# Government Transparency: Paradoxes and Dilemmas
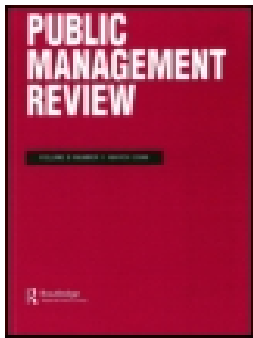
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# Government transparency: paradoxes and dilemmas

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# Government Transparency: Paradoxes and Dilemmas

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# Government Transparency: Paradoxes and Dilemmas

**Abstract**

Over the last three decades, the concept of government transparency has remained at the forefront of ongoing public debate. Using a systematic literature review of 470 articles on government transparency, this article identifies eight paradoxes and dilemmas related to government transparency including regulation, public safety, media interpretation, collaborative governance, functional ability, risk-taking, privacy, and personal interpretation. We then propose a comprehensive framework on how to reconcile these paradoxes and dilemmas towards achieving better transparency outcomes and ultimately effective public administration.

**Keywords:** Transparency; paradox; dilemma; public administration

The concept of government transparency has become a rapidly evolving area of study in the field of public administration. However, defining government transparency has proved to be an arduous task, with scholars not reaching a consensus. For example, some scholars limit the scope of government transparency to the amount of information made available by public officials (Etzioni 2014, 687). Some researchers tried to explain government transparency by including the need for the general public (outside actors) to be able to get information when they need it, rather than having to wait for it (Porumbescu, Lindeman, and Cucciniello 2017, 841). Meijer (2013, 430) and Grimmelikhuijsen et al. (2013, 576) offered broader definitions of government transparency by incorporating a check-and-balance between the giver and the receiver of information. We believe that achieving the right balance in government transparency requires the working knowledge and awareness of all stakeholders. Hence, building on Grimmelikhuijsen et al.'s (2013) definition, we propose a definition of government transparency as: those needed efforts in governments to enhance the availability of information about the internal workings or performance of government, which in turn enhances the inward observability and monitoring of government workings by external actors such as members of the public.

Most scholars believe that a higher level of transparency is necessary for an accountable and responsive public service (Lourenço, 2015, Benito and Bastida 2009; Hodge, 2007). However, other scholars are skeptical about the short and long-term unintended consequences of transparency (Grimmelikhuijsen and Meijer 2014). Government transparency initiatives have become more complicated, and public administrators are looking for advice on how to deal with the complexity and unintended consequences. This is especially true when scholars and public administrators have realized that the costs, unintended consequences, and risks of government transparency bring in tensions that are sometimes more than anticipated.

When public officials encounter tension in their transparency efforts, they are likely to lean towards a tradeoff approach to navigating such tension. A "tradeoff" is a tactical move that reduces or significantly lessens one element or feature of a competing situational decision in instances where such competing decisions cannot be simultaneously undertaken (Campbell &

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Kelly, 1994). Simply said, a tradeoff happens when the preference for one element increases at the expense of another. Such an approach sees elements that need to be traded off as separate and possibly sacrificial entities. This means that choosing between competing tensions is a "necessary evil."

However, more often than not, when it comes to government transparency efforts, the elements in a tension often present themselves as entangled together, mutually dependent on each other, and persistent over time such that they can be contradictory yet unavoidable to a degree that neither element in a tension could be easily reduced or significantly lessened (Brunswicker, Priego, & Almirall, 2019, 571-591; Sáez-Martín, López-Hernandez, & Caba-Perez, 2017, 2085-2094). Thus, the traditional tradeoff approach becomes insufficient. We offer an alternative perspective: that while trading-off between apparently conflicting priorities may produce short-term positive results, leaders must acknowledge and reconcile all elements in tensions concurrently if they are to entrench long-term government transparency gains and, ultimately, good governance (Smith & Lewis, 2011). In doing so, we advocate a reinvigorated focus to the use of paradox perspective in the management of government transparency effort.

According to Smith and Tracy (2016, 382) paradox is defined "as contradictory yet interrelated elements that exist simultaneously and persist overtime". The paradox perspective is based on three main assumptions which include (i) that competing elements are a natural part of organizing, which requires relational dynamics or sense making; (ii) that two elements exist in relation to each other, with a conflicting but interdependent dynamic from both elements; and (iii) that competing elements persist over time and often can't be solved, but if they are properly identified and acknowledged, they can spur creativity and innovation for better performance (2016, p. 457–466). In our view, the paradox perspective provides possibilities for improving government transparency efforts rather than being a tug of war between necessary evils that can be easily traded off. Consequently, our aim is to steer the debate on government transparency away from a "good" or "bad" point of view and toward a more robust point of view that seeks to maximize the positive potential of government transparency while minimizing the negative consequences when faced with the duality of public sector transparency.

In attempting to embrace, integrate, and transcend apparent tensions, we aim to assist public scholars and practitioners in navigating the practical compromises and contradictions inherent in government transparency efforts by seeing these intricacies through the perspective of "paradoxes and dilemmas," as described in the organizational paradox literature. Through a comprehensive systematic review, we bring these paradoxes and sometimes dilemmas to light by identifying, extracting, and classifying the tensions surrounding government transparency attempts. We then put these ideas together into a framework that will help public managers and scholars find and solve these tensions more effectively.

Although, there have been several systematic literature reviews on transparency in recent years (e.g., Cucciniello et al. 2017 or Mabillard and Zumofen 2017), as well as several other efforts to propose frameworks that assist in navigating the tradeoffs in transparency (e.g., Kosack and Fung 2014), none of the existing systematic reviews is dedicated to understanding and clarifying tensions, paradoxes, and dilemmas inherent in government transparency, but rather focuses on

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what transparency can do (outcomes) and factors that promote or hinder transparency. In this paper, we provide a detailed outlook that is premised on a holistic perspective in understanding government transparency as opposed to isolating one or two paradoxical/dilemmic concepts (e.g., Pozen 2020, 326-31; Sharman 2009, 717-31; Roberts 2004, 410-24; Meijer 2013, 429-439; Etzioni 2014, 687-88). We also noted that much of the existing work on government transparency may not have expressly focused on paradoxes and dilemmas, but their analysis often revolves around tensions in government transparency. In this broader context, we went on to critically examine two questions: *how paradoxical and dilemmic is government transparency, to the point where it is likely to produce ambiguous and contradictory outcomes on a regular basis? Can the paradox perspective be used to better manage possible conflicting outcomes, instead of the more traditional tradeoff approach?*

Hence, our study attempts to add to the growing body of government transparency research by applying the paradox perspective to propose a framework aimed at guiding future work towards resolving the paradoxes and dilemmas surrounding government transparency. A systematic literature review is presented, leading to a wide-ranging framework of the most significant circumstances identified from the review that make government transparency paradoxical and dilemmic.

This article is structured as follows. We start by reviewing the paradox perspective and delineating the differences between this perspective and the traditional tradeoff perspective. We then move on to report our systematic literature review, followed by a detailed discussion on each paradox /dilemma we distilled from the review within a framework that categorizes them. We end with a discussion of how the paradox perspective could be used to better manage complexities and tensions inherent in government transparency.

**The Paradox Perspective: Paradoxes and Dilemmas**

The management and administration literature on paradoxes has continued to gain momentum in the face of the growing complexities of the 21st century, with more and more researchers engaged in developing paradox perspectives on social phenomena (Schad, et al. 2016; Schad, et al. 2019: Smith and Lewis, 2011). In the public sector, when governments need to handle societal problems that traverse vertical hierarchy, lateral jurisdictional boundaries, and complex social structures because of new technologies, globalized mobility, and institutional fragmentation, paradoxes and dilemmas naturally emerge to create conflicts, tensions, and contradictions that contribute to the notion of "wicked problems" that has caught the attention of public administration researchers and practitioners (Head, 2008; Head & Alfrod, 2015; Peters, 2017). However, the growing interest in the complex nature of governance is not without some controversies and misconceptions. This is because, sometimes, seemingly similar words like paradox, dilemma, conflict, tension, and contradiction are used interchangeably in articles adopting the paradox perspective (Schad and Bansal, 2018; Smith and Lewis, 2011), making the paradox perspective ambiguous conceptually. While we recognize that, to some extent, there exists a very thin line between the conceptual meaning of these words, their distinction is worth exploring further. Our distinction will focus on paradoxes and dilemmas since our subsequent

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findings and discussion revolve around these two terms, bearing in mind that each of these terms has conflict, tension, and contradiction embedded in them, hence their ambiguity.

