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RECONCEPTUALIZATION OF PUBLIC SECTOR ACCOUNTABILITY THROUGH VALUE FOR MONEY-BASED PERFORMANCE AUDIT: A SYSTEMATIC LITERATURE REVIEW ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNANCE

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Abstract

Public sector accountability has become an important issue in governance, especially with the high cases of budget misappropriation indicating a weak public sector audit oversight system. This study aims to reconceptualize public sector accountability through value for money audits in order to improve governance effectiveness. The research method used is a systematic literature review (SLR) covering the period 2016-2026 from 512 articles after the screening stage, 27 articles were analyzed discussing accountability principles, performance audits, recommendation quality, public value, and sustainability. The study results indicate that public sector accountability needs to shift from administrative compliance towards result based, evidence based, benefit based, and public value based responsibility. Value for money based performance audits significantly influence strengthening the evaluation of the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of public fund usage through inputs, processes, outputs, and outcomes. Audit reports must be supported by valid evidence and produce concrete, measurable, and actionable recommendations. Performance audits are also capable of responding to corruption risks, improving digital governance, emergency management governance, and achieving the SDGs. The implication is that audits are not only tasked with supervision but are also able to increase public trust, evaluate service quality, and promote fair and sustainable development.

Keywords: Public Sector Accountability, Performance Audit, Value For Money, Governance, Systematic Literature Review

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INTRODUCTION

Public sector accountability is a key principle in ensuring the proper, efficient, and transparent use of state funds. The paradigm of public financial management, which previously relied solely on administrative compliance, has also shifted towards a performance based approach to create tangible impacts on society (Nor, 2026). Value for money, which encompasses economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, is a widely used tool designed to help evaluate the success of public programs. Performance audits serve as an evaluation method that addresses not only the proper use of budgets but also investigates the effectiveness of public sector programs that have the potential to provide maximum value for citizens (Restrepo-Carmona et al., 2024). Because performance audits based on value for money still face various operational challenges and the entire governance can still be questioned regarding how accountability is defined, measured, and internalized.

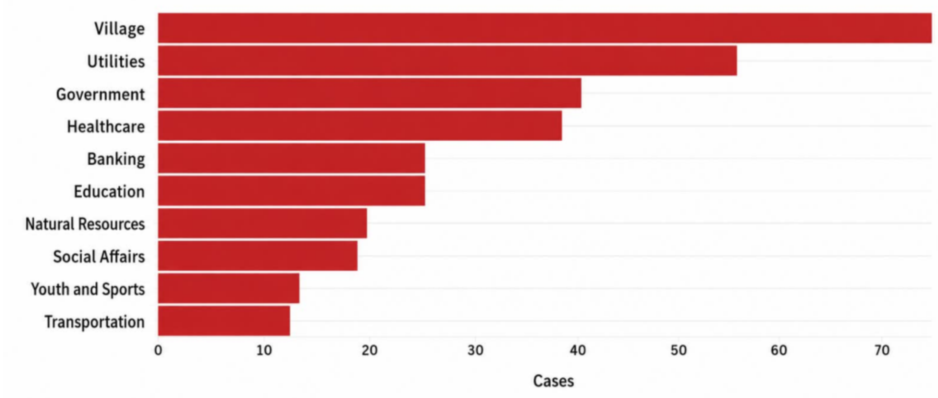

Figure 1.
Sector with the Most Corruption Cases in Indonesia
Source : https://dataindonesia.id/varia/detail/data-kasus-korupsi-di-indonesia-berdasarkan-sektor-pada-2024

Figure 1: Cases of Corruption in Indonesia by public sector in 2024 show that the highest number of corruption cases are directly related to the management of public budgets. There was a total of 364 corruption cases with 888 suspects; the village sector occupied the highest position with 77 cases, the public utilities and industry sector (second highest position) had 57 cases, the government sector had 41 cases, and the education and health sectors, the last two sectors, also showed significant numbers (Schmidthuber et al., 2022). Overall, the village sector remains the main area of corruption, clearly indicating weak accountability systems. The high number of cases in public service sectors such as health, education, and utilities shows that acts of corruption not only financially harm the state but also directly reduce the quality of public services and community welfare (Wilson & van der Velden, 2022). This indicates that the main problem of public sector accountability does not only come from administrative compliance, but also from the performance-based oversight assessment mechanisms that

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are still weak and the implementation of the value for money principle that is still not optimal.

