

ACCOUNTABILITY OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES IN ACCESSING LAND INFORMATION OF ETHNIC MINORITIES IN BINH DINH PROVINCE

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Abstract

The study was conducted to test the impact of accountability on access to land information for ethnic minorities. The research model of the article is a linear structural equation model (SEM). The partial least squares (PLS) method was used to test the SEM model with 372 survey samples of households and individuals of the Cham, Bana, and H're ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province, Vietnam. Research results show that accountability is vital in promoting and improving the effectiveness of ethnic minorities' access to land information. Accountability is considered a mechanism to monitor managers' behavior and ensure land users' rights and interests in accessing land information. The research results confirm that a strong relationship exists between accountability and access to land information of ethnic minorities. Improve accountability of state land management agencies to help land users, predominantly ethnic minority land users, and those considered disadvantaged in society perform better and be more suitable to access land information. This relationship is shown through the research model's significance level of 1% (t value = 11.130); the coefficient β to evaluate the relationship from accountability to access to land information is 0.5. The estimated path coefficient β , close to +1, indicates a strong positive relationship. The research results provide some suggestions for continuing to promulgate regulations and policies to strengthen further the implementation of state land management agencies' accountability towards improving the effectiveness of ethnic minorities' access to land information.

Keywords: Binh Dinh, ethnic minorities, access to land information, accountability, Vietnam

INTRODUCTION

The right to access information has been recognized in international conventions such as the 1948 United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. The right to access information is one of the fundamental human rights, officially recognized in Article 25 of the 2013 Vietnamese Constitution and institutionalized in the 2016 Law on Access to Information. Access to information is vital in promoting democracy, creating conditions to promote and protect the legitimate rights and

interests of citizens, contributing to ensuring equality and justice in society, and improving knowledge. and citizen participation in state management activities, contributing to bringing the policy "People know, people discuss, people do, people check" step by step into life (Hue, 2021). The right to access information in the land field is a right that land users need to have access to satisfy their legal needs and exercise other fundamental rights of land users recognized by law (Anh, 2021). The government's openness and information transparency play a vital role in helping ethnic



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minorities access land information. At the same time, competent state agencies must report and explain to land users to better grasp and understand the information received (Anh, 2021). The land management system has the potential to promote the country's economic growth and development, improve social justice standards, and protect the vulnerable, thus contributing to sustainable development (Deininger and Hilhorst, 2013). Transparency and accountability of actors involved in land management can help improve land administration (Samson Okoth Ayuki, 2023). In addition, implementing accountability is also considered a method to ensure the exercise of state power under control and supervision (Khanh, 2019).

In Vietnam, according to the Land Information Transparency report conducted by the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) in Vietnam and the Center for Promoting Education and Empowering Women's Capacity from July 2021 to June 2022 shows that among requests for information sent to 561 district-level People's Committee offices, up to 402 agencies did not respond (accounting for 71.7%), 15 agencies refused to provide information (2.7%), 46 agencies responded but did not provide information (8.2%). The 2023 Vietnam Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index (PAPI) report reports that people's access to land information still needs to be improved in all provinces and cities. The rate of people knowing about the local land use plan for 2022 ranges from 7% to 34% in 61 provinces and cities, of which only eight provinces and cities reach a rate higher than 20%, and Only about 20% of people who need information about State policies and laws said they received the information they needed; Only about 20% said the information received was reliable (CECODES, 2023). The accountability index demonstrates the effectiveness of citizen contacts at all government levels, demonstrating people's trust in local judicial agencies. In Vietnam, the results of implementing accountability in the high or medium-high group are concentrated in the Northern provinces, the results of implementing accountability in the low-medium and low groups are concentrated in most provinces in the Central Highlands, some provinces in the South Central Coast region (Da Nang, Binh Dinh, Phu Yen) and the Mekong Delta (CECODES, 2023).

Binh Dinh is a coastal province in the South Central Coast, located in the central key economic region. According to the results of the Provincial Governance and Public Administration Performance Index report in Vietnam in 2023, the information disclosure and transparency issue in Binh Dinh province still needs to be higher compared to neighboring provinces and other provinces with the national average. The openness and transparency index of the Binh Dinh

provincial government is only at a low average level of 5.04 points on a maximum scale of 10, lower than the national average of 5.28 points simultaneously (CECODES, 2023). The access to information of people in Binh Dinh province still needs to be higher; only about 10% of people who need information about State policies and laws said they received the information they needed. Only 10% said the information received was reliable. At the same time, the results of implementing accountability to the people in Binh Dinh province were at a low level, with 4.14/10 points, lower than the actual results. The national average accountability is 4.28 points (CECODES, 2023).