Paradoxes could be understood as the "interdependent and persistent tensions (that) are intrinsic to organizing" (Schad, et al. 2016, 10). According to Smith and Lewis (2011, 387), paradox proposes "contradictory yet interrelated elements (dualities) that exist simultaneously and persist over time; such elements seem logical when considered in isolation but irrational, inconsistent, and absurd when juxtaposed." Contrastingly, a dilemma denotes "a tension such that each competing alternative poses clear advantages and disadvantages" (Smith and Lewis, 2011, 386), with the disadvantages being more manifest. In a dilemma, it is an "either" or "or" relation between the two alternatives, whereas in a paradox, opposites co-exist in a fused whole ("and" relation). However, an overlap between paradox and dilemma cannot be ruled out, suggesting a close tie between these two concepts. For instance, Smith and Lewis (2011, 387), posit that "a dilemma may prove paradoxical when a longer time horizon shows how any choice between A and B is temporary."

In the absence of a broad range theory capable of capturing the multi-dimensional ambiguities surrounding government transparency, this article employs the paradoxical and dilemmic lenses advocated by the paradox perspective to examine a variety of contradictory, oddly competitive, yet indispensable factors relating to public sector transparency. We are careful to refer to the paradoxical and dilemmic lenses as "the paradox perspective" rather than "the paradox theory," because a theory, in our opinion, is a system of scientific knowledge that generates generalized thinking about a phenomenon and is supported by a substantial amount of empirical evidence. While we believe immense progress has been made in existing literature toward a generally acceptable paradox theory, such efforts still relatively fall short of the rigor and comprehensiveness required of modern scientific knowledge, hence we call it a paradox perspective.

According to Smith and Tracey (2016, 457–66), three key assumptions underpin the paradox perspective. First, the paradox perspective presumes that competing demands are innate in "organizing," necessitating relational dynamics or sensemaking. The second assumption posits that two elements exist in relation to one another, with an interdependent yet conflicting dynamic from both elements. The third and most cited assumption postulates that competing demands persevere over time and often cannot be resolved, but if effectively identified and acknowledged, they can foster creativity and innovation for better performance. Under these assumptions, tensions arising from paradoxical situations are oppositional, inconsistent, and conflictual on the one hand, and on the other hand, such tensions are also interconnected, synergistic, and reciprocally established. Thus, the paradox perspective emphasizes the imperativeness of consciously acknowledging and accepting the tension that often exists when a paradoxical situation presents itself, with the view of mitigating and dealing with such tension as much as possible.

The paradox perspective is similar to the tradeoff perspective that has been extensively used by both scholars and practitioners in public administration, since both of them emphasize a need to make compromise and avoid going with one extreme. Yet, different from the tradeoff

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perspective, the paradox perspective can offer some distinctive and important insights on understanding and examining conflicting demands, opposing assumptions, or seemingly incompatible elements. First, the paradox perspective requires a tighter interdependence between the conflicting elements in a paradox (to a degree that the conflicting elements are mutually defined by each other), and this interdependence creates a sense of wholeness that ultimately form a Gestalt (Schad et al., 2016). As against the assumption of mutual exclusivity in the tradeoff approach, the paradox perspective focuses on how the elements are mutually inform, affect, and define each other to form a coherent wholeness. Differently, the tradeoff perspective focuses on a pair of elements that each will lose some aspects in return for gains on other aspects, but these elements are not required to be interdependent (Smith and Lewis, 2012). Because of the tight interrelatedness of certain government transparency efforts that is examined in this work, the drawback to the traditional tradeoff compared to the paradox perspective is that tradeoff decisions could lead to undesirable outcomes due to less consideration on the mutual definitions of conflicting factors. Second, from the paradox perspective, the contradictory yet interdependent elements will persist over time. The persistence of paradoxes emphasizes an ongoing process of "working through" conflicting forces for a long-term success (Smith & Berg, 1987; Schad et al., 2016). Comparatively, the tradeoff approach satisfies at selecting an option that maximizes the merits and minimizes the demerits in a given situation without necessarily emphasizing the persistence of these elements, thus might miss considerations for long-term outcomes. Third, the paradox perspective accentuates constant changes of the elements in a paradox (Khazanchi, Lewis, & Boyer, 2007) that require dynamic and flexible mechanisms to deal with conflicting elements contingently, rather than making a one-time tradeoff between conflicting factors. "Managing paradox therefore requires a creative, both/and approach that leverages the benefits of each side separately, while also tapping into their synergistic potential." (Smith and Lewis, 2012, p. 62). Last but not the least, generative-ness is another critical characteristic of the paradox perspective that makes it more powerful than the tradeoff perspective for dealing with tensions and contradictory elements. The generative nature of paradoxes is based on its philosophical underpinning - dialectics. According to dialectics, contradictory elements in a paradox (thesis and antithesis) are resolved through synthesis and "every synthesis constitutes a new thesis that is eventually opposed by a new antithesis" (Schad et al., 2016, p. 45). As the dialectical process continues, there will always be a higher synthesis occurring and current synthesis becomes the starting point of a new synthetic process (Schad et al., 2016). In this sense, the paradox perspective can generate synthesis (e.g., new and creative ways of looking at the phenomenon) through a process of self-transcendence. Differently, the tradeoff perspective is originated from the pragmatism tradition that stops at making "forced" compromises between two extremes based on pragmatic considerations.

## Methodology

A systematic literature review was performed to identify the circumstances that catalyze government transparency paradoxes and dilemmas. A systematic literature review is "a review in which there is a comprehensive search for relevant studies on a specific topic, and those identified are then appraised and synthesized according to a pre-determined explicit method" (Klassen, Jahad, and Moher 1998, 700). We utilized the widely accepted Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) to report the systematic review

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(Liberati et al. 2009). The systematic review followed a search method, inclusion and exclusion criteria, and final sample size for review and extraction of findings.

*Search Method/Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria*

1. The Web of Science was used to search for articles on transparency. We searched for articles published in all years (from 1900 to 2020) that have the keyword "transparency" in the title. The assumption behind this approach is that articles that have the word "transparency" in their titles provide a confined and definitive frame focusing on transparency issues, as compared to other broad and loosely used words like "right to know," "access to information," "disclosure," "secrecy in government," or "open government", etc. Using these criteria, 15,614 articles from the Web of Science were retrieved.

2. Next, we filtered the results generated above to retain articles published in public administration discipline since our focus is on government transparency. In Web of Science, we chose the search criteria of "public administration" as the subject category, and this filtering process reduced the number of articles to 451.

3. Then, we further filtered the results in Step 2 to retain only peer-reviewed articles. We believe peer-reviewed articles provide better objective perspectives compared to reports, conference papers, etc., having been scrutinized by editors and reviewers in the field of public administration. This reduced the number of articles to 340.

4. To cross-check the coverage of these 340 articles, we repeated the process from step "1" to step "3" on the ProQuest database to compare the result with that of the Web of Science. ProQuest generated 279 final articles as compared to the 340 in the Web of Science. Further scrutiny revealed a 98% overlap between the two databases. After sorting through the results, we arrived at a combined total of 386 articles published in 111 journals.