Several previous studies revealed that public sector performance audits not only assess program effectiveness but also pay attention to the economic aspects and efficiency in the use of public resources. Latupeirissa et al (2024) explained that the digitalization of public services can increase bureaucratic efficiency, accelerate service processes, and reduce administrative waste. Nabila & Maulina (2025) revealed that performance audits play a role in promoting accountability in public financial management through evaluations of budget management accuracy, transparency, and government responsibility. In the economic aspect, it is seen in the ability of the institution to acquire and use resources at reasonable costs, while efficiency is seen in the ability to produce public service outputs optimally with the available resources. In addition, Otia & Bracci, (2022) explained that digital transformation in public sector auditing helps audit institutions improve quality in data based examinations. Thus, economy, efficiency, effectiveness, good governance, and accountability are interrelated in public sector management.

Research has revealed various gaps in public sector accountability research that have not been integrated with a value for money approach to performance auditing, empirical gaps because previous studies still focused on aspects of efficiency or effectiveness, and good governance implemented in developing countries has not adapted the optimal concept to the local institutional context. Thus, this study provides a reconceptualization of public sector accountability through performance audits based on value for money. The background of the above issues can be formulated into the research problem (RQ) in this study as follows:

RQ1. What are the basic principles of public sector auditing and its urgency in realizing accountability and the application of the value for money concept in government governance?

RQ2. How is the performance-based audit approach applied in the public sector, including in the process of risk identification, evaluation of public programs, and the use of audit techniques based on value for money?

RQ3. How is a public sector audit report prepared that is objective, evidence-based, and capable of producing constructive recommendations to improve governance and the performance of public institutions?

This research uses a systematic literature review (SLR) approach that examines relevant studies during 2016-2026 with the aim of understanding the basic principles of public sector auditing in realizing accountability and value for money, analyzing how performance audits are carried out in risk identification, evaluation of public programs, and value-for-money-based audit techniques, and preparing public sector audit reports that are truly objective based on evidence and capable of providing constructive recommendations in improving governance and performance of public institutions. Theoretically, this research provides benefits in enriching the study of public sector

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accountability through value-for-money-based performance audits, especially in explaining audit principles, accountability, risk evaluation, and evidence-based financial reporting in improving governmental governance effectiveness. Practically, this research can serve as a reference for public sector auditors, public institutions, and policymakers in preparing more objective audit performance and providing constructive improvement recommendations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Public Accountability Theory

Public accountability theory, according to Bovens (2003), is defined as a social relationship between public actors (government) and the society that grants the mandate (society), wherein public actors have the obligation to explain and be accountable for every action and decision taken. This framework considers accountability not only in terms of administrative reports being submitted, but along two axes: responsibility (obligation of justification) and enforcement (definition of sanctions or consequences for actions taken) (Nayak & Deo, 2010). According to this theory, accountability functions successfully as long as it is accompanied by information transparency, evaluation mechanisms that can be conducted objectively, and external regulatory measures to ensure that public resources are directed effectively for social interests. Thus, in the modern understanding, public sector accountability can become an instrument to realize good governance and also become part of measuring government performance in a holistic and results-based manner.

Public Sector Accountability

Public sector accountability is also a fundamental principle in governance that states the obligation of public institutions to provide accountability to society as an important stakeholder regarding how they use their resources and implement policies. However, as Mark Bovens argues, the concept of accountability is related to administrative reporting; it contains two dimensions: answerability (the obligation to explain) and enforcement (imposing consequences)(Edelmann et al., 2023). At the same time, public sector accountability is an approach to control and enforce transparency as well as prevent abuse of power, which indirectly tends to increase citizens' trust in the government. Accountability must align with clearly defined performance measures, independent oversight, and adequate information openness.

Value for Money

Value for money (VFM) is an evaluative approach in the public sector to determine the extent to which the resources used generate maximum social value. Christopher Pollitt defines VFM as one of the three dimensions called 3E, which stands for economy (cost savings), efficiency (how well resources are used), and effectiveness or the level of goal achievement (Mchopa & Changalima, 2026). This basic approach is at the core of performance auditing, as it allows assessment on the financial side but also on how public programs achieve the desired results and impacts. Thus, VFM promotes

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a focus on results and outcomes by public sector organizations to help them deliver higher quality services while ensuring the best return from every public expenditure.

