

Governance

In India, the concept was talked about in the Arthashastra, authored by Chanakya.

He mentions the characteristics of a good king - , "In the happiness of his subjects lies his happiness, in their welfare his welfare; whatever pleases himself, he does not consider as good, but whatever pleases his subjects he considers as good."

Mahatma Gandhi had also given the term 'Su- Raaj' literally meaning good governance.

Governance can be defined as 'the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented.'

Governance refers to the decision-making and administration involved in any level, i.e., national, regional, local, corporate, family, etc.

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), 1997, defined governance as "the exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels.

It comprises the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences."

World Bank -method through which power is exercised in the management of a country's political, economic and social resources for development.

In simple words, Governance is the process and institutions through which decisions are made and authority in a country is exercised.

Governance can be used in several contexts such as corporate governance, international governance, national governance and local governance.

Thus governance focuses on the formal and informal actors and institutions involved in decision-making and implementing those decisions.

Stakeholders of Governance

Government political actors and institutions, interest groups, civil society, media, non-governmental and transnational organizations.

Typically, the stakeholders of governance at national level can be categorised into three broad categories –

State, Market and Civil Society.

1. The State includes the different organs of the government (Legislature, Judiciary and Executive) independent accountability mechanisms

different segments of actors (elected representatives, political executive, bureaucracy/civil servants at different levels etc.)

2. The Market includes the private sector – organised as well as unorganised – that includes business firms ranging from large corporate houses to small scale industries/ establishments.

3. The Civil Society-most diverse and includes Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), media organisations/ associations, trade unions, religious groups, pressure groups etc.

Characteristics of Governance

1) Accountability: Governance lays emphasis on making all the organs of government accountable for the performance of functions.

Most commonly it is witnessed during elections. The electorates if they are not satisfied with the performance of elected representatives in their constituencies, vote them out of power.

2) People's participation: Governance aims at seeking the participation of people in various developmental activities. The Panchayati Raj Institutions (PHs) and the municipal bodies in India are locally elected representative bodies looking after the management of local affairs.

3) Rule of Law: Governance requires a well-drafted and fair legal framework that protects the interests of

people and provides them justice.

4) Transparency: Administration in the traditional sense functioned on the principle of Secrecy and it was quite secretive in letting out information to the people whom they serve.

Now there is a change in the scenario. People, being participants in the governance process, are desirous of accessing information from the administration regarding matters that concern them.

5) Effectiveness and Efficiency: Governance is characterised by effective and efficient service delivery from any organisation.

The government comes up single window portals to fast track the approval mechanism of service requests.

Good Governance.

Governance' by itself is a neutral term while 'Good Governance' implies positive attributes and values associated with the quality of governance. Good governance is a dynamic concept and there is much subjectivity involved in defining the aspects of good governance.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) recognizes eight core characteristics of good governance:

1. Participatory 2. Consensus oriented 3. Transparent 4. Accountable 5. Responsive 6. Effective and Efficient 7. Equitable and Inclusive 8. Rule of Law

Participation: Participation of all section of society is cornerstone of good governance.

- Participatory governance provides opportunities for citizens to take part in decision making, implementation and monitoring of government activities. However, participation needs to be informed and organized. This includes freedom of association and expression as well as an organized civil society.

Consensus oriented- Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on

o what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

- It also requires a broad and long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development.

Rule of Law - Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are enforced impartially.

- It also requires full protection of human rights, particularly those of minorities and vulnerable sections of the society.

- An independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force is sine qua non for impartial enforcement.

Transparent - It means that information is freely available in easily understandable forms and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. For example, in India the Right to Information (RTI) Act has been a powerful instrument in the hands of people to ensure transparency in the decision making process of executive.

Accountable - Accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies.

- In general an organization or an institution is accountable to those who will be affected by its decisions or actions.

- Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

Responsive - Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable timeframe.

- Redressal of citizen grievance, citizen orientation, citizen friendliness and timely delivery of services are key component of responsive governance.

Effective and Efficient- Good governance means that processes and institutions produce results into the optimum use of resources at their disposal.