4. We further examined this result of 386 articles and noticed that some major journals publishing government transparency related research were not included, such as *Government Information Quarterly, MIS Quarterly,* or *Information Systems Research,* etc. This is because Web of Science categorizes these journals under "Information Science Library Science" category, rather than in "Public Administration" category. To be as comprehensive as possible, we then searched Web of Science (from 1900 to 2020) using the keyword "transparency" in the titles and filtered the results to retain articles published in "information science library science" discipline. We further filtered the results to retain only peer-reviewed articles in Web of Science's Social Sciences Citation Index. This step generated 84 articles from 39 journals.

   We combined search results from Step 4 and Step 5 and ultimately had a combined total of 470 articles from 150 journals (Appendix 1). We then move on to the analysis and coding of these articles.

*Analyzing and Coding Articles*

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The authors independently read the articles from an interpretive standpoint, focusing on where the articles delve into transparency ambiguity. During this reading, the authors paid particular attention to information related to conflicts, inconsistencies, disagreements, and tensions discussed within and between these articles. This process is not inductive or deductive but abductive, with data and theory examined in tandem (Henry, Rasche and Möllering 2022). At the end of this process, a combined total of 17 initial pairs of paradoxical and dilemmic situations were identified. Then, the authors examined the 17 pairs that were initially extracted to address areas of difference in the extraction process in order to streamline the pairs and resolve differences. At the end of the streamlining sessions, the authors were able to further narrow the number down to eight (8) broad categorizations by matching similar pairs as well as pairs that imply the same conceptualization and dropping some trivial ones. Table 1 shows the eight (8) paradoxes and dilemmas extracted and the number of articles upon which they were identified.

Table 1: Categorization of Paradoxes and Dilemmas of Government Transparency Identified in Literature

| Categorization Level | Paradox/Dilemma | No. of Articles | Sample Articles |
|---|---|---|---|
| Societal Level | Regulation | 112 | Lagunes & Pocasangre (2019); Brian (2014); Etzioni (2014). |
| | Public Safety | 65 | de Jong and de Vries, (2007); da Cruz, et al, (2016); Piotrowski and Van Ryzin. (2007). |
| | Media Interpretation | 32 | Piotrowski (2017); Piotrowski (2017b); Porumbescu (2017). |
| Inter-organizational Level | Collaborative governance | 67 | Bryer (2014); Reynaers and Grimmelikhuijsen (2015); Gil-Garcia, Gasco-Hernandez, & Pardo, (2020). |
| Organizational Level | Functional Ability | 101 | Halachmi & Greiling (2013); Kim et al. (2005); Prat (2005). |
| | Risk Taking | 47 | Cucciniello et al. (2017); Meijer, Harts, and Worthy (2018); Hood (2007). |
| Individual Level | Privacy | 52 | Graham, Gooden, and Martin. (2016); Etzioni (2014); Sharman (2009). |
| | Personal Interpretation | 15 | Piotrowski and Van Ryzin (2007); Ruiz-Lozano et al. (2019); Grimmelikhhuijsen & Meijer (2014). |
| | Total | 491** | |

**The total number is greater than the sample size of 470 as a result of double counting in instances where an article touches on cross categorization of factors.

In the next section, we present our findings from the systematic review on these paradoxical and dilemmic circumstances.

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## Government Transparency-Paradoxes and Dilemmas

Eight paradoxical and dilemmic circumstances were identified from the articles retrieved from the systematic search of the literature. They include:
1. Privacy – Dilemma
2. Personal Interpretation – Paradox
3. Functional Ability – Paradox
4. Risk Taking – Dilemma
5. Collaborative Governance – Paradox
6. Regulation – Paradox
7. Public Safety – Dilemma
8. Media Interpretation – Paradox

These circumstances were further categorized into a framework with four embedded levels depending on the scope with which each circumstance helps uncover government transparency as a complex phenomenon: individual level, organizational level, inter-organizational level, and societal level (See Figure 1). Though we are consonant on the very thin and fluid difference between paradox and dilemma, our findings indicate a possibility to differentiate them - that when these paradoxes and dilemmas interact with mediating and moderating contingencies (factors that promote or demote transparency), different ambiguous outcomes may result. On the paradoxical hand, contradictory yet interrelated elements (dualities) exist concurrently ("and" relation) and persist over time. On the dilemmic hand, tension is caused since each competing choice has distinct advantages and drawbacks and is more prone to an "either-or" relation between two possibilities, with the downsides being more pronounced.

Figure 1: Paradoxical and Dilemmic Factors of Transparency
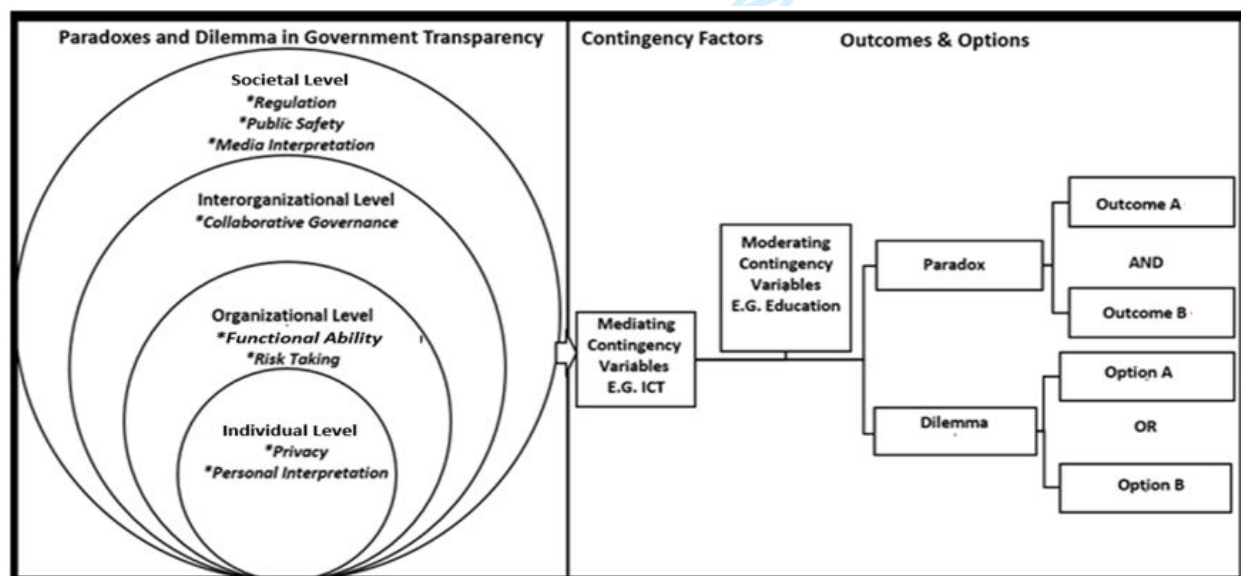
**Individual Level**

Individual level refers to inconsistencies in government transparency that are linked to a specific person or group of people. The complexity surrounding government's transparency at this level is furthered as a result of the direct action or inaction of an individual and how such individuals or groups of people are impacted either positively or negatively by the efforts to entrench transparency. We identified two such circumstances: privacy and personal interpretation.

**Privacy:** Governments at all levels possess private information about individual citizens. However, the effort to be as transparent as possible while not breaching an individual's privacy creates a dilemma.

Burke & Teller (2011, 7) captured the government's transparency-privacy dilemma when they posited that "transparency must be counterbalanced with maintaining citizens' privacy, protecting national security, and the costs associated with the technical capacity of the government to make information available and accessible." As much as the government strives to be accountable to a diverse set of stakeholders, with increased transparency expectations to promote accountability, the government also owes the citizen the right to privacy (Coglianese 2009, 529; Janssen, & van den Hoven, 2015, 364). The question then becomes, how does the government sustain a balance of providing access to information while maintaining citizens' privacy (Sharman 2009, 719; Graham, Gooden, & Martin 2016, 571)?