Governance

Public sector governance encompasses the systems, processes, and legal mechanisms of authority to direct and control public organizations in achieving development goals. This concept is closely related to the principles of good governance developed by the World Bank, which emphasize accountability, transparency, effectiveness, and the rule of law as the main pillars. Good governance not only complies with regulatory adherence but also improves the quality of decision-making and public service.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research method is qualitative, using the Systematic Literature Review (SLR) technique to search for identification, evaluation, and summarization of conceptual material on public sector accountability, performance auditing, and the value-for-money approach that supports how governance can be improved (Creswell, 2017). The research process was conducted in accordance with the procedures of the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA), which include stages from identifying the literature to final inclusion, as well as screening and applicability assessment. Data sources were obtained from recognized scientific archives, such as SCOPUS international journals and SINTA national journals for the period 2016-2026 to ensure the flow of data analyzed.

Keywords that correspond to the scope of the research are used in the literature search process to obtain articles relevant to this study. The main keywords used are: *public sector accountability, transparency, public sector audit, performance audit, public sector performance, value for money, audit value for money, audit recommendation, public value.* The keywords are combined using the Boolean operators AND and OR to obtain focused results. The literature search is limited to articles published in the period 2016-2026 and written in Indonesian and English.

This study uses articles that are selected and analyzed using a thematic synthesis approach. Each article is chosen based on the main themes related to public sector accountability, public sector audit performance, value for money audit, public value, and audit recommendations. The results of the synthesis are then used to identify findings, research gaps, and to formulate ways to reconceptualize the principles of public sector accountability based on value for money performance audits, and their application in public sector audits by identifying risks, evaluating public programs, conducting value for money-based audits, and providing evidence-based recommendations for better public sector governance. To maintain the systematic nature and transparency of the literature review, this study applies selection criteria that include aspects of publication year, source type, topic relevance, methodology, publication quality, and the availability of full-text. This pragmatic review deepens critical analysis to produce a synthesis that is

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reliable and academically accountable (Haddaway et al., 2022). Inclusion and exclusion criteria are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria

Category	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Topic	Research related to accountability in the public sector, performance audit, audit value for money, public value, and audit recommendations.	Does not discuss accountability in the public sector, performance audit, value for money, public value, and audit recommendations.
Methodology	Quantitative, qualitative, or mixed methods, literature review	Opinion articles, editorials, articles in blogs.
Publication	National Journal SINTA International Journal SCOPUS	Seminar proceedings, theses, dissertations.
Year Range	2016-2026	<2016
Availability	Full text available	Full text not available
Quality of Study	Articles through peer-review process	Does not have a review process

These criteria ensure that only articles that have direct relevance to public sector accountability, performance audits, value for money audits, public value, and audit recommendations are included in the analysis stage, whereas articles that are not peer-reviewed, do not provide full text, or are not in line with the theme are excluded from the analysis. Next, ensure that the entire process of reviewing the article selection flow is analyzed using the stages of identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion. A summary of this process is attached in the PRISMA flow diagram Figure 2.