- Thus it also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

Equitable and Inclusive• A society's wellbeing depends on ensuring that all its members feel they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society.

- This requires all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well-being.

Many sources include "Strategic Vision" as a 9th principle of Good Governance.

Strategic Vision: A broad and long-term perspective on good governance and human development is required. There is also an understanding of the historical, cultural and social complexities in which that perspective is grounded.

Strategies for good governance

- Reorienting priorities of the state through appropriate investment in human needs
- Provision of social safety nets for the poor and marginalized
- Strengthening state institutions
- Introducing appropriate reforms in the functioning of Parliament and increasing its effectiveness
- Enhancing Civil Services capacity through appropriate reform measures that matches performance and accountability
- Forging new alliances with civil society
- Evolving a new framework for government-business cooperation

4Es- Pillars of Good Governance

- Ethos (of service to the citizen)
- Ethics (honesty, integrity and transparency)
- Equity (treating all citizens alike with empathy for the weaker sections)
- Efficiency (speedy delivery of service without harassment and using ICT increasingly)

Citizens are thus at the core of good governance.

Therefore, good governance and citizen centric administration are inextricably linked.

Necessary Pre-Conditions For Good Governance

- Effective legal framework
- Sound and effective institutional mechanism for correct implementation of laws
- Competent employees manning these institutions and efficient personnel management policies
- Apt policies for delegation, decentralization and fixing accountability.

Tools of Good Governance

- Re-engineering processes
- Adopting correct modern technology
- Right to information
- Citizens' charters
- Independent services evaluation
- Grievance redressal mechanisms
- Active citizens' participation – public-private partnerships

The Worldwide Governance Indicators project – World Bank

World Bank defines Governance as the process and institutions by which authority in a country is

exercised.

Specifically, governance is: • the process by which governments are selected, held accountable, monitored, and replaced;

- the capacity of governments to manage resources efficiently, and to formulate, implement, and enforce sound policies and regulations; and
- the respect of citizens and the state for the institutions

'The Worldwide Governance Indicators project' – By World Bank ranks more than 200 countries on six key indicators of governance.

The six indicators are:

1. Voice and Accountability
2. Political Stability and Absence of Violence
3. Government Effectiveness
4. Regulatory Quality
5. Rule of Law
6. Control of Corruption

These aggregate indicators combine the views of a large number of enterprise, citizen and expert survey respondents in industrial and developing countries.

Governance in India

Dimensions of Governance in India

Department of Administrative reforms and Public grievances (DARPG) in its report "State of Governance – A framework of assessment" has broken down governance into five dimensions viz. political, legal & judicial, administrative, economic and social & environmental dimensions.

1. Political Dimension -It is the most essential aspect of governance that looks at the quality of political contestation, conduct of individuals and institutions representing the people, use and abuse of political authority, decentralization of powers and citizen's faith in the political system.

It has four key components:

- Exercise of franchise
- Profile and conduct of Political Representatives, Political Parties and Political Executive
- Functioning of Legislature
- Political Decentralisation

2. Legal & Judicial Dimension of Governance-This dimension seeks to measure whether the state's exercise of power is within its boundaries. Also its ability to effectively maintain law and order, safeguard human rights and enable access to & delivery of justice.

It has four basic components:

- Law & Order and Internal Security
- Safeguard of basic rights
- Police Administration and Citizen-friendliness of the Police
- Access to Justice and Judicial Accountability

3. Administrative Dimension of Governance-This dimension determines the ability of government to deliver basic services to citizens by efficiently managing the human and financial resources. It also includes performance of the State on vigilance and anti-corruption matters as well as responsiveness and transparency in administration.

It has following four components:

- Citizen Interface and Engagement

- Managing Human, Financial and other resources
- Basic Service Delivery
- Corruption Perception, Vigilance & Enforcement

4. Economic Dimension of Governance

The economic dimension pertains to the ability of the state to ensure macro-economic stability and create conducive climate for economic activity to take place across different sectors of the economy. Economic Governance is also reflected in the state's ability to provide support to the primary sector.

