

Reforming Public Administration: Need of good Governance in India

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Abstract

Public administration that supports the conduct of government business and operation of management, remains an integral to the process of globalization and economic liberalization during 21st century. It continues to play significant role in forms of data sharing resources and multichannel information. Whereas good governance baked by ICT norms and supported by Simple, Morale, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent (SMART) policy, remains the backbone of decision makings through formation of sound public opinion, ethics of democratization, efficient public management, enhanced productivity, prompt delivery services and sustained economic productively. India, world's largest democracy, knowingly backed by the largest public management system and the most complicated e-governance programmes, needs urgent reforms. Rampant corruption, financial scams, non-transparency of administrative polices and unaccountability of bureaucracy should be accompanied with serious reforms. Covid-19 that has dramatically changed the eco-social scenario of India and the world, needs to strengthen the pillars of good governance duly supported by the spirit of PPP, BOOT and LPG culture. Repeated wave of Corona Pandemic where thousands of Indians lost life for want of basic facilities due to virtual collapse of health care system and administrative mismanagement, are now alarming concerns. There is hardly any aspect of public or private life which is free from the fear of COVID-19. Good governance needs urgent attention to shed light on the unaddressed issues that existed in the Indian society since long time. Delivery of basic services, citizen empowerment, freedom of press, creation of business-friendly atmosphere and improved quality of life as essential ingredients of good governance, are now integral to public life. The paper examines a comparative study of selected stakeholders of public administration like legislature, bureaucracy, in-handed corporate and censored media. Data is being extensively derived from online sources apart from literacy sources.

Keywords: Public administration, management, good governance, globalization, ICT norms

INTRODUCTION

India, the largest democracy in world with over 1300 million inhabitants and 6500 million voters, four times than that of total combined population of USA, presents a unique example. It is capable enough to change the policy matters of democratic functioning. Indian parliament is often described

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as crazy, hazy and hypocrisy due to unmanageable diversity where exaggerative claims for secularism, socialism and nationalism remain debated and controversial topics. India's vote banking and democratic governance are very often support the caste, region, race and religion rather than true spirit of equity, accountability and administrative transparency. Whereas good governance is based on cultural homogeneity, social equality, impartial judiciary and peoples' parliament to promote greater transparency and administrative accountability which can work as wonder against

the corrupt system. Good and bad governance often ends in bizarre and mismatch of common interests [1].

Today, Indian administration is undergoing through the phase of revolutionary challenges in economic, social, environmental and political spheres. Such changes are promising for 'good governance' by incorporation of new ideas equipped with technology, scientific innovation and multilateral guarantees through Public-Private Partnership (PPP), Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Multinational Corporations (MNCs), globalization and Information Revolution. These are conditioned by new forces of innovative management practices, changing international agenda and multilateral agreements with global agencies. Emergence of good governance, free from any political or ideological agenda, encompasses grater promises for developmental projects through transparent approach and applications. Being active in participation, mass appeal, and equitable growth; it is a close knit with public administration for embarking the new path of development. In general practice, good governance is a consensus based global policy for answering the greater responsibility and democratic orientation in favour of public as well as private enterprises [2].

CONCEPT OF PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Public administration refers the management of affairs of government at all levels: local, regional, national and international. In general practice, it is a systematic application of law, operation of government, enforcement of public policy, actual conduct of public affairs, activities of legislature, execution of policy and intellectual inquiry. These are essential imperatives for policy formulation, organizational structure, administrative process and social environment. It supports direction, accomplishment of common goals, coordination of human and material resources. A great American scholar Luther Gullick beautifully summed public administration as POSDCORB (Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting, Budgeting) which are the common features of large-scale organizations [1]. In short, the traditional character of public administration supports monopoly of power, community services anonymity, public responsibility, social information, and large-scale organizations [3].