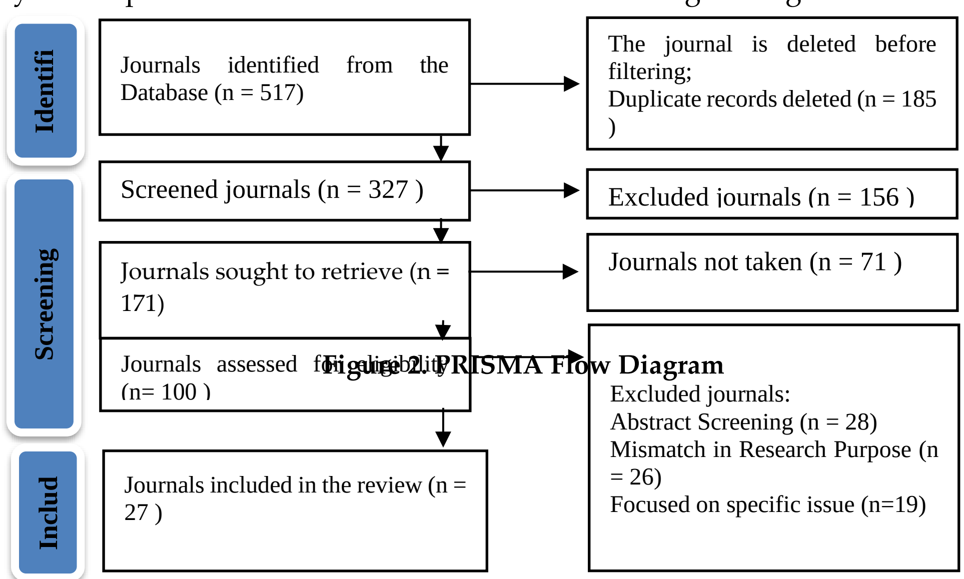

Figure 2. PRISMA Flow Diagram

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The conceptual shift from administrative accountability to accountability based on outcomes, evidence, benefits, and public value is necessary, according to a survey of

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27 articles on the topic of public sector accountability. In addition to ensuring that government agencies follow the rules, audits provide valuable insights into how well programs are running, how well funds are managed, and how well leadership is implemented. Accountability, transparency, independence, impartiality, oversight, and the use of evidence are important principles of public sector auditing, as confirmed by the reviewed publications. Because they evaluate the use of public funds in terms of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness, performance audits of value for money support this role. Instead of just spending money, the government must demonstrate that programs have a positive impact on society through tangible results.

Furthermore, these findings indicate that audit procedures, the accuracy of risk identification, the quality of evidence, and follow-up recommendations all significantly impact governance effectiveness. Inputs, processes, outcomes, and results of public programs can be better evaluated using performance audits. The ability to translate findings into concrete, achievable, quantifiable, and actionable recommendations is a key component of an impartial audit report. Key issues, accountable units, corrective actions, timelines, and performance metrics must all be included in the recommendations. Public sector audits in the current era must address digitalization, corruption risks, sustainability, SDGs, and public value, among other related topics. As a result, performance audits focused on value for money can serve as a foundation for enhancing oversight, public trust in government, and accountability in public institutions.

Of the 27 articles, 9 articles or 33.33% are dedicated to discussing the research question RQ1, and 10 articles or 37.04% are dedicated to discussing the research question RQ2. This indicates that the majority of the literature is dedicated to discussions on value for money methods, public program evaluation, risk identification, and performance audits. The research question RQ3 consists of 8 articles, or 29.63%. Articles from SCOPUS represent a larger percentage of the overall journal index (15 articles, or 55.56%) compared to national SINTA journals (12 articles, or 44.44%). 13 articles, or 48.15%, discuss quantitative approaches. 9 articles, or 33.33%, discuss literature reviews, while 5 articles, or 18.5%, discuss qualitative research. In this mapping, there is not a single article on mixed-method approaches.

Table 2. List of Articles Used in SLR (n=27)

NO	AUTHOR AND YEAR	JOURNAL	RESEARCH FOCUS	METHOD	MAIN FINDING	NOTE
1	(Subari, 2019)	SINTA	Public sector performance audit, functional supervision, and public accountability	Quantitative	Performance audits and functional supervision have a positive effect on public accountability	Explaining that public sector audits are important for maintaining the accountability of public institutions (RQ1)