It has three basic components:

- Fiscal Governance
- Business Environment
- Support to the Primary Sector

5. Social and Environmental Dimension of Governance-The social dimension pertains to the ability of the state to take care of the vulnerable sections of the society. It also seeks to assess governance by examining the role and quality of the civil society and media.

Environmental management as a separate component is also included due to its increasing importance in governance.

This dimension has three key components:

- Welfare of the Poor and Vulnerable
- Role of Civil Society and Media
- Environmental Management

Governance Issues in India

• Political Issues:

- o Criminalization of Politics
- o Misuse of political power
- o Decentralization more in letter, less in spirit

• Legal and Judicial issues

- o Delayed justice, issue of under trials
- o Lack of accountability in Judiciary
- o Threat to life and personal security

• Administrative issues

- o Lack of sensitivity, transparency and accountability in the working of State machinery
- o Bureaucratic Delays
- o Resistance to changes which promote transparency and accountability
- o Corruption

• Economic issues

- o Poor management of economy
- o Persisting fiscal imbalances
- o Regional disparities

• Social and Environmental issues

- o Denial of basic services to a substantial proportion of the population
- o Marginalisation and exclusion of people on account of social, religious, caste and gender affiliation
- o Existence of a significant number of voiceless poor with little opportunity for participation in governance;

and

o Deterioration of physical environment, particularly in urban areas.

Good Governance Initiatives in India

- Decentralization and People's Participation - 73rd and 74th Constitutional amendment Act
 - Developing programs for weaker sections and backward areas
 - Financial management and budget sanctity
 - Citizen's Charters
 - Sevottam model
 - Redressal of Citizen's Grievances
 - E-Governance and use of ICT tools
 - Public service morale & anti-corruption measures
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- Transparency and Accountability measures- Right to Information Social Audits
 - Rights-related statutory bodies such as the National Commission for Women (1992), National Commission for Minorities (1993), National Human Rights Commission (1993) etc., have been set-up.
 - the repeal of 1500 dysfunctional laws.
 - A Computerised Public Grievances Redressal and Monitoring System was installed in 2001.
 - The Central Vigilance Commission was accorded a statutory status in 2003.
 - The Prime Minister's Awards for Excellence in Public Administration was instituted in 2005.
 - Laws were enacted giving certain rights to people like the Protection of Women from Domestic Violence Act (2005), Scheduled Tribes and Other Traditional Forest Dwellers (Recognition of Forest Rights) Act (2006)
 - The All India Service Rules were amended, providing a certain fixed tenure for specified posts to be notified by the state and Central Governments.
 - GST simplifies the tax systems and has enormous positive implications for major reforms in the tax structure.
 - Electoral funding reforms were introduced, promoting transparency and fairness (Electoral Bonds) disclosure of antecedents of candidates contesting for public office.
 - Digital India
 - Initiatives on participatory governance were introduced under the National Rural Employment Guarantee Programme, National Rural Health Mission
 - A policy for voluntary organisations was announced by the Central Government, reflecting the importance of the voluntary sector in promoting participatory systems.
 - A National Disaster Management Authority was established to bring more focused attention to this important area and to initiate preparatory work to make responses to disasters more effective.

Minimum Government, Maximum Governance

- It means a citizen friendly and accountable administration.
- It is done by simplification of procedures, identification and repeal of obsolete/archaic laws/rules, identification and shortening of various forms, leveraging technology to bring in transparency in public interface and a robust public grievance redress system.
- This will greatly reduce time and effort on the part of the both citizen and government officials in public offices.
- On these lines, Digital India has helped Ministry of Panchayati Raj move to 100% e-office.
- Ease of Doing Business' also focuses on ease of governance.

The emphasis has been on simplification and rationalization of the existing rules and introduction of information technology to make governance more efficient and effective.

• mygov@nic.in and india.gITov.info are two citizen centric platforms to empower people to connect with the Government and contribute towards good governance. PMO website also seeks expert advice from the people, thoughts and ideas on various topics that concern India.