In a bid to further entrench transparency efforts, a significant number of governments at all levels across the globe enacted sunshine laws (regulations requiring transparency and disclosure in government). For example, FOIA (1966) in the US, Regulations of the People's Republic of China on Open Government Information (2008) in China, Freedom of Information (2011) in Nigeria, etc. However, the issue with these sunshine laws as it affects government transparency efforts is the existence of intra and inter law exemptions that are often vaguely written thus aiding government transparency ambiguity instead of its intended purpose of increased transparency. For instance, as enshrined in one of the exemptions of FOIA and the Privacy Act (1974) in the United States, individual privacy must be protected (Graham, Gooden, and Martin 2016, 570) and, as such, some information needs to be redacted when released. However, what makes implementing these privacy laws a dilemma for government transparency is that sometimes redacted information may not be meaningful enough to information-seekers (Dawes, 2010, 378). When information that is not meaningful enough is released, it could potentially provide users with the illusion of openness while actually serving to obfuscate (Etzioni 2014, 688; Veljković, Bogdanović-Dinić, & Stoimenov, 2014). According to Lagunes & Pocasangre (2019) and Worthy (2017), just like the United States, many goverments often find themselves in a similar paradoxical and dilemmic situation in the implementation and outcomes of the sunshine laws. When this happens, administrators are forced to choose between two oddly competing alternatives: either to obfuscate the public or release potentially damaging information, thus creating an ethical dilemma.

**Personal Interpretation:** The content of the information made available to the public is subject to different interpretations by individuals or groups of people. Such varying interpretations create

a paradoxical effect: to some, it is interpreted positively, thus increasing their level of trust in the government; to others, it is interpreted negatively, thus decreasing their level of trust in the government.

This factor is exacerbated because of political, ideological, racial, tribal, religious, and other considerations (Piotrowski and Van Ryzin 2007, 310). For example, researchers found that people perceive (interpret) and appreciate information differently depending on cultural values (Ruiz-Lozano et al. 2019, 481), power distance between the citizens and their leaders (Grimmelikhuijsen et al. 2013, 580), perceived relational distance (de Boer & Eshuis 2018, 455), and level of education (Cicatiello et al., 2018, 601). These interpretations can be linked to the paradoxical relationship between transparency and trust in the government (Field 2019, 43; Grimmelikhuijsen, Piotrowski, & Van Ryzin, 2020, 101497). This is more so because, "the ''right'' information to generate trust might not be the right information for better government, since it is not necessarily true that more disclosure makes the government behave better" (Cucciniello, Belle, Nasi, & Valotti, 2015, 580; Prat, 2005). Grimmelikhhuijsen & Meijer (2014, 138) submitted that "a few academic articles have tended to prove that transparency has a rather neutral effect on citizens' trust in government, appearing to confirm the so-called "skeptics"— those who remain skeptical about the strong influence of transparency on trust in government."

**Organizational Level**

Circumstances involving government transparency occur at organizational levels that are embedded within an organization. These circumstances have a direct internal impact on the organization. To an extent, officials within the organization have some level of control over organizational level circumstances, in that, they may be able to navigate (albeit, with little or no success) to what extent these circumstances affect government transparency. We identified two such circumstances: functional ability and risk-taking.

**Functional Ability:** Public organizations often strive to achieve efficiency and effectiveness at the same time, but government transparency makes it harder for the two to go hand in hand, thus creating a paradoxical tension.

According to Barnard (1938, 30), "effectiveness relates to the accomplishment of the cooperative purpose when a specific desired end is attained" (p. 30), while on the other hand, efficiency refers to 'the optimal relationship between input and output" (Anthony 1965, 28). As strategic and important as effectiveness and efficiency may sound, public officials are often confronted with the problem of how to counterbalance them (Zhang & Wang, 2020, 446-459; Pernagallo & Torrisi, 2020). One of the factors that potentially contribute to this incompatibility is government transparency (Newbold 2011, 551). The reason being that while transparency tends to lead to more effectiveness, as suggested by Halachmi & Greiling, 2013, (579), and Kim et al. (2005, 649), it can at the same time reduce efficiency (Prat 2005, 869). In theory, transparency initiatives can be positively linked to performance. However, the same initiative "can slow government operations due to the reduced operational capacity that results from the consumption of scarce resources, not to improve performance, but to generate information about it (e.g., performance reports)" (Halachmi, & Greiling, 2013, p. 579, Chen, 2012, p.331).

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The paradoxical effect that government transparency has on effectiveness and efficiency is more pronounced when talking about input transparency compared to process and outcome transparency. According to Cucciniello, Porumbescu, and Grimmelikhuijsen (2017, 39), input transparency is related to the transparency activities "about the debate and discussions that led to the adoption of a particular policy." Input transparency necessitates feedback, through which people may want to get more clarification about the proposed policy orientation; others may vehemently disagree with what they have been told by expressing their displeasure or offering a counter opinion about the policy orientation (Licht 2014; Licht, et al., 2014). Once a proposed decision is made public, public officials become unconsciously attached to the feedback it generates, because when that feedback goes unaddressed, the negative no-voice effect becomes pronounced as it reminds people that they have no voice (van den Bos 1999, 560-77). At the same time, responding to the feedback can be daunting in terms of the time and resources needed. In a rapidly changing public sector sphere, where managers are expected to make complex decisions that might be time-sensitive, valuable time might be lost, thus dampening the deliberation process (Coglianese 2009, 529, Dawes, 2010, 378).

**Risk-Taking:** When the idea that government should be transparent clashes with the fact that people in public service tend to avoid taking risks, things get complicated for public officials. They sometimes have to choose between taking a popular but potentially harmful decision or making an unpopular but potentially worthwhile decision that might backfire, thus creating a dilemma.

There are numerous theoretical and empirical studies on the relationship between government transparency and public sector performance (Cucciniello et al. 2017, 32). However, the findings of these studies point in a mixed direction regarding the nature of the relationship (Meijer, Harts, and Worthy 2018, 502). Perhaps, as Hood (2007, 191–10) suggests, a closer look at the reason for this ambiguous relationship can be traced to public managers' conscious desire to avoid blame at the expense of taking risky, but potentially high-rewarding, innovative ideas (Hood 2007, 202). Indeed, a solid literature outside government transparency domain has examined the role of politicians and civil servants on the introduction, implementation, promotion, and persistence of innovation in public sectors (Borins, 2000).

Hood (2007, 197) submitted that when the public is examining the information provided by public officials, there is always the presence of "negativity bias"—the likelihood that negative information will generate more impact in terms of condemnation than positive information will generate praise. According to Borins (2002, p. 467), "Political scientists have observed that the media's and opposition parties' interest in exposing public sector failures (management in a fishbowl) forms a powerful impediment to innovation." As such, public officials (both elected and appointed) have an aversion to risky initiatives to get re-elected or retain their position. Rose & Smith (2012, 188) portray public officials' aversion to blame associated with risky initiatives more accurately when they quote a public budget official as saying, "I am a hero when there is more money than I predicted and a villain when there is less. Let me tell you, it is much better to be a hero than a villain. "

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Since the culture of blame avoidance has become unconsciously entrenched in the public sector to escape backlash from the citizens, it is natural to infer that the absence of an innovative culture in public organizations stems from public officials' not wanting to always take risks and be negatively judged by their constituents. Unfortunately, in reality, transparency tends to suffocate public officials with increased blame from members of the public. Hence, public officials are often too much reluctant to champion innovative ideas, should things go wrong (Howell-Moroney and Hall 2011, 237).

**Interorganizational Level**

Paradoxical circumstances of government transparency also occur at the interorganizational level when two or more organizations come together, forming a network of organizations to pursue shared goals. Here, the paradoxical nature of transparency is bolstered as a result of the sometimes-conflictual nature of the collaborating organizations in terms of their missions, values, principles, and legal mandates. Although there could be many inter-organizational factors impacting the paradoxical circumstances of government transparency, we found only one major factor in our review of the literature: collaborative governance.