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2	(Asih, 2021)	SINTA	Performance audit, financial reporting and public accountability	Quantitative	The presentation of financial statements affects public accountability, whereas performance audits do not always have a direct effect	Indicating that audit accountability needs to be supported by clear financial statements (RQ1)
3	(Laoli, 2019)	SINTA	Accountability, transparency, and budget performance based on value for money	Quantitative	Accountability and transparency affect the performance of value-for-money-based budgets	Supporting the relationship between accountability, transparency, and value for money (RQ1)
4	(Batubara & Risna, 2020)	SINTA	Accountability, participation, supervision, and value for money	Quantitative	Accountability, participation, and supervision have a positive effect on performance-based budgeting using value for money	Explaining that value for money requires supervision and participation in budget management (RQ1)
5	(Purnomo & Putri, 2018)	SINTA	Accountability, transparency, supervision, and budget performance based on value for money	Quantitative	Accountability, transparency, and oversight are related to value-for-money-based budget performance	Strengthening the basic principles of public budget governance that are transparent and accountable (RQ1)
6	(Hay & Cordery, 2018)	SCOPUS	Public sector audit value from the perspective of literature and history	Literature review	Public sector audit is valuable because it supports agencies, signaling, governance, control, and confirmation	Providing a theoretical basis that public audit is important for control and governance (RQ1)
7	(C. J. Cordery & Hay, 2019)	SCOPUS	Supreme audit institutions and public value	Literature review	State audit institutions need to demonstrate relevance through contributions to public value	Explaining that public sector audits must generate public value, not just compliance (RQ1)
8	(Gustavson &	SCOPUS	Public audit and public	Quantitative	Independent and quality audits are associated with low	Demonstrating the urgency of audits in strengthening

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	Sundström, 2018)		sector corruption		public sector corruption	government integrity and accountability (RQ1)
9	(Mattei et al., 2021)	SCOPUS	Trends in public sector audit research	Literature review	Public sector audit research has developed from financial audits towards performance audits, governance, and accountability	Providing an overview of the development of public sector audit principles in the context of modern governance (RQ1)
10	(Tuati et al., 2025)	SINTA	Performance audit, clarity of budget objectives, and accountability of government agency performance	Quantitative	Performance audit and clarity of budget targets simultaneously affect performance accountability	Explaining the importance of budget targets in performance-based auditing (RQ2)
11	(Faizal & Nugrahanti, 2026)	SINTA	Performance audit as an instrument for increasing public accountability	Literature review	Performance audits strengthen transparency, the quality of decision-making, financial management effectiveness, and public trust	Supporting performance audits as an evaluation of public sector performance (RQ2)
12	(Nasution, 2024)	SINTA	Value for money analysis in assessing financial performance	Quantitative	Financial performance can be assessed through aspects of economy, efficiency, and effectiveness	Explaining the technique of value for money analysis in the public sector (RQ2)
13	(Pratama et al., 2022)	SINTA	Regional government performance measurement based on value for money	Quantitative	Regional performance can be measured through economic ratio, efficiency, and effectiveness	Providing an example of the application of the 3E Technique in the evaluation of local government programs (RQ2)
14	(Setyaningrum et al., 2025)	SCOPUS	The impact of performance audits on accountability in Indonesia's public sector	Quantitative	Performance audit improves SOPs, internal control, risk management, regulations,	Very relevant for risk identification and evaluation of public programs (RQ2)

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					efficiency, and governance	
15	(Parker et al., 2019)	SCOPUS	New public management and the development of performance audit in the public sector	Qualitative	Performance audit develops due to demands for accountability, but in practice it is often still strongly focused on control	Explaining the theoretical background of performance audit in the public sector (RQ2)
16	(Rana et al., 2022)	SCOPUS	Systematic literature review on performance auditing in the public sector	Literature review	Performance audit has two main functions, namely accountability and performance improvement	Becoming the main reference for the performance audit concept in SLR (RQ2)
17	(Raudla et al., 2016)	SCOPUS	The impact of performance audits on public sector organizations	Quantitative	Performance audits are useful for the auditee, but their impact depends on the organization's response	Explaining that the effectiveness of performance audits is influenced by the readiness and responsiveness of institutions (RQ2)
18	(Adi & Dutil, 2018)	SCOPUS	Value for money audit in the era of new public management	Qualitative	VFM audit becomes an instrument of accountability, but the selection of audit objects requires a consistent strategy	Relevant for audit techniques based on value for money and the selection of audit objects (RQ2)
19	(Grossi, Hancu-Budui, et al., 2023)	SCOPUS	The shift in public sector auditing due to institutional logics	Literature review	Public sector auditing is shifting towards performance audits and non-financial audits	Explaining the shift in audit approach from compliance to performance and outcomes (RQ2)
20	(Kamilah et al., 2024)	SINTA	SPI, regulatory compliance, follow-up on recommendations, and BPK audit opinions	Quantitative	SPI, regulatory compliance, and follow-up on recommendations are related to the quality of audit opinions	Explaining the importance of evidence, internal control, compliance, and audit follow-up (RQ3)
21	(Ihsan, 2021)	SINTA	Evaluation of the follow-up completion of	Qualitative	The follow-up resolution of recommendations	Relevant to discuss the follow-up on audit recommendations (RQ3)