Second ARC Recommendations

Empowerment: giving power to the people in the form of legal, constitutional measures, so that people share the fruits of good governance. The idea of empowerment is based on the thinking that development has no meaning unless it empowers people for whom it is meant. Empowerment should be particularly targeted at the socio-economic-politically-culturally deprived strata of the society e.g. SC, ST, BCs, Women etc. Thus there should be a protective discrimination in favour of the traditionally deprived classes of the society.

Right to Information: This is based on the logic that civil servant have been exploiting citizens out of their sheer ignorance. Thus citizens should be empowered to ask for information. It would reduce secrecy, will empower people (because information is power these days), reduce exploitation and correspondingly increase openness and transparency.

The right to information to people has been talked over worldwide. It has gained a lot of momentum even in India. We are on the verge of passing the Right to Information Act.

Citizens Charter: means implied contract between administration and citizens. It lists out the people's rights or entitlements in the activities of the state/ administration. It gives the philosophy of the state which now envisages the duties of the state as the rights of the citizens.

4 Use of information technology / e-governance: It will bring speedier disposal of cases, certain degree of openness and transparency, access to information.

5 Grievance Redressal machinery: These have been set up in almost all countries in the form of Ombudsman. In India, Lok Pal, Lok Ayuktas etc.

6 Bringing the concept of ethics and morality in public services: It means increasing concern for democratic values and public purpose. It calls for evolving of professional code of ethics and various other measures as will reduce public corruption and bring greater discipline in resource use.

7 Creation of institutional mechanism to protect the rights of the people: e.g. NHRC, National Comm. for women, SCs, ST. Even judiciary is talking of increasing rights of the people.

8 Reforming Administrative law for good governance: this includes:

- a) Reform in the administration of judicial system
- b) Judicial review. The political and administrative class should be held accountable for what they do.

The above instruments to operationalise Good Governance can also be stated as:

- Decentralization: Political empowerment
- Delegation: Administrative empowerment
- Democratization: Governance should be broad based and should include private sector, NGO: civil society, professional organization,
- consumers associations, social groups, co-operative: media etc.
- Debureaucratisation: it means two things:
 - reducing bureaucratic role in some of the non vital functions of the state.
 - Dismantling bureaucratic way of functioning of the government and bringing instruments of good governance
- Technology: IT
- Techniques: Modern methods of managements
- Transparency: Openness
- Training: Capacity and capability enhancement.

E-GOVERNANCE

- The 'e' in e-Governance stands for 'electronic'.

2nd Administrative Reform Commission (ARC) Report:

E Governance is basically associated with carrying out the functions and achieving the results of governance through the utilisation of ICT (Information and Communication Technology).

- UNESCO - "e-Governance may be understood as the performance of governance via the electronic medium in order to facilitate an efficient, speedy and transparent process of disseminating information to the public, and other agencies, and for performing government administration activities."

• World Bank -

"E-Governance refers to the use by government agencies of information technologies (such as the Internet, and mobile computing) that have the ability to transform relations with citizens, businesses and arms of government.

e-Governance e-Governance can be defined as "an electronic delivery of government services to citizens, business in a reliable, timely and transparent manner

e-Governance implies use of the Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) to aid the public service delivery.

e-Governance is to provide simple, moral, accountable, responsive and transparent i.e. Smart Government.

S - Simple: Simplification of rules and procedures of Government making it user-friendly.

M-Moral: Infusing ethics and morals into officers again since anti-corruption and vigilance agencies improving.

• A- Accountable: ICT helps set standards of performance and efficiently measures it.

• R- Responsive: Efficient service delivery and government that is in tune with the people

• T - Transparent: Information confined to secrecy is out in the public domain bringing equity : and rule of law in public agencies.

• These technologies can serve a variety of different ends:

- o Better delivery of government services to citizens
- o Improved interactions with business and industry
- o Citizen empowerment through access to information
- o More efficient government management.

The resulting benefits are less corruption, transparency, paperless offices, greater convenience, revenue growth and cost effectiveness

• The broad goals of the e-Governance are:

- o Better service delivery to the citizens
- o Ushering in transparency and accountability
- o Empowering people through information
- o Improved efficiency within Government
- o Improved interference with business and industry

Interactions in E-Governance: