Open Data Initiatives and Governance in South Africa: A Review of Transparency Practices

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Abstract

Open data initiatives have emerged as a critical tool for enhancing transparency and accountability in governance across various countries. In South Africa, these initiatives aim to promote public trust by making government information available to citizens. A comprehensive search strategy was employed using academic databases such as JSTOR, Google Scholar, and Web of Science. Studies published between and were included, focusing on studies that discuss the implementation and impact of open data initiatives in South Africa. The review identified a significant proportion (78%) of reviewed studies emphasising the importance of stakeholder engagement for successful open data projects. A notable trend was the use of interactive platforms to facilitate citizen participation in data-driven decision-making processes, with over half of the studies reporting increased public trust and transparency as outcomes. The findings suggest that effective open data initiatives require robust governance structures and comprehensive stakeholder involvement. Future research should focus on developing more transparent and participatory mechanisms for open data use in South Africa. To enhance the impact of open data initiatives, it is recommended that policymakers integrate interactive platforms for citizen engagement and establish clear guidelines for data quality and accessibility. Additionally, fostering a culture of transparency through education and training programmes should be prioritised. Model estimation used $\hat{\{\theta\}} = argmin\{\theta\} sumiell(yi, f\theta(\xi)) + \lambda lVert\theta rVert 2^2$, with performance evaluated using out-of-sample error.

Keywords: *Geographic, Transparency, Governance, Openness, E-Government, Accountability, Data, Policy*

ABSTRACT-ONLY PUBLICATION

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