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			the recommendations from the BPK audit results		needs to be supported by monitoring, coordination, and the commitment of the implementers	
22	(Kurnia, 2020)	SINTA	BPK audit findings, audit opinions, follow-up on audit results, budget structure, and local government performance	Quantitative	Audit opinions affect the performance of local governments, whereas findings and budget structure do not always have an effect	Showing the relationship between audit results, opinions, follow-ups, and local government performance (RQ3)
23	(Šalienė et al., 2024)	SCOPUS	Recommendations for performance audit and the creation of public value	Qualitative	Performance audit recommendations need to be directed at creating public value, not just administrative compliance	Highly relevant for constructive audit recommendations (RQ3)
24	(Lino et al., 2023)	SCOPUS	Digitalization of public sector audits and regional government budget planning	Qualitative	The digitalization of audits strengthens the use of data in budget planning and oversight	Supporting data- and evidence-based audit reports (RQ3)
25	(Grossi, Hay, et al., 2023)	SCOPUS	Changes in the public sector audit boundaries	Literature review	Public sector audits need to respond to the risks of corruption, digitalization, collaborative governance, emergency governance, and the SDGs	Explaining that the audit report must adjust to increasingly complex public risks (RQ3)
26	(C. J. Cordery & Hay, 2025)	SCOPUS	Public sector audit reform due to NPM (New Public Management)	Literature review	The public sector audit has changed due to demands from technology, sustainability,	Supporting audit reports that are more responsive to the needs of modern governance (RQ3)

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			and governance ecosystem		internal audit, audit committees, and citizen communication	
27	(C. Cordery et al., 2023)	SCOPUS	Publik sector audit, SDGs, dan prinsip leave no one behind	Literature review	Public sector audits can support democratic accountability and SDG commitments	Strengthening the importance of audit reports that consider the benefits to the public and affected groups (RQ3)

Table 3. of Characteristics of Research Methods and Types of Journal Articles in SLR

CATEGORI	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE	TYPE OF JOURNAL	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE
Quantitative	13 Articles	48,15 %	SINTA	12 Artikel	44, 44 %
Qualitative	5 Articles	18,52 %	SCOPUS	15 Artikel	55, 56 %
Literature Review	9 Articles	33,33 %			
Total	27 Articles	100 %	Total	27 Artikel	100 %

Table 4. Characteristics of Problem Statements in Articles in SLR

CATEGORI	NUMBER OF ARTICLES	PERCENTAGE	EVIDENCE MAPPING
Problem Formulation 1	9 Articles	33,33 %	1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9
Problem Formulation 2	10 Articles	37,04 %	10,11,12,13,14,15,16,17,18,19
Problem Formulation 3	8 Articles	29,63 %	20,21,22,23,24,25,26,27
Total	27 Artikel	100 %	