Research on the accountability of local authorities in accessing land information for land users, especially land users who are ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province, is necessary for the sake of the people. Ethnic minorities are considered disadvantaged in society with low educational levels. The proportion of ethnic minorities with a high school degree or higher accounts for 20.2% of the total number of ethnic minorities (Committee for Ethnic Minority Affairs, 2019), the economic life of ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province is still tricky; more than 54.75% of ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province are in poor households (Binh Dinh Province People's Committee, 2023), the proportion of ethnic minorities aged 15 years and older who are fluent Mandarin only accounts for 70%. Limited access to land information will bring many disadvantages in the management and use of land by ethnic minorities (Hayward, 2021). The research conducted not only contributes to providing scientific arguments in continuing to promulgate policies further to improve the accountability of state land management agencies but also aims to the goal is to improve the effectiveness of state land management by ensuring the right of ethnic minorities to access land information.

Theoretical Background

According to (Meckling and Jensen, 1976), agency theory focuses on the relationship between principals and agents, in which the representative will have certain powers based on the authorization of the authorizing party. In the issue of land use, according to the provisions of Article 53 of the 2013 Constitution, the Socialist Republic of Vietnam (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2013) and the Land Law 2024 (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2024) has affirmed that "Land is owned by the entire people, represented and uniformly managed by the State." The State's right to represent landowners is exercised through empowered state agencies. The State grants land use rights to land users through land allocation, land lease, recognition of land use rights, and the right to access land information. In

accessing land information for ethnic minorities, the relationship between the authorizing party and the representative is expressed through the relationship between the district People's Committee, the commune People's Committee, the Department of Natural Resources and Environment, and civil society. Land registration offices and land users are ethnic minorities. In this relationship, information asymmetry occurs in the direction that civil servants and public employees will clearly understand information on land use and management, as well as information related to land use planning, information about land allocation, this information according to the provisions of law, land users have the right to know and the right to access information. According to modern land law regulations in Article 24, Land Law 2024, land users have the right to access land information on "Land use planning, plans, and plans related to land use" land has been decided and approved by a competent state agency; Land allocation, land lease." However, in practice, land users who are ethnic minorities have little access to this information.

Accountability of state administrative agencies is the responsibility of state agencies under the executive system and officials and civil servants within this system of agencies to proactively perform accountability to provide and, explain, clarify information about performing tasks and their responsibilities in performing tasks, thereby ensuring transparency and publicity in state administrative management activities, ensuring and protecting the legitimate rights and interests of relevant individuals effectively, meeting the requirements of building a Vietnamese socialist law-governed state of the people, by the people and for the people (Quang, 2014). An accountable government is when institutions make the government's agencies accountable for publicizing the government's decisions (Peruzzotti, 2011). An appropriate monitoring mechanism and tools to protect the rights of people and stakeholders who are land users is considered necessary. The agency theory used in this article helps the authors realize the importance of accountability in monitoring

the activities of representatives so that public units operate with better results, thereby Ensuring citizens' rights in accessing land information.

To affirm the vital role of accountability in accessing land information, the 15th National Assembly passed the Land Law of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam 2024 on January 18, 2024, effective August 1, 2024, continued to affirm land users' right to access information through provisions regulating the State's responsibility in providing land information. The right to access information is a premise that ensures the exercise of other fundamental human rights, including civil, political, economic, and cultural rights.

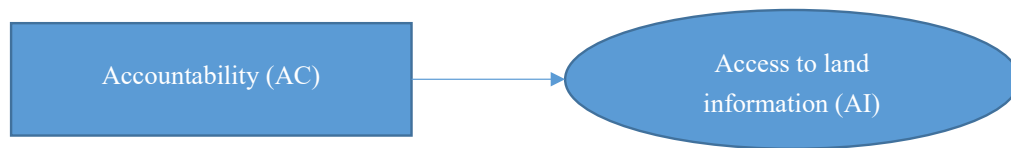
MATERIALS AND METHODS

Sampling method: According to (Hair *et al.*, 2006), the minimum sample size required is 50 samples, preferably 100 samples, with a ratio of observations to measured variables of 5:1; that is, one measured variable needs at least five observations. Therefore, the sample size needed for the research model is at least $14 \times 5 = 70$ samples. According to the author's research (Cohen, 1992), the larger the survey sample size compared to the minimum sample size requirement will help increase the reliability of the research results. Therefore, in this study, the authors used 372 samples as appropriate. The Binh Dinh province currently has 33 communes and towns with 39 ethnic minorities with about 41,768 people, of which three main ethnic groups are Bana, H're, and Cham, accounting for 93.70%. Because of the distribution characteristics and retention of ethnic characteristics, the study focused on surveying the Bana ethnic group in Vinh Thanh district, the H're ethnic group in An Lao district, and the Cham ethnic group in Van Canh district. With an official sample size of 372, the authors calculated the parameters of the survey sample according to the norm sampling method in Tab. I.

The method of data collection: Based on the synthesis of research in the world and Vietnam, the authors have proposed a model to research the impact of local government accountability on

I: Select a quota sample based on ethnic minorities

Ethnic minority areas are concentrated in large numbers, retaining the nation's unique cultural features.	Several ethnic groups reported from the district ethnic minority office in 2021 (households).	Calculate the allocation rate according to the report results from the district ethnic minority office in 2021 (%).	Number of ethnic minority households that need to be interviewed according to the quota method (households)
The Cham ethnic group (Van Canh district)	1,516	28.1%	105
The Bana ethnic group (Vinh Thanh district)	2,657	49.1%	182
The H're ethnic group (An Lao district)	1,230	22.8%	85
Sum	5,403	100%	N = 372



1: Proposed research model

access to land information of ethnic minorities in Fig. 1. At the same time, to identify and better understand the role of accountability in accessing land information of local ethnic minorities, research and use the discussion method with cadastral officials at localities Commune People's Committee, land registration office, and Department of Natural Resources and Environment of 3 districts in Binh Dinh province: Van Canh, Vinh Thanh and An Lao.

The study was conducted in consultation with six experts working at universities. This sample size is considered suitable for in-depth interviews with experts because it ranges from 6 to 12 people, as suggested by (Guest *et al.*, 2006). The purpose of collecting opinions is to calibrate the scale of concepts in the model to suit the subject and research area. The qualitative research results have identified 14 observed variables used to measure research concepts in the proposed model. In particular, access to land information (AI) had ten observed variables; Accountability (AC) had four observed variables. The 14 observed variables of the two research concepts were evaluated using the 5-level Likert scale (Likert, 1932). The scale levels from 1 to 5 according to the level of agreement, including:

1. Completely disagree;
2. Disagree;
3. Normal;
4. Agree;
5. Completely agree.

The value of people's assessment points (m) is determined according to the formula: $m = \text{Total score of each criterion} / n$. The scale distance (a) is $a = (\text{Max} - \text{Min}) / n$. In which n is the number of scale steps, min is the smallest value, and max is the most significant value. With min = 1, max = 5 and n = 5, a = 0.8 (Huong, 2017). Accordingly, the level of agreement is divided into five levels as follows:

- Completely agree: $4.20 < m \leq 5.00$;
- Agree: $3.40 < m \leq 4.20$;
- Normal: $2.60 < m \leq 3.40$;
- Disagree: $1.80 < m \leq 2.60$;
- Strongly disagree: $m \leq 1.80$.

Data processing methods: All data obtained from the interview results were coded and entered into Excel software and then processed with Smart PLS 3 software to verify the measurement model (scale), then test the model structure (path) to clearly define the relationship between research variables in the proposed research model. SmartPLS is software for variance-based structural equation modeling (SEM) using partial least squares (PLS) path modeling

(Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017). SEM model is a technique to test theory and has two types (Hair *et al.*, 2019), which are covariance-based structural equation model (CB-SEM) and average structural equation model partial least squares (PLS-SEM). PLS-SEM is capable of providing reliable estimation results when the sample is small and does not require a customarily distributed sample (Chin, 2009); PLS-SEM relies on a nonparametric nonparametric bootstrap procedure (Davison and Hinkley, 1997) to test the significance level. Because PLS has higher predictive power than CB-SEM, the ability to detect relationships that exist in reality between variables will be higher (Khoi, 2022), and PLS-SEM can be used effectively in research projects. Research needs to provide practical recommendations (Hair Jr and Sarstedt, 2021), so in this study, the authors used partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to detect the relationship link between accountability and access to land information. According to Henseler and Chin (2010), when applying PLS-SEM, the research model is evaluated through two steps: evaluating the measurement model and evaluating the structural model. According to (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017), when evaluating the outcome measurement model on Smart PLS, it is necessary to evaluate the scales' reliability, convergence, and discrimination.

Evaluation of scale reliability: Perform internal consistency reliability testing using three criteria, including Cronbach's alpha coefficient, CR composite reliability, and RhoA coefficient. Values of Cronbach's alpha, CR, and RhoA coefficients greater than 0.7 show the appropriate reliability of the scales used (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017). At the same time, the authors also evaluated the statistical significance of the survey data by running the bootstrapping algorithm 5,000 times according to the (Nevitt and Hancock, 2001) proposed to determine the corresponding t-value of observed variables.

Evaluation of scale convergence value: The scale's convergent validity is checked by the external loading factor and average variance extracted (AVE). The minimum threshold for external factor loadings of observed variables is 0.50 (Hulland, 1999). An AVE value greater than 0.5 is good for accepting a scale with convergent validity (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017).

Evaluation of the discriminant value of the scale: According to Cooper and colleagues (cited by Nguyen Minh Ha, 2021 (Ha and Thanh, 2021), discriminant value refers to the degree of non-correlation between a set of indicators used to measure one concept versus a set of indicators

used to measure another concept. The authors evaluated the discriminant validity of the scale to confirm that there is a difference in each observed variable measuring two factors, including access to information and accountability. Because of the PLS-SEM application research, the discriminant value of the scale was tested using two criteria, including the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) coefficient and the Cross Loadings coefficient.

In testing the structural model, it is vital to evaluate the problem of multicollinearity, the appropriateness and statistical significance of the relationships (paths), and the appropriateness of the model with the collected data set through the adjusted R2 coefficient.

Evaluation the multicollinearity problem: The authors evaluated the value of the variance inflation factor, denoted VIF. In the PLS-SEM technique, a tolerance value of 0.20 or lower or a VIF value of 5 or higher indicates a potential multicollinearity problem (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017). Suppose the degree of collinearity is very high, as indicated by a VIF value of 5 or higher. In that case, consideration should be given to removing one of the corresponding indicators (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017) or creating higher-order constructs than to handling collinearity problems or establishing formative higher-order structures as a solution to the collinearity problem (Ringle *et al.*, 2012).

Evaluation appropriateness and assessing statistical significance (t-value): When the size of the resulting empirical t value is above 1.96, we can assume that the path coefficient is significantly different from zero at a significance level of 5% ($\alpha = 0.05$; two-tailed test). The critical t values for significance levels of 1% ($\alpha = 0.01$; two-tailed test) and 10% ($\alpha = 0.10$; two-tailed test) probability of error are 2.57 and 1.65, respectively (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017).

Evaluation of the level of influence of independent variables R2: R2 reflects the level of model fit; this index reflects the level of explanation of independent variables on the dependent variable in the regression model. R2 ranges from -1 to 1, and an R2 value of 0.20 is considered high in behavioral and exploratory research fields (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017).

RESULTS

Current Status of Access to Land Information of Ethnic Minorities in Binh Dinh Province

Ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province live in 33 communes and towns in 6 districts. Natural area accounts for 48.4% of the province's natural area. By the end of 2022, the province will have 11,491 households/41,903 ethnic minorities, accounting for about 2.65% of the province's population, mainly three ethnic groups: Cham, Bana, H're. The rate of poor ethnic minority households compared to the number of ethnic minority households at the end of 2022 is 6,291, accounting for 54.75% (Binh Dinh

Province People's Committee, 2023). Although the Law on Access to Information specifically regulates the exercise of citizens' right to access information, the responsibilities and obligations of state agencies in ensuring citizens' right to access information, creating a legal framework for exercising citizens' right to access information, and contributing to improving transparency in the organization and operation of the state apparatus. However, The effectiveness of ethnic groups' access to land information related to land access and the exercise of land use rights is still limited; this is shown through the results of granting the certificate of land use rights for ethnic minorities in the study area is very low. Of the 372 ethnic minority households and individuals participating in the survey, only 95 cases, accounting for 25.53% of the total number of surveyed cases, had land use rights certificates for land plots. Notably, out of 95 surveyed cases with the certificate of land use rights, only 52 cases, accounting for 54.7% of transactions, had land use rights registered at Land registration authorities or their branches. The main reason is that ethnic minority households do not have complete access to land information and are unaware of the role and meaning of being granted land certificates and implementing land use rights.