**Collaborative Governance:** Collaborative governance is a multi-organizational arrangement where a number of identified participants work together through deliberative consensus and collective decision making to pursue shared purposes (Ran and Qi 2019, 608). Organizations in this arrangement tend to have varying perspectives on the extent and process of transparency, thus creating paradoxical tension in government transparency efforts where an aversion to too much openness (private sector mindset), and a rapidly increasing demand for openness (public sector and civil society mindset) try to co-exist in the collaborative arrangement (Hevenstone & von Bergen, M. 2020, 205; Aaronson 2011, 57). It is not simply the fact that organizations are subject to a different type of rule and managerial expectation that causes paradoxical tension, but when such rules and expectations contradict each other in the collaborative process, a paradoxical situation arises (Cuadrado-Ballesteros, 2014, 275).

For example, in public-private collaborations and outsourcing situations, while public sector actors might be willing and ready to disclose as much information as possible, actors from the private and/or non-profit sectors might be reluctant to do the same (Reynaers and Grimmelikhuijsen 2015, 609), either because they are not legally required to disclose as much information as public actors, or because they simply try to protect the corporate interest (Favotto and Kollman, 2021, 12; Wang, Qi, and Ran, 2021, 15). In situations when the collaborations are among public agencies, different organizational cultures, values, trust, power, and modes of operations could potentially lead to different perspectives (Ran and Qi, 2018) on the extent and process of transparency (Hook 2019, 109). For instance, even though there were warnings, Hurricane Katrina became the most severe hurricane to ever hit the United States. It killed 1,250 people and caused an estimated $125 billion in economic losses. The Congressional Bipartisan Select Committee, tasked with investigating how Katrina was prepared for and managed, was concerned that federal and state authorities failed to share information following the storm (Peled, 2011).

**Societal Level**

At the societal level, paradoxical and dilemmic circumstances of government transparency often occur at a much broader scope than at the individual, organizational, and inter-organizational levels. At this level, identified factors interfere with government transparency based on a larger societal framework under which organizations operate. Societal factors are related to structured societal settings imposed on an organization or a network of organizations as a result of the environment in which such organizations exist. From the literature, we identified three such circumstances: regulation, public safety, and media interpretation. Our classification of these three as "societal" is based on the fact that they typically have far-reaching implications on virtually all segments of society, which can be said to be beyond any personal, organizational, or interorganizational level.

**Regulation:** Much as government transparency can be further promoted with a regulation, the same regulation or other paradoxical regulations can also be used to obstruct transparency from the citizenry.

Government transparency initiatives tend to clash with other regulatory practices. Thus, the possibility of these skirmishes must be recognized to ensure that they are effectively eased (Deighton-Smith, 2004). The rational belief amongst scholars and practitioners in the public sector is that regulation helps promote transparency, which will in turn engender better public service performance (Welch, Hinnant and Moon 2005, 371–391; Ingrams, 2017). It was based on this belief that the popular Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) came into effect in the United States in 1966 (Pozen 2017, 1102). However, despite this rational belief, a deeper look at events in the public sector suggests that rather than promoting government transparency as many believe, regulations present a paradoxical approach as to how and to what limits public officials can choose to be transparent (McDermott, 2010, 413). For example, in the US, on the one hand, regulations like FOIA, the Whistleblower Protection and Enhancement Act, and some transparency-related executive orders tend to promote transparency (Lagunes & Pocasangre 2019, 162). On the other hand, regulations such as the National Defense Authorization Act, the US Patriot Act, and the Espionage Act of 1917 serve the contrary purpose of promoting secrecy in the government (Brian 2014, 8; Banisar 2007, 1). Similar situations are noticeable in other parts of the world including but not limited to Africa (Svärd, 2018, 27), Spain (de Mingo & Cerrillo-i-Martínez, A 2018, 261). Often times, such legislative contradiction are referred to the judiciary where the discretion of the extent of transparency is up to a judge. For instance, the freedom of information legislation was passed in Liberia in 2010. Kpargoi (2015,1) posited that the Center for Media Studies and Peacebuilding petitioned Liberia's Independent Information Commission in 2012 to compel the country's anti-corruption authority to disclose over government officials' asset declaration filings. After the anti-corruption organization contested the information commissioner's request to make the asset declarations public, the matter is still pending in the country's court system three years later (Kpargoi, 2015: 1).

One might be tempted to argue that regulations that serve the contrary purpose of promoting secrecy in government fall under the policy areas of defense and national security and, as such, deserve their secret nomenclature (Piotrowski 2009, 359-61). However, the issue with most of

these laws and regulations has to do with the ambiguity and fuzziness of the provisions under those laws (Svärd, 2018, 27). Hence, it is not the mere existence of these different laws that creates paradoxical situations on their own. Instead, paradoxical situations arise when government officials and sometimes even citizens try to use the vagueness of such a contradiction for their own benefit.

**Public Safety (Security):** Regarding government transparency, regulation and public safety follow the same logic but slightly different. In the public safety sub-sector comprising law enforcement, defense, correction, and first responders, transparency presents an ethical dilemma in that it could help increase accountability and reduce corruption, but at the same time, releasing security-related information could increase the threat to the lives and properties of the citizenry.

Public safety dilemma seems to have some similarities with regulation paradox. In effect, the public safety dilemma derives its manifestation from existence of certain intra and / or inter conflicting government transparency regulations. Despite this fuzziness, they can be distinguished. Holding public safety officials accountable in the face of limited information (lack of transparency) creates a dilemmic tension in the government transparency effort (Bell et al. 2014, 603). On one hand, withholding such information could potentially shield public safety officials from scrutiny and accountability (da Cruz et al., 2016, 884; Bleiberg, 2020, 1). On the other hand, as a derivative of the preceding paradox of regulation, being transparent about certain public safety information can be potentially harmful to society (de Jong and de Vries, 2007, 215). Hence, the continued existence of certain perceived secrecy regulations.

Liberal democracies like the United States and some European countries have always been at the forefront of promoting government transparency in all its ramifications. These countries enjoy a relatively high level of accountability as a result of high government transparency. However, these same countries are beginning to experience higher levels of public safety challenges. A study by Bell et al. (2014, 604) found that "countries with higher levels of internal and external transparency are more likely to experience both domestic and transnational terrorist attacks." Terrorist organizations and other dissident groups frequently exploit a more transparent society to gather as much information as they need to promote their desired policies while instilling fear in the populace (Deng, Peng, and Wang 2013, 947; Bell et al. 2014, 611), creating a conundrum for transparency efforts.

**Media Interpretation:** The content of the information made available to the public is subject to different interpretations by the media outlets, especially with the growing media polarity and ideological lineage. These different interpretations have a strange effect: some media outlets might show a piece of information in a positive light, while others might show the same piece of information in a negative light.

Media interpretation and personal interpretation identified earlier share similar logical reasoning when it comes to government transparency. The role of the media in society in promoting the tenets of transparency cannot be overemphasized. While media outlets serve as one of the primary conduits in the transparency effort (Song and Lee, 2015; Lee and Kwak, 2012), the manner in which information provided is portrayed varies across the board. Thus, the same

information can be interpreted contradictorily by different media outlets (Piotrowski, 2017, 155-71). To counter the multiple interpretations often associated with the information made available to the public, Piotrowski (2017b, 710-711) suggested creating a trusted medium (middleman) or filter between the government and the people (outside of the media) to disseminate an unbiased interpretation of information that can be trusted by all.

While this proposition may sound logical and idealistic, it does have its drawbacks. One of the potential drawbacks is that most of the entities like civil society organizations, think tanks, universities, etc. that are expected to do the interpretation on behalf of the government are directly or indirectly funded by the government. This is true even when no government funding can be linked to these entities. Most of them are linked to private funding that comes from people who support a political ideology, making their interpretation less trustworthy as well.

**Discussion**

From the results of our systematic literature review, it is clear that transparency in the political and administrative spheres of public sector management has a deeper and intriguing duality. Because of this ambiguity, transparency optimists and pessimists have argued and counter-argued for the last 20 years about the extent to which transparency should be used in the public sector. We believe both sides have valid points when we treat the concept of government transparency as paradoxical and dilemmic.