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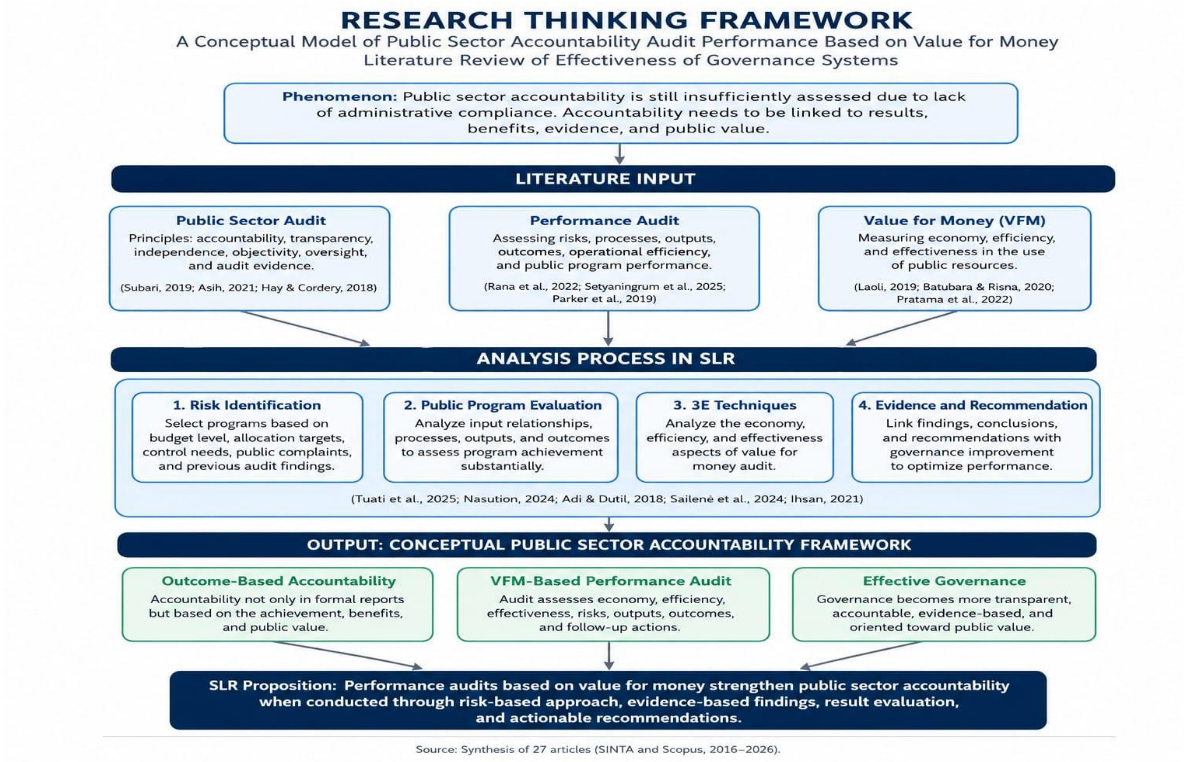

Figure 3. Research Conceptual Framework

RQ1. What are the basic principles of public sector auditing and its urgency in realizing accountability and the application of the value for money concept in government governance?

By applying the principles of independence, transparency, impartiality, accountability, oversight, and the use of evidence, these are the basic concepts of public sector auditing. The government's capacity to account for the use of budgets, program implementation, and work results to the public is all evaluated in public sector audits, in addition to administrative compliance. Performance audits and functional monitoring, as shown by Subari (2019), can enhance public accountability by ensuring that programs are implemented as planned. The delivery of financial reports that are reliable and easy to understand can influence responsibility according to (Asih, 2021). Public sector audits can improve internal controls, government governance, and public trust while connecting information gaps between the public and the government (Hay & Cordery, 2018).

Public sector auditing is very important because it can ensure the more effective, efficient, and economical use of public funds. To guarantee that the public receives value for money, the government must pay more attention to public fund budgeting, so that it can provide beneficial results and be a source of pride for the public. According to Laoli, (2019), the performance of public fund budgeting based on value for money is supported by transparency and accountability. In this regard, it requires transparent management of funds so that citizens can assess whether the money has been used appropriately or not. The performance of value-for-money-based budget audits is strengthened by accountability, involvement, and supervision (Batubara & Risna, 2020). Public sector audit performance in responsible budget management, efficiency, and results-oriented outcomes is created through openness and supervision, as emphasized by (Purnomo & Putri, 2018).

RQ2. How is the performance-based audit approach applied in the public sector, including in the process of risk identification, evaluation of public programs, and the use of audit techniques based on value for money?

Public sector performance audits begin with risk identification and the establishment of audit criteria as a basis for objective evaluation. Auditors need to map risks such as unrealistic budget planning, weaknesses in internal controls, unclear performance indicators, and increasing public complaints. This stage ensures that the audit focuses on aspects that affect the achievement of program objectives and the effective use of public resources. Performance audits play a role in strengthening operational standards, internal controls, risk management, operational efficiency, and public sector governance (Setyaningrum et al., 2025). In addition, performance evaluation must be supported by clear budget targets so that accountability can be measured objectively (Tuati et al., 2025). This approach has developed alongside public management reforms that emphasize accountability, efficiency, and program outcomes as the basis for government decision-making (Parker et al., 2019).

