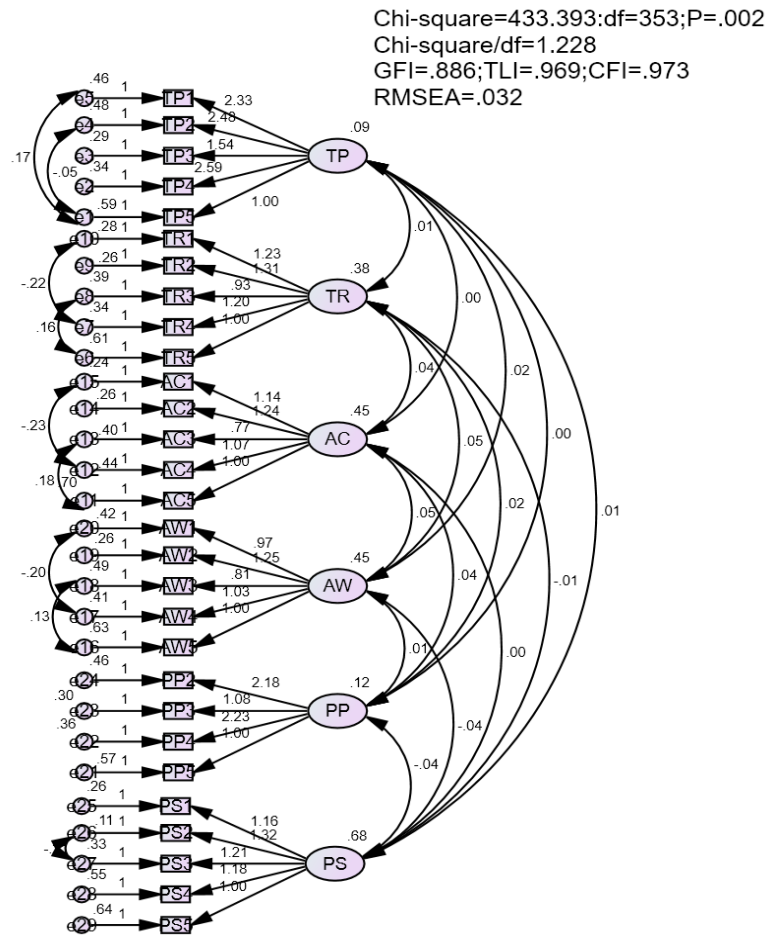


Figure 1.
 Results of CFA analysis according to the standardized coefficients of the factor
 Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

Table 7.
 SEM model evaluation criteria according to standardized coefficients

No	Indicator	Value
1	Chi-square/df	1.709
2	P-value	0.00
3	GFI	0.858
4	TLI	0.902
5	CFI	0.915
6	RMSEA	0.056

Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

Next, the author converted the CFA analysis results to the SEM model and obtained the coefficients Chi-square/df = 1.709, which is less than 3; GFI = 0.858 which is greater than 0.8; TLI = 0.902 which is greater than 0.9; CFI = 0.915 which is greater than 0.9; and RMSEA = 0.056 which is less than 0.08. This shows that the CFA analysis results fit the data well (Kline 2015, Xia & Yang 2018). Detailed results are presented in Table 7 and Figure 2.

The p-value for all relationships were 0.00, indicating that each relationship was statistically significant. The CR values for all relationships are high, exceeding the threshold of 1.96, with significance level Sig. coefficients less than 0.05 (Kline 2015), indicating that the estimates are statistically significant and reliable. The estimates show both positive and negative relationships in Table 8.