The natural reaction to the complexity of government transparency is to use the tradeoff approach, in which the preference for one part of a pair goes up at the expense of the other part. For example, security-related rules that stop people from sharing information are often necessary and preferred. However, this tradeoff can make it easy for officials to ignore or circumvent rules that encourage openness. The tradeoff approach could be functional in the short term, but it does not seem to be the best solution. Thus, we introduce the paradox perspective that provides a new outlook to managing government transparency complexities.

As depicted in the previous texts of the four differences between the tradeoff approach and the paradox perspective, we propose a normative three-legged sequential approach to managing government transparency using the paradoxical perspective (Figure 2). The normative steps involved require public officials to *recognize, accept, and synergize* (in that order) when dealing with government transparency outcomes that are contradictory yet interdependent on each other. It should be noted that our proposed approach is one recommended alternative to the tradeoff approach based on the paradox perspective, rather than a final definite solution to the tensions inherent in government transparency.

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Figure 2: Normative three-legged sequential approach to managing government transparency
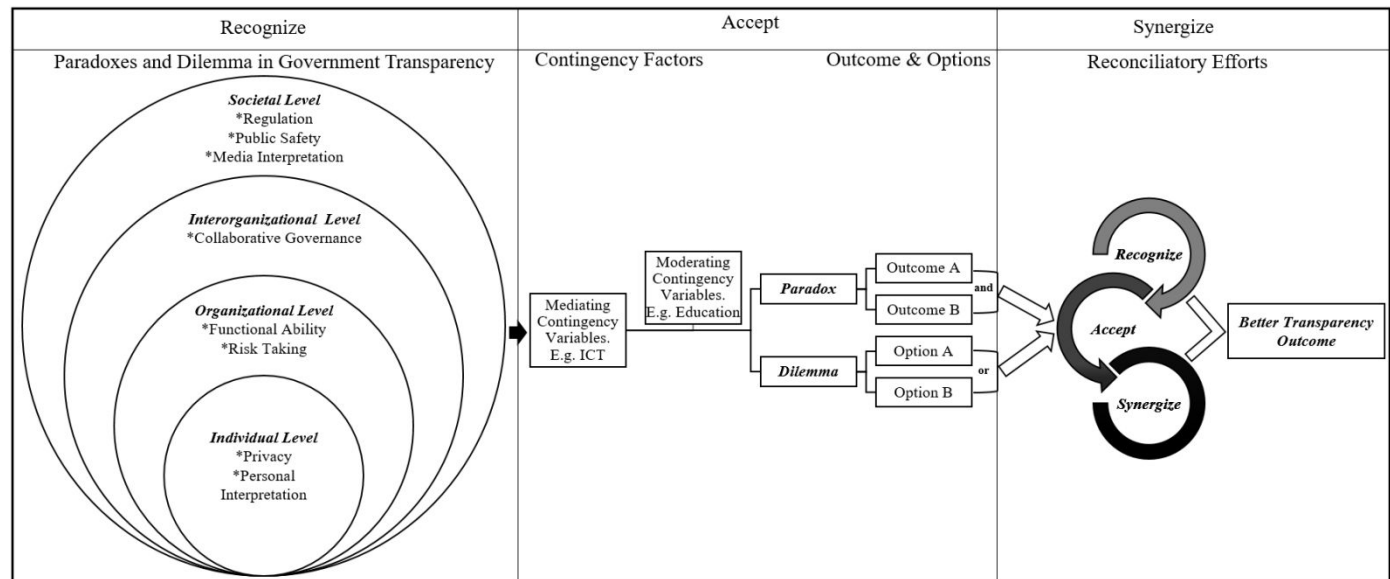


The first step of the reconciliatory effort in managing government transparency effort is recognizing. It entails an understanding of the interdependence between conflicting elements. From the literature, we recognized eight such paradoxical tension ranging from the individual level to the organizational level, interorganizational level, and societal level. Efforts at this stage of the reconciliatory process involves "working through" the situation in order to identify and welcome the entangled elements that create contradictory tensions (Murnighan & Conlon, 1991). Luscher and Lewis (2008) discuss building a "workable certainty"—a negotiated agreement on how to proceed when confronted with contradictory but interdependent conditions. Communication is critical in navigating this first step. The manner in which government transparency efforts are conveyed internally and publicly to stakeholders may sensitize and create an awareness of potential conflicting elements for all stakeholders. For example, there are nine FIOA exemptions in US that when the vagueness of some of the exemptions' words is looked at, they make sense, but they still seem to be contradictory in practice and potentially shield public officials from scrutiny and accountability, which is why recognizing regulation paradox is so important in government transparency. Without a clear recognition, when there is a disagreement about whether or not to withhold or redact certain information "reasonably," public officials' traditional response has always been to be defensive, saying that their actions are justified by a specific exemption or other regulation that allows them to do so.

Acceptance, which is the second step in the paradox management process, means living with what has been recognized as reality. Public officials and all stakeholders need to accept that the conflicting elements mutually inform, affect, and define each other. Accepting the reality of the situation and deciding to live with it reflect the paradoxical thinking as the ability "to effectively embrace, rather than avoid contradictions" (Smith and Tushman 2005, 533). Accepting reality in this case mean accepting the truth that government transparency is not a one-way fast lane where more and more transparency is always worthwhile as many academics and policymakers maintain (Montinola & Jackman, 2002; Persson, Tabellini, & Trebbi, 2003; Bäck & Hadenius,

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2008; Transparency International, 2016). To develop a paradoxical thinking as a general mindset in handling challenges in government transparency initiatives, public administrators need to accept that the costs and unanticipated consequences of transparency are heavier than originally anticipated, and the necessity of transparency and cost of it are mutually informing, affecting, and defining each other to form a coherent wholeness (Smith & Berg, 1987). Accepting paradoxes inbreeds the third step in managing them – achieving a dynamic equilibrium among multiple competing forces by considering and tackling them holistically rather than pursuing a normative stasis where the dynamics of paradoxes and the persistence of tensions are somehow neglected or temporarily addressed.

Synergizing, as the third step, refers to the ongoing dynamic process of conceiving novel and creative mechanisms contingently to deal with conflicting elements for a long-term success. Managing a paradox does not mean resolving or eradicating it, but rather maximizing its stimulating potential. Eisenhardt (2000, 703) asserts that to be effective in the long run, good management makes use of paradox "in a creative approach that encompasses both extremes." Similarly, Rothenberg (1979) suggested that ground-breaking ideas are generated by purposefully contrasting tensions and pursuing a solution that encompassed both choices. In this process, such a novel and creative idea should be capable of synergize both opposing components for the long-term goals. For instance, we mentioned the risk-taking paradox above. Instinctively, public officials tend to be more risk-averse in order to achieve the short-term goal of remaining in the good books of the governed. This often comes with a considerable loss in long-term organizational goals that could have been achieved via innovation, assuming the officials were not mindful of the backlash that government transparency could generate. Rather than forcing public officials into opting for risk avoidance in the face of transparency, policy makers may create a structure and incentive system to embrace this apparently paradoxical duality to achieve a dynamic equilibrium of a calculated risk taking of public officials.

We believe that by focusing more on a deeper understanding of the tensions that exist within government transparency initiatives, both academia and public officials will greatly benefit. The focus on what transparency is capable or not able to do in the public sector is becoming insufficient, especially with the realization that circumstantial situations will always be there to swing transparency in the opposite directions (Brunswicker, Priego, & Almirall, 2019, 571-590). For instance, regulations will always be there to promote transparency, but so will certain exemptions or even contradictory regulations. Similarly, the material and time costs will always be there to compete with the robustness and inclusiveness that come with transparency, thus necessitating an innovative approach for improving both efficiency and effectiveness.