In its implementation, performance auditing evaluates the relationship between input, process, output, and outcome to assess the effectiveness of government programs. Inputs include human resources, funds, time, and facilities, while outputs consist of goods or services produced and outcomes refer to the social benefits for the community. Rana et al., (2022) emphasize that improving performance and accountability in the public sector is the main objective of performance audits, while Raudla et al., (2016) show that the impact of an audit is influenced by the organization's response to audit findings. Performance audits can also enhance transparency, decision-making quality, effectiveness in managing public funds, and public trust (Faizal & Nugrahanti, 2026). Through a value-for-money approach, auditors assess the economic, efficiency, and effectiveness aspects of resource use (Nasution, 2024). This measurement often uses the 3E ratio Pratama et al., (2022), supported by the selection of appropriate audit objects Adi & Dutil, (2018), as well as increasingly directed towards the creation of public value in modern public sector auditing (Grossi, Hancu-Budui, et al., 2023).

RQ3. How is a public sector audit report prepared that is objective, evidence-based, and capable of producing constructive recommendations to improve governance and the performance of public institutions?

The preparation of public sector audit reports must be based on auditor independence, transparent examination criteria, and relevant, reliable, sufficient, and verifiable evidence. Auditors need to present the condition, criteria, cause, effect, and

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impact of findings proportionally so that the report does not shift into a subjective judgment or merely a list of administrative weaknesses. Hay & Cordery, (2018) explain that audits have value because they reduce information asymmetry, strengthen internal control, and enhance government accountability to the public. At the regional level, audit opinions have been shown to significantly influence local government performance (Kurnia, 2020). Therefore, audit reports need to link financial accountability, program achievements, service quality, and the contribution of public institutions to the SDGs, particularly in strengthening institutions that are transparent, effective, accountable, and trusted by the public.

Evidence-based audit reports must also produce operational recommendations, not just stop at administrative improvements. Each recommendation needs to include the root cause, corrective actions, responsible parties, deadlines, success indicators, and measurable monitoring mechanisms. Ihsan, (2021) found that the implementation of BPK recommendations is often hindered by weak operational regulations, limited human resources, official rotations, suboptimal action plans, and insufficient leadership commitment. The effectiveness of recommendations is determined by the institution's ability to translate audit results into tangible changes. Šalienė et al., (2024) emphasize that performance audits must create public value through improvements in governance, strategy, services, and social impact aligned with the SDGs. Furthermore, Grossi et al., (2023), (Lino et al., 2023), and Cordery & Hay (2025) indicate that the development of auditing includes corruption risks, digitalization, and collaborative governance, up to institutional reforms, so that audit recommendations must be adaptive, measurable, and oriented toward tangible public benefits.

CONCLUSION

Based on these 27 research articles and the 3 problem formulations above, it can be concluded that public sector accountability still needs to be understood as accountability based on results, evidence, benefits, and public value. The principles of accountability such as transparency, impartiality, independence, strict supervision, and use of evidence form the basis of audits in evaluating the management of public funds. Performance audits based on value for money assess the economy, efficiency, and effectiveness of government programs. By identifying program risks and analyzing the relationship between input, process, and output, the impact on society can be evaluated. A good audit report produces valid, actionable data recommendations, contains indicators, timelines, and corrective actions. Its implementation requires monitoring, coordination, and commitment from practitioners; this approach reduces the risk of corruption, strengthens governance, improves service quality, and supports the SDGs and sustainability. Thus, making public sector audits a strategic tool to ensure the wise use of public funds so that the community prospers and public trust is increased.

It is recommended that future researchers use quantitative data and conduct in-depth interviews with public sector audit employees to investigate the relationships

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between value-for-money-based performance audits, recommendations for further actions, audit report quality, and governance effectiveness. To make this study more relevant to the development of modern governance, researchers may also include new variables such as audit digitalization, risk management, public value, and sustainability. The implications of this research for auditors emphasize the importance of preparing financial reports that are objective, measurable, and accompanied by actionable recommendations; for the government, it highlights the need to strengthen the audit system, enhance auditor competency systems, and use audit results for policy improvement. For future researchers, this study opens up opportunities to explain the practices and impacts of performance audits in a concrete way.

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