Table 8.
SEM model results

	Relationship	Estimate	SE	CR	P	
TP	<-->	TR	0.077	0.066617	13.85533	0.00
TP	<-->	AC	0.001	0.066815	14.95167	0.00
TP	<-->	AW	0.077	0.066617	13.85533	0.00
TP	<-->	PP	0.031	0.066783	14.50964	0.00
TR	<-->	AC	0.104	0.066453	13.48322	0.00
TR	<-->	AW	0.129	0.066257	13.14577	0.00
TR	<-->	PP	0.089	0.06655	13.68892	0.00
AC	<-->	AW	0.113	0.066387	13.36098	0.00
AC	<-->	PP	0.184	0.065675	12.42491	0.00
AW	<-->	PP	0.05	0.066732	14.2361	0.00
TP	<-->	PS	0.034	0.066777	14.46613	0.00
TR	<-->	PS	-0.022	0.066799	15.2996	0.00
AC	<-->	PS	-0.002	0.066815	14.99659	0.00
AW	<-->	PS	-0.077	0.066617	16.16706	0.00
PP	<-->	PS	-0.138	0.066176	17.19656	0.00

Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

Chi-square=606.839;df=355;P=.000
 Chi-square/df=1.709
 GFI=.858;TLI=.902;CFI=.915
 RMSEA=.056

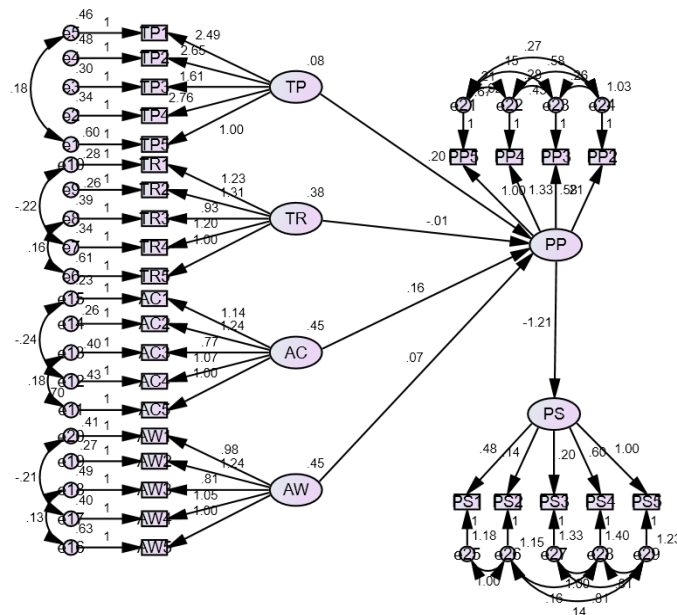


Figure 2.

The results of the SEM structural model show the impact of the factors
 Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

Model analysis results

The results of the SEM model showing the relationship of the factors all show Sig. coefficients (P) of the relationships are all less than 5%. Therefore, the relationships between factors are statistically significant. As the regression coefficients are all greater than 0, this shows a positive relationship (positive impact) between factors. In the SEM analysis in Table 9, we can see the relationships between People's Participation and factors such as Transparency, Trust, Accessibility and Awareness, we can clearly see what factors promote or hinder their participation and People's Satisfaction. Positive relationships indicate which factors support people's participation, while negative relationships indicate factors that may lead to a decline in trust and satisfaction.

Table 9.
SEM model results

Relationship	Standardized regression coefficient	Regression coefficients are rounded according to the diagram
People's Participation <--- Transparency	0.198	0.2
People's Participation <--- Trust	-0.14	-0.1
People's Participation <--- Accessibility	0.165	0.2
People's Participation <--- Awareness	0.75	0.8
People's Satisfaction <--- People Participation	-1.214	-1.21

Source: AMOS 20 analysis results

First, transparency has a positive impact on people's participation with a standardized regression coefficient of 0.198. Although this relationship is not strong, when information is clearly provided, citizens will be confident and motivated to participate in the decision-making process. Next, access to public information also has a positive impact with a coefficient of 0.165. This shows that when information and services are easily accessible, people tend to participate more.