Imperatively, the fluid and normative nature of government transparency further exacerbates its non-stasis nature, thus making it expedient to view government transparency as an "empty signifier" that is dynamic and changeable across space, time, and place and persons (Stubbs and Snell, 2014). In other words, while the identified ambiguous circumstances may hold true in a broader public sector sense, pragmatically, the extent to which each paradox or dilemma manifests is context dependent (Michener, 2019; De Fine Licht, 2014; Grimmelikhuijsen 2010; De Fine Licht, et al., 2014). Hence, in our view, dealing with dilemmas and paradoxes might require a different path. Dealing with dilemma is hinged on competing unpleasant alternatives

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where choice making might be appropriate; and dealing with paradox is inherently hinged on opposing duality within a whole that cannot be separated. Nevertheless, there might be a need to cross paths when dealing with situations involving the two since there exist a very thin line between dilemma and paradox, particularly in the long run for the better transparency outcomes.

## Conclusion

This research, taken collectively, gives insight into how to use government transparency more successfully in the face of the daunting duality that paradoxical and dilemmic circumstances may present. While the link between government transparency and improved public sector performance has been assumed in the past, further research shows that this link is complicated and varied. Government transparency, similar to other concepts in the social sciences, has limitations and can be harmed by improper use; if it is not utilized appropriately, it will not function well.

Our application of the paradox perspective in analyzing the tensions inherent in government transparency efforts and practices helps move the needle forward on how the tensions in public sector transparency can be better recognized holistically and managed more effectively. As against a more traditional approach centered on a basic cost-benefit analysis of tradeoffs, the core idea is for administrators and citizens alike to be more conscious of viewing competing demands not as something to "solve" but rather as something to recognize and accept as persistent and to continuously engage in innovative solutions.

Thus, understanding the interconnectedness of the different layers of dimensional influence from the societal level to the interorganizational level, organizational level, and micro-level of individual interpretation coupled with a paradoxical and dilemmic analysis is imperative. This understanding helps to bolster the reconciliatory maneuvers of public officials while educating consumers of information (specifically members of the public) on how transparency works for some purposes in some situations, but not in others. Instead of arguing about the positives and negatives of government transparency, it is better to look at all the ambiguities that surround its implementation in order to conceive novel and creative mechanisms to deal with paradoxical tensions contingently for effective public administration.

Resolving the tension arising from the paradoxical and dilemmic nature of transparency requires a painstaking effort on the part of the government and public administrators specifically. From our findings, such resolution becomes more complex as the level of categorization of the identified paradoxes and dilemmas increases. As you might expect, the societal level is more difficult to deal with than the interorganizational level or the individual level because higher-level factors have an overarching and snowball effect on all lower-level factors.

Reconciling government transparency paradoxes and dilemmas to achieve the right balance for effective public administration requires deliberate effort. Trying to reach this goal means putting our propositional framework together with specific action plans for each of the two complexes (dilemma and paradox).

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The systematic literature review and our propositions on how to navigate the paradoxical and dilemmic nature of public sector transparency are not without their shortcomings. For example, the paradoxes and dilemmas identified and discussed above are not intended to be exhaustive, but a succinct compilation of government transparency ambiguity deliberated on by the articles captured in our systematic literature review. In the same view, the categorization of the identified paradoxes and dilemmas into different levels of individual, organizational, inter-organizational, and societal is meant to provide a systematic organization of how the factors interact with government transparency at different levels of scope and implication. More importantly, the identified paradoxical and dilemmic circumstances are not mutually exclusive as there could be some level of interconnectivity and embeddedness amongst the circumstances. In other words, these paradoxes and dilemmas are connected, and lower-levels are expected to be naturally embedded in higher-levels. For example, the individual level may be embedded in the societal level, as in the case of personal interpretation and media interpretation. It is possible that individuals develop or reshape their interpretation of government information based on the implicit bias of the news outlets deemed to be legitimate by society. Also at the societal level, as we examined earlier in the paper, the public safety dilemma can be a derivative of the regulation paradox.

The body of literature on government transparency is enormous, especially in the last 20 years. However, reviewing the huge amount of work out there in a single paper like ours seems practically unrealizable. For practical reasons, we chose to adopt the selection and inclusion criteria described in the methods section. We recognize that limiting our search to papers that satisfy the inclusion and exclusion criteria in this paper may undercut the findings advanced in our research, particularly some highly relevant papers may be left off due to the search strategy. Even so, we strongly believe that the academic journals indexed in the *Web of Science* and *ProQuest* have good coverage breadth, and the 470 articles we systematically reviewed in this paper are prototypal of the overarching thoughts in literature related to government transparency.

Additionally, we note that many examples in this article pertain to the United States (US) and country-specific regulations such as the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA), with limited reference to European or even global perspectives. Our exclusion and inclusion criteria, together with the fact that a large amount of available literature on the issue originates in the United States, may have warranted the absence. However, we do recognize that different institutional structures and views on the public sector's involvement in society are of critical importance in light of transparency paradoxes and dilemmas.

Our hope is that now that our study has brought to the fore a succinct compilation of the often understudied paradoxical and dilemmic aspects of government transparency, future researchers will use the opportunity to further assess and empirically investigate government transparency using our framework, with the goal of helping to maximize the gains of government transparency while also addressing its tensions.

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Appendix 1: List of Articles Retrieved (1900 – 2020)

| NO. | Journal Name | No. of Articles |
|---|---|---|
| | Articles in the *Web of Science* and *ProQuest* within the Subject Category of "Public Administration" with "Transparency" in the Title | |
| 1 | *Public Administration Review* | *19* |
| 2 | *International Review Of Administrative Sciences* | *17* |
| 3 | *Public Administration* | *16* |
| 4 | *Public Performance Management Review* | *14* |
| 5 | *Governance An International Journal Of Policy Administration And Institutions* | *13* |
| 6 | *Administration and Society* | *12* |
| 7 | *Earth System Governance* | *12* |
| 8 | *Public Administration And Information Technology* | *11* |
| 9 | *Transparency In Global Environmental Governance Critical Perspectives* | *11* |
| 10 | *American Review Of Public Administration* | *9* |
| 11 | *Local Government Studies* | *9* |
| 12 | *International Journal Of Public Administration* | *8* |
| 13 | *Lex Localis Journal Of Local Self Government* | *8* |
| 14 | *Public Money Management* | *8* |
| 15 | *\*Administracao Publica E Gestao Social (Published in English Language)* | *7* |
| 16 | *Governance And Public Management* | *7* |
| 17 | *Public Administration And Development* | *7* |
| 18 | *\*Revista Del Clad Reforma Y Democracia (Published in English Language)* | *7* |
| 19 | *Australian Journal Of Public Administration* | *6* |
| 20 | *Journal Of European Public Policy* | *6* |
| 21 | *Laws Of Transparency In Action A European Perspective* | *6* |
| 22 | *Public Management Review* | *6* |
| 23 | *Regulation Governance* | *6* |
| 24 | *Transylvanian Review Of Administrative Sciences* | *6* |
| 25 | *Climate Policy* | *5* |
| 26 | *Government Transparency Impacts And Unintended Consequences* | *5* |
| 27 | *Nispacee Journal Of Public Administration And Policy* | *5* |
| 28 | *Public Sector Organizations* | *5* |
| 29 | *\*Revista De Administracao Publica (Published in English Language)* | *5* |
| 30 | *\*Revista Iberoamericana De Estudios Municipales  (Published in English Language)* | *5* |
| 31 | *\*Cadernos Gestao Publica E Cidadania (Published in English Language)* | *4* |
| 32 | *Central European Public Administration Review* | *4* |
| 33 | *Public Integrity* | *4* |
| 34 | *Rescuing Science From Politics Regulation And The Distortion Of Scientific Research* | *4* |
| 35 | *E Government Website Development Future Trends And Strategic Models* | *3* |
| 36 | *Government 3 0 Next Generation Government Technology Infrastructure And Services Roadmaps Enabling Technologies Challenges* | *3* |
| 37 | *International Journal Of Public Sector Management* | *3* |
| 38 | *Journal Of Accounting And Public Policy* | *3* |
| 39 | *Journal Of Comparative Policy Analysis* | *3* |
| 40 | *Journal Of Public Affairs* | *3* |
| 41 | *Nonprofit Management Leadership* | *3* |
| 42 | *Policy Studies* | *3* |
| 43 | *Public Policy And Administration* | *3* |