The result shows that 90.7% of ethnic minorities who responded to the survey were 31 years old or older. The ethnic minorities participating in the survey have a relatively low level of education; only 32.3% of people have a high school degree. The proportion of workers who have undergone intermediate and college training is only 17.8%. Notably, among the Cham, Bana, and H're ethnic minorities participating in the survey, 93.3% of households work as farmers, laborers, or small traders. The income of ethnic minorities in the study area is relatively low, of which up to 75.5% of ethnic minority households have an income of less than 2.54 million VND/person/month, an income level considered very low compared to the income of ethnic minorities. The average per capita in Binh Dinh is 3.9 million VND/person/month. Through the results of interviews with 372 ethnic minority households, 100% of households know that issuing the Certificate of land use rights and ownership of property affixed to the land is one of the legal bases for the state to confirm their legal land use rights over a plot of land (Tab. II). However, only 2.7% of households participating in the survey said that the Certificate of land use rights and ownership of property affixed to the land is one of the prerequisites for carrying out transactions related to land use rights such as conversion, transfer, inheritance, donation, and mortgage land use rights; this leads to transactions transferring land use rights of ethnic minorities mainly taking place in handwritten form or verbal exchange, instead of being registered at a competent state agency (Hang

II: *Significance of the issuance of Certificate of land use rights and ownership of property affixed to the land for ethnic minorities*

Significance of the issuance of land use rights certificates		Households	%
1	Ensuring state land management.	22	5.9%
2	Have the state confirm legal land use rights to the plot of land.	372	100.0%
3	It is one of the prerequisites for carrying out transactions related to land use rights.	10	2.7%
4	It is one of the necessary legal bases to receive compensation from the state when carrying out land recovery.	5	1.3%
5	It is one of the legal bases when resolving disputes, complaints, and denunciations about land.	2	0.5%

et al., 2023). Only 1.3% of households participating in the survey believe that Certificate of land use rights and ownership of property affixed to the land is one of the necessary legal bases to receive compensation from the state when conducting land recovery, and only 0.5% of households think that Certificate of land use rights and ownership of property affixed to the land is one of the base legality when resolving disputes, complaints, and denunciations regarding land.

Inadequate access to land information also stems from the need for more diversity in the study area's access to land information. Ethnic minorities access land information mainly through relatives, Villagers, and acquaintances; there are very few cases where ethnic minorities have access to land information through consultation conferences or on local electronic information sites. The need for diverse forms of access to land information is shown through the results of interviews and surveys of 372 ethnic minority households. Mean AI1 to AI10 values range from 3.40 to 4.20; this means that ethnic minorities participating in the survey agreed that land information needs to be accessed through forms such as radio and television systems, broadcasting newsletters in ethnic languages, and through community events of the community ethnic minority groups, through annual village meetings, or land information needs to be accessed through a team of reputable people in the community. At the same time, interviewed households believe that to access land information effectively, the information needs to be accessible from officials in a way that is easy to understand, concise, selective, complete, timely, and valuable.

Mean AI1, AI2, and AI3 are all greater than 3.40, showing the interviewee's level of agreement.

Strengthening the responsibility of state land management agencies in explaining opinions on land use rights through land allocation and implementation of land use rights helps increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities; 100% of ethnic minorities participate. Surveyors agreed with this statement, Mean AC1=4.1. At the same time, accountability needs to be implemented promptly and fully to quickly resolve recommendations and feedback related to implementing land use rights, helping to increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities. 100% of ethnic minorities participating in the survey agreed with this statement; Mean AC2, AC3, and AC4 ranged from 4.07 to 4.09. Thus, information accessibility is indispensable in allowing the public to hold decision-makers accountable (Justice *et al.*, 2006).

Thus, additional forms of land access through village meetings, a team of reputable people in the community, community activities, and the radio system in English are necessary for ethnic groups and strengthening accountability, answering questions and feedback from ethnic minorities, and strengthening direct dialogue with the people is necessary. This work contributes to solving difficulties and obstacles for ethnic minorities in accessing land information. Strengthening the implementation of accountability through diverse forms of information access and enhancing the information accountability role of local officials is considered a lever to promote adequate access to land information for the community ethnic minorities, thereby ensuring the rights of ethnic

III: *Descriptive Statistics*

Accountability (AC)	Mean
Strengthening the explanation of opinions on land use rights through land allocation and implementation of land use rights helps increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC1).	4.10
Implementing timely and complete explanations of administrative decisions related to the implementation of land use rights helps enhance the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC2).	4.06
Carrying out timely and complete explanations of administrative actions related to implementing land use rights helps enhance the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC3).	4.07
Quickly resolve recommendations and feedback related to implementing land use rights to help increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC4).	4.09

IV: *The results of the evaluation of the reliability of the scale*

Scales	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite reliability CR
1. Accountability (AC)	0.910	0.911	0.937
2. Land information access (AI)	0.934	0.952	0.943

minorities in accessing land information, improving the efficiency of land use management of ethnic minorities.

Testing the Research Model on the Impact of Accountability on Access to Land Information for Ethnic Minorities in Binh Dinh Province

To test the research model on the impact of accountability on access to land information of ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province, the authors used the SEM linear structural model analysis method using the software Smart PLS 3.

Evaluation of Scale Reliability

The scale's reliability is checked by three criteria: Cronbach's alpha coefficient, CR composite reliability, and RhoA coefficient.

Tab. IV shows that Cronbach's alpha coefficient, CR, and RhoA ensure the condition is more significant than 0.7 (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017), which proves that the 14 observed variables used for the two scales, AC and AI, are excellent, the observed variables have shown the characteristics of representative factors. At the same time, the observed variables in each scale reached values to ensure reliability, as proposed by Hair, J. F. *et al.*

Evaluation of Scale Convergence Value

Convergent validity in the study was conducted to determine the degree of positive correlation of 14 observed variables with the latent variables AC and AI. According to the instructions of (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017), the authors tested the convergent validity of the scale in the study using the external loading factor, t-value, and average variance extracted (AVE).

V: *The results of evaluating the convergent value of the scale*

Scale	Outer loadings	Two tailed tests (t)
<i>The Scale of Land information access (AVE = 0.624)</i>		
Land information needs to be accessible, easy to understand, and accurate (AI1).	0.742	27.844
Land information needs to be presented briefly and selectively (AI2).	0.658	15.918
Land information needs to be provided fully and promptly (AI3).	0.691	15.256
Land information must be accessed through local authorities' websites (commune level, district level, provincial level) (AI4).	0.834	36.057
Land information must be accessed through radio and television systems and broadcast newsletters in ethnic languages (AI5).	0.856	42.640
Land information needs to be accessed through community events of ethnic minorities (AI6).	0.895	72.473
Land information must be accessed through conferences and dialogues between the Commune People's Committee and the people (AI7).	0.823	33.814
Land information must be accessed through land law dissemination and education (AI8).	0.687	11.540
Land information needs to be accessed through annual village meetings (AI9).	0.826	39.893
Land information must be accessed through a team of reputable community members (AI10).	0.844	38.339
<i>The Scale of Accountability (AVE = 0.788)</i>		
Strengthening the explanation of opinions on land use rights through land allocation and implementation of land use rights helps increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC1).	0.900	56.081
Implementing timely and complete explanations of administrative decisions related to the implementation of land use rights helps enhance the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC2).	0.872	37.393
Carrying out timely and complete explanations of administrative actions related to implementing land use rights helps enhance the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC3).	0.896	46.832
Quickly resolve recommendations and feedback related to implementing land use rights to help increase the effectiveness of land use rights for ethnic minorities (AC4).	0.882	45.492

The analysis results in Tab. V show that the loading factors of 14 observed variables are all higher than the minimum threshold proposed by (Hulland, 1999) of 0.5. The research results confirm the existence of a correlation between observed variables and factors. The t-test value of the observed variables ranges from 11,540 to 56,081, satisfying the condition more significant than the threshold of 2.57 for 1% statistical significance. At the same time, the AVE value ranges from 0.624 to 0.788, so the latent variable explains 62.4% to 78.8% of the variance of its observed variables, ensuring the research model has full convergent validity (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2021).

Evaluation of the Discriminant Value of the Scale

As (Henseler *et al.*, 2015) suggested, when testing discriminant validity with studies applying PLS-SEM techniques, researchers must first consider the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) coefficient. The results in Tab. VI show that the HTMT coefficient has the highest value of 0.499, which is lower than the threshold of 0.9 as proposed by (Gold *et al.*, 2001). Thus, all the level 1 scales used in the study achieved discriminant values, which proves that the scale has a discriminant value (Henseler *et al.*, 2009).

When testing the scale's discriminant value using the Cross Loadings cross-loading coefficient, the results in Tab. VII show that all the loading coefficients of the observed variables within its structure are higher than their cross-loading coefficients with other constructs, this has confirmed that the scale has discriminant validity (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017).

Evaluation of the Multicollinearity

The authors checked the value of the variance inflation factor (VIF) to evaluate the level of

VIII: Collinearity Statistics (VIF)

	AC	AI
AC		1.000
AI		

collinearity between research variables in the structural model. Variance inflation factor (VIF) values are provided in Tab. VIII.

Tab. VIII shows that VIF values have a value of 1.000, which is lower than the threshold criterion of 5 (Hair Joseph F. and Hult G. Tomas M., 2017a), so there is no multicollinearity problem in the study.

Assessing the Impact of Accountability on Ethnic Minority People's Access to Land Information

The results of testing the structural model help determine the relationship and level of impact between research variables in the proposed research model. Model testing results in Fig. 2 show that the adjusted R² coefficient of the dependent variable AI is 0.250, and the adjusted R² value is more significant than 0.2, proving that the proposed research model fits the collected data well (Hair Jr *et al.*, 2017).

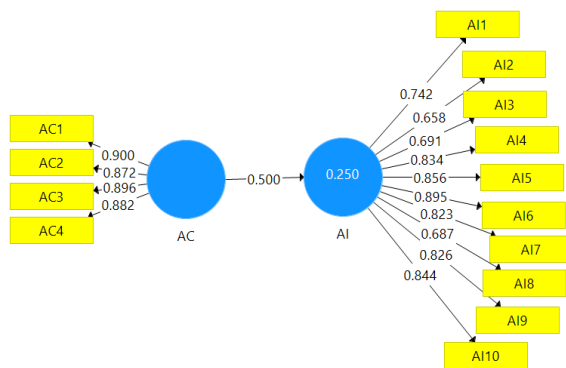
The strength of the hypotheses in the research model is evaluated through the path coefficient (β coefficient - Fig. 2) and t-value (Fig. 3). The larger the path coefficient β represents, the stronger the impact; the path coefficient β ranges from -1 to 1. The t-value represents the statistical significance of each path in the structural model. Research results show that the impact of accountability on access to land information of ethnic minorities in Binh Dinh province has a high level of statistical significance; this is shown through the t-value of

VI: Measurement model: discriminant validity

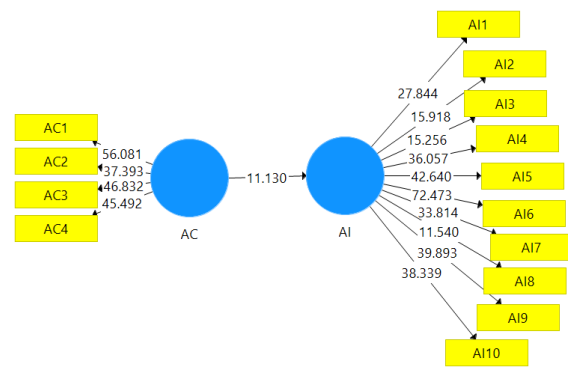
Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)		Fornell-Larcker Criterion	
	AC	AI	
AC			AC
			0.888
AI	0.499		AI
			0.500
			0.790

VII: Measurement model: discriminant validity by Cross Loadings

	AC	AI		AC	AI
AC1	0.900	0.455	AI4	0.392	0.834
AC2	0.872	0.429	AI5	0.442	0.856
AC3	0.896	0.438	AI6	0.465	0.895
AC4	0.882	0.454	AI7	0.409	0.823
AI1	0.480	0.742	AI8	0.169	0.687
AI2	0.172	0.658	AI9	0.415	0.826
AI3	0.218	0.691	AI10	0.481	0.844



2: Result of PLS Algorithm



3: Results of Bootstrap 5000 times

the impact of accountability (AC) to access to land information (AI) is 11.130, the t-value is more significant than 2.57, ensuring a statistical significance level of 1%. At the same time, the path β coefficient on the impact of accountability (AC) on access to land information (AI) is $\beta = 0.500$. This means that the impact of accountability (AC) on access to land information (AI) is positive; strengthening the accountability of authorities will be an effective solution in enhancing the ability of ethnic minorities to access land information. This result has clarified and provided evidence for the representative theoretical framework that Jensen and Meckling (1976) mentioned regarding the meaning of accountability in the public sector; Managers' Accountability to ensure land users' rights in accessing land information. Thus, the issue of ensuring ethnic minorities' right to access land information and accountability are closely related. Accountability is associated with providing information to beneficiaries and ensuring that information is associated with the responsibility to perform tasks. Providing information in any form but not enough for land users to fully access land information requires improving the effectiveness of accountability in addition to other measures. Strengthening accountability will promote access to land information; this result has been confirmed in related studies by (Justice *et al.*, 2006; Ly and Thanh, 2020).

DISCUSSION

Research results have shown that accountability plays a vital role in accessing land information for ethnic minorities, and the impact of accountability on access to land information is confirmed to be significant. The direction is positive ($\beta = 0.5$) and has a statistical significance level of 1% (t value = 11,130); this means that strengthening the accountability of state land management agencies will contribute to improving the effectiveness of ethnic minorities' access to land information. Ensuring the right to access information and accountability are closely related, the right to access information promotes accountability of state agencies (Ly and Thanh, 2020).

Vietnamese law stipulates the accountability of state agencies in the 2013 Constitution, the 2013 Law on Citizen Reception, the 2014 Law on National Assembly Organization, the 2015 Law on Government Organization, and the Law on Organization local government in 2015, Law on Supervision Activities of the National Assembly and People's Council in 2015, Law on Access to Information in 2016, Law on Prevention and Combat of Corruption in 2018. Accountability requires someone to be accountable to others for performing specific tasks with adequate authority and resources (Wallis and Gregory, 2009). Accountability is a prerequisite for social order (Hall *et al.*, 2017) and one of the foundations of good governance.

Accountability is increasingly becoming a common practice in organizations and is critical to implementing management policies and programs. Accountability is one of the outstanding features of representative democracy, requiring those exercising public authority to be subject to supervision and evaluation (Aucoin and Jarvis, 2005). The scope and level of citizens' rights recognized in the law are criteria for assessing the level of democracy in society and the relationship between the state and society in the overall development of society (Huong, 2023). Accountability means promoting democracy, compliance, and continuous improvement in the use of public resources and agencies (Aucoin and Heintzman, 2000).

In Vietnam, accountability is a matter of competent agencies, organizations, units, and individuals clarifying information and promptly and thoroughly explaining their decisions and actions while performing their duties, assigned public duties (National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, 2018). According to this definition, accountability includes two main contents: providing and explaining information. According to (Ebrahim and Weisband, 2007), accountability includes four core components including:

1. Transparency, information needs to be accessible, meaning information is always available, easy to understand, and accurate, and completeness, for citizens, it is necessary

to ensure that information is presented in an accessible way, that is, concise, selective, and easy to read (Chase and Phillips, 2004);

2. Answerability or justification means providing clear reasons for actions and decisions, including those that are not adopted;
3. Compliance, monitoring and evaluation of procedures and results, combined with transparency in reporting;
4. Enforcement or sanctions, imposing sanctions for deficiencies in compliance, justification or transparency, such that part of the accountability relationship includes sanctions penalties for non-compliance.

Recognizing that accountability is not simply presenting information but also demonstrating proactive disclosure of information to the people, demonstrating transparency and clarity in providing information. Use and proactively submit to supervision and take responsibility for administrative actions and decisions. Implementing accountability is showing responsibility to the community and society, creating people's trust in the state apparatus. Accountability is carried out openly and transparently, and compliance and the application of sanctions for shortcomings in the implementation process are seen as a driving force to help improve the effectiveness of land users' access to land information, especially land users who are ethnic minorities.

CONCLUSION

Research results confirm that accountability is vital in promoting and improving the effectiveness of ethnic minorities' access to land information. Research results evaluating the impact relationship between accountability (AC) on access to land information of ethnic minorities by applying a linear structural model (PLS-SEM) show that the relationship impact has a very high level of significance, a 1% significance level shown by the t value = 11.130. Accountability (AC) impacts 25% of ethnic minority people's access to land information (AI) (adjusted R^2 value of the research model is 0.250). Research results on determining the impact of accountability on access to land information for ethnic minorities is one of the scientific bases for the Vietnamese Government to continue to develop policies to improve. Furthermore, the principles, requirements, and content in implementing the accountability of state land management agencies regarding access to land information for ethnic minorities. Affirming the positive relationship between accountability and access to land information contributes to filling the theoretical gap between accountability and access to land information of ethnic minorities.

This study only stops at evaluating the role of accountability in accessing land information for ethnic minorities, which is also a limitation of the study. 75% of the factors affecting ethnic minority people's access to land information need to be understood and analyzed in future studies.

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