The strongest relationship is between awareness and people's participation, with a coefficient of 0.75. When awareness of social issues and public decision-making is enhanced, people will participate more actively, because clear understanding and awareness will encourage them to contribute to the development and improvement of public policies. In contrast, people's participation and trust have a negative relationship with a coefficient of -0.14, indicating that when trust is high, people may not feel the need to participate because they believe that the system is operating effectively.

Another notable negative relationship is between participation and people's satisfaction, with a coefficient of -1.214. Although participation is important, it can lead to dissatisfaction if expectations are not met. In conclusion, to promote people's participation, transparency, accessibility and awareness play an important role. However, expectations need to be managed and decision-making efficiency improved to ensure public satisfaction.

Figure 3 shows an overview of the research model after conducting CFA factor analysis and SEM model on factors affecting people's participation and citizen satisfaction with public policy along with a theoretical overview of previous studies. From the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) and the provided theoretical content, it can be seen that people's participation in decision-making and public policy implementation is influenced by multiple factors, including Transparency, Trust, Accessibility, and Awareness. Transparency, with a coefficient of 0.2, shows a positive impact on People's Participation, meaning that when government information and decisions are clear and accessible, people are more likely to engage actively in community activities and public policies (Meijer et al. 2012, Guillamón et al. 2023). Trust, with a negative coefficient (-0.1), indicates a slight inverse relationship with participation, suggesting that, as trust in the government increases, some citizens might feel less compelled to participate directly, believing in the government's competence (Lee & Schachter 2019, OECD 2020).

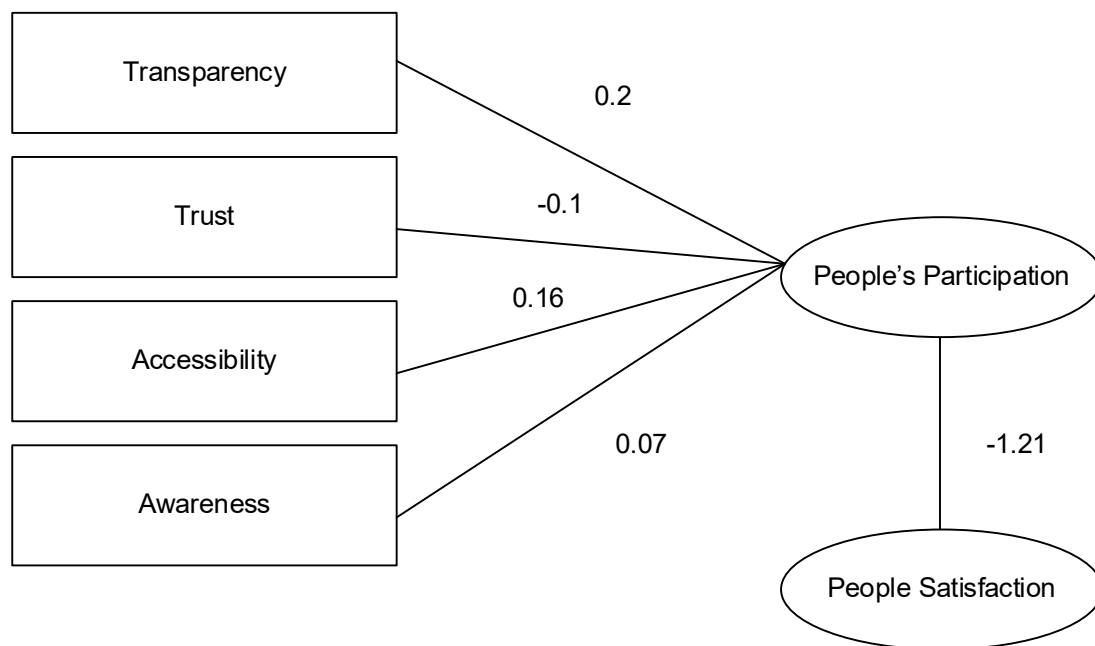


Figure 3.

SEM model of factors affecting people's participation and people's satisfaction with public policy
Source: Compiled by author

The accessibility of public information, with a coefficient of 0.16, shows that when information is readily available and easily understood, citizens are more likely to engage in policy decision-making (Naranjo-Zolotov et al. 2019, Mountasser & Abdellatif 2023). Awareness, with a coefficient of 0.07, indicates a mild positive impact on participation, suggesting that when people are well-informed about their rights, responsibilities, and government activities, they tend to participate more in public policy processes (Fung 2015, OECD 2020). However, the relationship between people's participation and their satisfaction with public services is complex, as reflected by a negative coefficient (-1.21). This indicates that increased participation does not necessarily lead to higher satisfaction, possibly because people's expectations are not met, or the participation process is ineffective or lacks transparency, leading to disappointment or a sense of being deceived (Zolotov et al. 2018, Castañeda-Sánchez et al. 2023). Therefore, while increasing people's participation in public affairs is often seen as a positive step toward improving satisfaction with public policy, it does not always guarantee the desired outcomes. This underscores the importance of carefully designing participation mechanisms that are transparent, fair, and responsive to people's needs and expectations (Nabatchi & Leighninger 2015, United Nations 2020).

Conclusion

Based on this research, the author focuses on showing the impact of factors on people's satisfaction with public policy in Vietnam. Accordingly, the author has synthesized fundamental theories related to people's satisfaction and their participation in the public policy decision-making process. Based on the results of previous researchers, the author has synthesized measurement scales and proposed a proposed research model along with conducting qualitative research to adjust the scale and the model to better suit the research context. The main results of the study show the impact of factors on people's satisfaction with public policy in Vietnam, specifically: (1) Transparency: Transparency in information and procedures. Government decision-making has a positive impact on people's participation, thereby enhancing their satisfaction with public policy. (2) Trust: People's trust in government agencies and decision-making processes has an important impact on their level of participation. When people believe that their opinions are heard and have an impact, they will participate more actively, thereby increasing satisfaction. (3) Accessibility: The ability to access information easily and effectively helps people feel they can monitor and evaluate government activities, thereby encouraging participation. increased initiative and increased

satisfaction. (4) Awareness: When people are highly aware of opportunities and ways to participate in decision-making processes, they will participate more actively and feel more satisfied with government policies. (5) People's Participation: People's active participation in the decision-making process and monitoring of government activities has a direct impact on their level of satisfaction with public policy.

Based on the results of the research model, the author proposes a number of recommendations to improve people's satisfaction with public policy based on factors affecting participation as follows: (1) Enhance transparency in information: The government needs to provide information about the process and results of policy decisions in a clear and easy-to-understand manner. This includes publicizing the reasons and purposes of new policies, ensuring people have enough opportunity to express their views and opinions. Use information and communication technology (ICT) platforms to create online information portals, helping people easily access and understand government activities and policies. (2) Building and maintaining people's trust: The government needs to ensure that people's opinions are heard and have real influence in the decision-making process. This can be done through direct democratic participation mechanisms such as people assemblies or online participation platforms. Public services should be provided effectively and meet people's needs, thereby increasing their trust in government capacity. (3) Improve access to information: Ensure that public information from the government is presented in a clear and easy-to-understand manner, easily accessible to all segments of society, including those with disadvantaged digital backgrounds. Use online feedback and complaint systems so people can easily access and use public information. (4) Increase public awareness: The government needs to develop a strong communication strategy to increase public awareness of their rights and opportunities to participate. This includes providing adequate information and materials to help people better understand democratic participation processes and their rights. Educate and propagate about public issues and government activities, thereby motivating people to participate and contribute to the decision-making process. (5) Improve online participation mechanisms: Deploy online participation platforms in a transparent and responsible manner, creating trust and encouraging active participation from people. Ensure these mechanisms are easy to use and protect people's privacy and security when participating in activities on digital platforms. These recommendations aim to create a transparent, accessible and trustworthy environment, thereby encouraging the active participation of people and enhancing their satisfaction with public policies.

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