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| 44 | *Smart Technologies For Smart Governments Transparency Efficiency And Organizational Issues* | *3* |
|---|---|---|
| 45 | *Active Citizen Participation In E Government A Global Perspective* | *2* |
| 46 | *Applying Quality Of Life Research Best Practices* | *2* |
| 47 | *Canadian Public Policy Analyse De Politiques* | *2* |
| 48 | *Entrepreneurial And Innovative Practices In Public Institutions A Quality Of Life Approach* | *2* |
| 49 | *\*Gestion Y Politica Publica (Published in English Language)* | *2* |
| 50 | *Information Models And Sustainability Policy Informatics In The Age Of Big Data And Open Government* | *2* |
| 51 | *Journal Of Public Administration Research And Theory* | *2* |
| 52 | *Journal Of Public Procurement* | *2* |
| 53 | *Policy Studies Journal* | *2* |
| 54 | *Public Administration Governance And Globalization* | *2* |
| 55 | *\*Voprosy Gosudarstvennogo I Munitsipalnogo Upravleniya Public Administration Issues (Published in English Language)* | *2* |
| 56 | *Accountability Through Public Opinion From Inertia To Public Action* | *2* |
| 57 | *Administration In Social Work* | *1* |
| 58 | *Advances In Electronic Government Digital Divide And Regional Development* | *1* |
| 59 | *America In The 21st Century Political And Economic Issues* | *1* |
| 60 | *\*Amme Idaresi Dergisi  (Published in English Language)* | *1* |
| 61 | *\*Anzsog Monographs (Published in English Language)* | *1* |
| 62 | *Asia Pacific Journal Of Public Administration* | *1* |
| 63 | *Brookings Sspa Series On Public Administration* | *1* |
| 64 | *Canadian Journal Of Nonprofit And Social Economy Research* | *1* |
| 65 | *Canadian Public Administration Administration Publique Du Canada* | *1* |
| 66 | *Cases On Adoption Diffusion And Evaluation Of Global E Governance Systems Impact At The Grass Roots* | *1* |
| 67 | *Challenges To Democratic Governance In Developing Countries* | *1* |
| 68 | *Change Transformation In Government Organizations* | *1* |
| 69 | *Journal Of Policy Analysis And Management* | *1* |
| 70 | *Comparative Policy Evaluation* | *1* |
| 71 | *Contemporary Economic Policy* | *1* |
| 72 | *Croatian And Comparative Public Administration* | *1* |
| 73 | *Environment And Planning C Government And Policy* | *1* |
| 74 | *Ethics And Integrity In Public Administration Concepts And Cases* | *1* |
| 75 | *Experiments In Public Management Research Challenges And Contributions* | *1* |
| 76 | *Government And Ngos In South Asia Local Collaboration In Bangladesh* | *1* |
| 77 | *Government Budget Forecasting Theory And Practice* | *1* |
| 78 | *Human Service Organizations Management Leadership Governance* | *1* |
| 79 | *Icts Citizens And Governance After The Hype* | *1* |
| 80 | *Innovation And The Public Sector* | *1* |
| 81 | *International Public Management Journal* | *1* |
| 82 | *International Social Security Review* | *1* |
| 83 | *Journal Of Chinese Governance* | *1* |
| 84 | *Research On International Civic Engagement* | *1* |
| 85 | *Law Governance And Technology Series* | *1* |
| 86 | *Leadership In The Open A New Paradigm In Emergency Management* | *1* |
| 87 | *Municipal Finances A Handbook For Local Governments* | *1* |
| 88 | *Open To The Public Evaluation In The Public Arena* | *1* |
| 89 | *Outcome Based Performance Management In The Public Sector* | *1* |
| 90 | *Policy And Politics* | *1* |
| 91 | *Public Administration And Public Policy* | *1* |

| 92 | *Public Works Management Policy* | *1* |
|----|----------------------------------|-----|
| 93 | *Remembering And Forgetting In The Digital Age* | *1* |
| 94 | *Research Handbook On Climate Governance* | *1* |
| 95 | *Research Handbook On The Ombudsman* | *1* |
| 96 | *Research Handbooks In Law And Politics* | *1* |
| 97 | *Research In Public Management* | *1* |
| 98 | *Research In Public Policy Analysis And Management* | *1* |
| 99 | *Review Of Public Personnel Administration* | *1* |
| 100 | *\*Revista De Gestion Publica (Published in English Language)* | *1* |
| 101 | *\*Revista Do Servico Publico (Published in English Language)* | *1* |
| 102 | *Routledge Handbook On Information Technology In Government* | *1* |
| 103 | *Routledge Handbooks* | *1* |
| 104 | *Routledge Research On Public And Social Policy In Asia* | *1* |
| 105 | *Routledge Studies In South Asian Politics* | *1* |
| 106 | *Science And Public Policy* | *1* |
| 107 | *State Of Citizen Participation In America* | *1* |
| 108 | *Strategies For Public Management Reform* | *1* |
| 109 | *System Dynamics For Performance Management* | *1* |
| 110 | *Transforming Asian Governance Rethinking Assumptions Challenging Practices* | *1* |
| 111 | *Trust And Governance Institutions Asian Experiences* | *1* |
| | Total | 386 |
| Articles in the *Web of Science* (Social Sciences Citation Index) within the Subject Category of "Information Science Library Science" with "Transparency" in the Title | |
| 1 | *Government Information Quarterly* | *21* |
| 2 | *Journal of the American Medical Informatics Association* | *5* |
| 3 | *Online Information Review* | *4* |
| 4 | *Ethics and Information Technology* | *3* |
| 5 | *European Journal of Information Systems* | *3* |
| 6 | *Information Systems Research* | *3* |
| 7 | *MIS Quarterly* | *3* |
| 8 | *Social Science Computer Review* | *3* |
| 9 | *Journal of Enterprise Information Management* | *2* |
| 10 | *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science* | *2* |
| 11 | *Journal of Management Information Systems* | *2* |
| 12 | *Journal of Strategic Information Systems* | *2* |
| 13 | *Online* | *2* |
| 14 | *Professional De La Informacion* | *2* |
| 15 | *Scientometrics* | *2* |
| 15 | *Telematics and Informatics* | *2* |
| 17 | *Econtent* | *1* |
| 18 | *Information and Organization* | *1* |
| 19 | *Information Development* | *1* |
| 20 | *Information Management* | *1* |
| 21 | *Information Technology Management* | *1* |
| 22 | *International Journal of Information Management* | *1* |
| 23 | *Journal of Documentation* | *1* |
| 24 | *Journal of Global Information Management* | *1* |
| 25 | *Journal of Global Information Technology Management* | *1* |
| 26 | *Journal of Health Communication* | *1* |
| 27 | *Journal of Information Technology* | *1* |
| 28 | *Journal of Knowledge Management* | *1* |
| 29 | *Journal of Scholarly Publishing* | *1* |

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| 30 | *Journal of the American Society for Information Science and Technology* | *1* |
|----|----|----|
| 31 | *Journal of the Association for Information Science and Technology* | *1* |
| 32 | *Law Library Journal* | *1* |
| 33 | *Learned Publishing* | *1* |
| 34 | *Library Information Science Research* | *1* |
| 35 | *Library Quarterly* | *1* |
| 36 | *Library Resources Technical Services* | *1* |
| 37 | *Libri International Journal of Libraries and Information Studies* | *1* |
| 38 | *Scienctist* | *1* |
| 39 | *Telecommunications Policy* | *1* |
| | Total | 84 |
| **Combined Total** | | **470** |