The intellectual foundation of public administration is strongly supported by large number of scholars like Wilson, McQueen, Pfiffner, Willoughby, Dimock, Luther, White, Hodgson, Waldo, and Simon whose theories have been critically assessed in reforming the traditional character of public administration. Both narrow and broad views of ideas as associated with the reformation process. The narrow views of public administration include planning, organization, management, department, staffs, recruitment, budget and corporation. These do not fully satisfy the aspiration. Hence, several attempts were gradually made in sixties and seventies to redesign the content of New Public Administration (NPA). Gradually, however, interdisciplinary ideas emerged which cover the broader dimensions of public administration. It briefly includes education, health, social security, environment, women empowerment, government, policy decisions, civil services, bureaucracy, legislature, executive, judiciary, political parties, pressure groups, general administration, economic development, ICT, and hundreds of more areas. Most of these are undergoing major reforms during the age of Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG) of culture. In short, public administration continues to reform major sectors and policies by applying multi-disciplinary approaches [2]. Today, public administration is widely accepted with core values of new polices equipped with good governance, being supported by academic and professional bodies. There is greater need to develop potential management services to incorporate truly with emerging polices of good governance [4].

GOOD GOVERNANCE: CONCEPT AND BASIC OBJECTIVES

Good governance liberally refers to Simple, Morale, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent (SMART) Policy, meaningful exploitation of resources and parity between administration and management. In a layman language, good governance refers to participatory, people oriented, accountable, transparent, rational choice, consensus oriented, efficient and inclusive growth. Movement from IT to ICT and then Information Society are the strategies in good governance which

can be identified as delivery of essential services to the citizens. There is greater need for freedom of information equipped with people friendly image of government and democratic freedom. Efficient and effective administrative system support sound public opinion, enhancement of productivity, prompt delivery, elimination of socio-economic backwardness and improvement of quality of life that remain the key objectives of good governance [3]. Besides, it also incorporates e-voting, e-productivity, e-service delivery, e-workflow, e-productivity and e-governance [5].

GOOD GOVERNANCE: BASIC INFRASTRUCTURE

Large number of scholars have examined various stages to develop a fully functional governance. Based on technical, organizational and managerial feasibilities; the important stages of a growth model for good governance are: Establishment of online presence of government, connection with internet government system to online interfaces, and Integration across different functions and utility services. Good Governance Model is somewhere lacking under Indian democratic set ups.

Unlike UAS, UK, Germany, Japan, Singapore and China; the history of good governance in India is comparatively young. It goes back to seventies with a focus on in-government applications in the areas of defense, economic monitoring, planning and the deployment of ICT. The key objective was to manage data intensive functions related to elections, census, tax administration etc. The initiative of the National Informatics Center (NIC)-India to connect all the district headquarters during the eighties was a milestone achievement. During early nineties, good governance has seen the use of IT for wider sectoral applications with policy emphasis on reaching out to rural areas with support of NGOs. There has been an increasing involvement of international donor agencies such as G-8, EU, ADB, IMF, UNDP, WB and WTO under the supervision of good governance for sustainable development. It is a move and a constructive step where WB emphasized the need for the Indian market to flourish the economic forces to attain the height of guaranteed socio-economic liberty [4]. While the emphasis has been primarily on automation and computerization, state endeavors at macro level to use IT sectors for better connectivity, networking, setting up systems for processing information and delivering services. At micro level, this ranges from IT automation in individual departments, electronic file handling, access to entitlements, public grievance systems, and service delivery for high volume routine transactions. The thrust has varied across initiatives, with some focusing on enabling the citizen-state interface for various government services, and others focusing on bettering livelihoods [6].

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND DELIVERY SERVICES IN INDIA

Both India and the world are witnessing the rapid transformation of socio-economic growth to replace the conventional techniques. Most developmental activities enabled with technology have largely employed and created the new phases of globalization. States and union territories in India are connected with internet services. *E-seva* is perhaps one of the few e-service initiatives that now have clear roll out plan to cover all municipalities in Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu, Kerala and Karnataka. Other effective good governance related services like public service delivery, IT based query less, online records, computerization projects, citizen service centers, national portal, satellite image, centralized allotment, community information centers, etc. are new directions duly supported by e-governance infrastructure. Several new inter-related projects like Lok Ayukta, information management, web technology, electronic delivery, e-procurement, single window operation, ICT solution, instant money order, mobile application, e-tendering, Aadhar, NREGA, portal life, Simple, Morale, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent (SMART) move, status information management, and portent are some integrated feature of good governance [5]. Large number of inter-related case studies like e-Seva (Andhra), E-Khazana (Bihar), InfoTech Promotion (Chhattisgarh), Delhi (Metro Rail Project), Mahiti Shakti (Gujarat), Nai Disha (Haryana), Lok Mitra (Himachal), Bhoomi (Karnataka), Setu (Maharashtra), Lok Mitra (Rajasthan) and Rasi Maiyams–Kanchipuram (Tamil Nadu) are some examples of ongoing projects [7].

REFORMING PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOOD GOVERNANCE

Through the focus of good governance, the touchstones to examine various parameters have essentially come from various means to meet the objectives. The following mechanisms to reform public administration through good governance can be examined in the context of following points [6].

Political Accountability

Political accountability refers to the benefits of common men without intervening political interest. Government institutions, private organizations, semi-body institutions and several independent working mechanisms should be held accountable to the public and institutional stakeholders. Flow of Information-Vertically and Horizontally to Encompass Common Awareness are widely covered under accountable administration. There is always wider scope to influence policy makers and members of civil society.

Ever since the early phase of globalization (1990s), the parameters of good governance became the imperative of large number of democratic nations like USA, UK, Germany, France, Sweden, Japan, Australia and India apart from several other nations. Several progressive reports from UN Development Index, Governance and Development, Global Economic Indicators, Human Development Report and Sustainable Environment Policy became the powerful agents in the direction of good governance to assess the accountability. In India, the Planning Commission of India, National Development Council, Swachh Bharat Mission and NITI (National Informatics Training Institute) were actively involved in this direction. As a result, several promising factors like consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and inclusive growth were incepted [8].

Transparency of Work Culture

Transparency fundamentally address to integrity honesty, dedication, commitment, social leadership, incorporation of goodness and simplicity of work for public benefits. It is often supported by non-censorship of press, public information and access of data with no hidden information. Some India media personnel during the ruling political BJP are often blamed as biased and arbitrary in decision makings. A greater need is felt for widespread application of digital governance through ICT through use of transparent culture of Indian administration.

Value of Responsiveness

Stakeholders like political leadership, farmers, corporate, banking institutions, insurance companies, academicians, professionals, and technical experts should serve the basic requirements within time frame, committed responsibility, and delivery of essential services.

Efficiency of Services

No public or private administration is workable unless the community in general get the expected outputs. Institution building should be organized in such a way that accessibility of Individual Citizens to Information Services meet the basic criteria.

Equity of Management

Equity literally refers to values of company, administration and policy that promotes fair, impartial and nondiscriminatory practices. Good governance ensures equitable society for well being and productive rewards without any discrimination. Needs of citizen-friendly image of government, transparency, right to information, healthy relationship between parliament and citizens, elimination of poverty, unemployment and the creation of business-friendly atmosphere are the backbones of equitable society.

Independent Power of Judiciary

It is truly said that the public administration is handicapped without free and fair judiciary. It stands for defending fair trail, dispute settlements, and effectively applies to legal decision makings. Good

governance needs active support and services of judiciary for legislation, amendments, rule of law and policy implementation through balanced and rational approach. Delay in judicial decisions directly hamper the smooth development of good governance. Indian judiciary continues to face challenge due to authoritarian policy of governments of various odds.

Bureaucratic Accountability

Bureaucracy as an important branch of governance and refers to rule of civil servants. In more specific terms, it is related to systematic administration, hierarchy of authority, span of control, and unity of command which signify the concentration of administration based on rationality of choice, impersonality in social relations and management of task [7]. Within the Indian System of Governance, bureaucracy works as form of organization, support polices, ideal construct and rational system of working. A good governance in democratic societies do support rational organization, proper rule of officials, monitor over *red-tapeism* and assess the quality of modern society which are integral of good governance.

E-Governance

It literally refers to SMART (Simple, Morale, Accountable, Responsive, Transparent) policies. E-governance can be attained through information, cataloguing, and transaction. India continues to prosper under Modi's Digital India Programmes. But the geographical, social, and economical disparities are the barriers for full-fledged e-governance. Illiteracy, lack of infrastructure, security and privacy of personal and financial data are other constraints.

In the changing economic scenario and emergence of corporate sectors, India is pursuing three e-government models: Funded Projects-NIC, CMC, C-DAC; Profit Sector Project like Kiosk Model; and Joint Initiatives like E-Seva. The major areas of implementation include: Services offered by e-government to citizens, services to rural sectors, e-business management, and e-governance in the legal and institutional regimes. Such initiatives of e-governance are widely connected through government servers. Major ones include passport services, PAN Card, Public Grievance Registration, Marriage Certificate, Railway Reservation, Passport, Birth and Death Certificates, jobs, services, public libraries, education, police and crime records. E-governance Management also covers: land record, crop loans, weather forecasting, VAT, GST, declaration and notification, corporation tax, customs declaration, income tax, public procurement, digital signatures, debit-credit card transactions, online banking series, and hundreds of more areas for public services.

Role of ICT

Public administration supports the conduct of government business and operation management which are integral to ICT. It is the latest trends during the age of globalization, privatization and economic liberalization. ICT continues to play significant role in forms of data sharing resources and multichannel information. It is backed by Hi-Tech culture, online services and all sorts of digital revolution be it planning, organization, departmental activities, business management, civil services and executive business. 'ICT-Good Governance Model' can be cited as an ideal example to study the latest trends in reforming public administration. To explore the impact of COVID-19 on business; factors related to social survey assessment, mass business closure, relief and economic security in the context ICT revolution are increasingly important.

ICT is an important source of information for social, political and professional awareness. It comes through the development of transparency, accountability and reduction of corruption. Modi government is fully committed to the development of ICT through investment of resources into controlling the dissemination of information by using best techniques in public reformation like demonetization, GST, NITI Aayog and Digital India Plan. India needs dynamic data model equipped with a to z services. Governments in the digital age is free to use information to reduce corruption, transparency, accountability, efficiency and citizen participation. Several schemes like Bhoomi, e-Khazana, e-Disha, e-Governance, Hi-Tech Parks, Digital Multiplexes and Online banking are good

examples. Corona pandemic has miserably affected India and the world, and the time has come to reform public administration the midst of COVID-19 by setting aside the worries and fears. Let us salute Corona warriors, advisory bodies, and COVID-19 A to Z drives.

Miscellaneous Imperatives

The above-mentioned features of good governance are only by way of reference only as there are many more such social mechanisms which are integral public administration. The prominent ones include civil society, efficient administration, free-fair elections, free press, social security, gender equality, education, and social welfare programmes. There is no doubt that good governance has encircled in almost every aspect of business, administrative, managerial and professional field which cannot be studied if new words. Emerging ideas and policies like PPT, BOOT, NGOs, SBM, and RTI apart from classical services like Planning Commission, National Development Council, Economic Development Council, and various commissions are increasingly important. The following table gives an overview of agencies as essential tools for reforming public administration (Table 1).

Table1. Reforming agencies in public administration in India: an overview.

S.N.	Agencies/bodies	Objectives/targets
1.	Public-Private Partnership (PPP)	While considering the financial worries of public sectors and budget allocation, PPP helps to ensure economic growth in rural India. PPP projects in India is an ideal platform to establish relationship between foreign and domestic players.
2.	BOOT (Build Own-Operate-Transfer)	Boot Model, an innovative reforming body ensures the necessary of investments into public sector for more effective public resources management. It promotes necessary investments into public sectors and more effective public resources management; and promotes higher quality of long-lasting public services.
3.	Globalization	Prompter of borderless world traditionally based on liberalization and privatization, promoted by market forces, a great financial advocate has benefited agriculture, insurance, banking, industry, education, biotechnology, engineering, medical science and dozens of other sectors.
4.	ICT Culture	The latest trend of reforming public administration, ICT continues to play significant role in forms of data sharing resources, multichannel information. It is backed by Hi-Tech culture and massive online services.
5.	Swachh Bharat Mission	A visionary project of Modi Government to work in the purview of sanitization, environment and personal hygiene, is getting instrumental support from social media, corporate, NGOs, and even common men. It stands for the sustainable development to promote green economy with active support of Volunteers, Professionals, Legislatures, and Goodwill Ambassadors.
6.	NITI Aayog	NITI Aayog is an initiative to re-write the traditional public administrative and economic policies. Several public institutions like energy, civil aviation, health, social security, education, employment, agriculture and industries are working under the umbrella of NITI Aayog.
7.	RTI-2005	RTI Act 2005 stands for common men who have access of freedom in case of shady deals, wrong doings, bribery, corruption and general malpractices.
8.	Citizens' Charter	Ever Since 1998, government of India added citizens voice, standard norms, open information for public verification, social delivery of goods and services, work culture, knowledge bank, value added taxes and SMART policies.
9.	PM Man Ki Baat	Voice of Prime Minister to address the nation for digital India which has eared wide popularity across India and the world. It also deals about the developmental activities in general.
10.	Miscellaneous	Classic Based: Planning Commission of India, National Development Council, State Development Council, Lok Pal, Lok Ayukta, Jana Lok Pal, etc., are also imperatives of good governance.

Source: Data is collected from various sources

Table data shares only selected cases as by way of reference only. There are also initiatives Social Welfare Programmes, National Human Rights Commission, National Commission for Women and Children, Minority Commission, National Urban Health Mission, Rural Development Schemes, and

National Environment Policy. It is rather difficult to put public administration Reform List in few words while considering the demography, resources and labour management of India.

GOOD GOVERNANCE AND COVID-19

Ever since the impact of Corona on Indian and global economy, isolation measures dramatically increased, and countries around the world place their citizens into total lockdown for several stages. However, the impact of second wave in India, the situation is virtually out of control due to divided policy of government resulting in large of death for want of basic medical faculties. Several state governments continue to lag behind due to gap between words and deeds. Sizeable sections of India community are still lethargic to follow SOP Formula. Modi *mantra* of good governance continues to face t challenges due to non-availability of basic infrastructure as promise of New India and Election Manifestos of BJP. Several NGOs are providing basic necessities in forms of good, shelter, clothing, oxygen, medicines, etc. which is just a temporary relief for COVID-19 Victims.

Notwithstanding, the social environment is creating conditions for Indians to incline towards social way of life where the selected government sectors like transport, aviation, academic bodies, banking, pubs, clubs and casino are now officially dysfunctional with low profile of business administration. Number of corporate sectors dramatically declined, death of large number of intellectuals and common men send shockwaves, global architects have shattered, banking sectors received major jolts and labour market is virtually dead. Impact sectors in terms of risk on account of COVID-19 are aviation, tourism, hotels, restaurants, retail and shipping related services. Even medium class business like dairy products, fertilizers, real estate, building materials, corporate and education are struggling to revive the sluggish economic growth. The pandemic is a major shock which has traditionally offset the green shoots of recovery of the Indian economy that were visible towards the end of 2019 and early 2020. Loss of trillions of dollars and monetary losses are beyond imagination. Third wave, if any, will be more disastrous as predicted by several experts. At this end, there is a greater need that citizens are alert, conscious and think in positive direction. Human Life is more precious than anything else. The universal phrase 'save life save all' is now the serious concern.

There is no doubt that the easiest victim of COVID-19 has been the business ventures and professional world which are pro actively eminent and visible in host of sectors like tourism, aviation, shipping, banking, agriculture, health, fiscal management, and monetary policies. Proactive agents in assessing the higher of risk factors and vulnerability of business from both operational and financial point of view are being seriously assessed on business management which requires altogether a different atmosphere to act decisively to mitigate the risk and future plan of action. Consequences of COVID-19 has directly affected smooth flow of government operations in forms of reduction, supply chain dry up, inadequate demand and supply, poor flow of customers, health hazard factors, lock down of major business and public administration. There is no dividing line that the risk factors have led to liquidity risks, pressure on covenants, re-financing requirements, and most heartening third-party business.

In the midst of all doubts and uncertainties, ICT backed by e-governance has earned high dividends as several sectors have gone online. ICT is an important channel of knowledge for social, political and professional awareness. The pandemic has hard hit on India and the world, and the time has come to rebuild new economic model in the midst of COVID-19 by setting aside the worries and fears. Let us salute Corona warriors, advisory bodies, and NGOs who are actively involved to help the victims.

It is now right time to redefine the application of vaccination, isolation, hygiene, true meaning of social distancing and self realization. It is still not too late as the real understanding starts from heart and soul. Role and realization of governing bodies like bureaucracy, civil servants, ministers, judiciary, legislature, municipalities, district administration, public health workers, *panchayats*, political parties, etc. are increasingly important during the Corona War. COVID-19 and its variants

have no right to survive anymore when India and Indians determine to end the pandemic with full spirit and sense.

The question related to COVID-19 Pandemic, governance really matters in terms of recovery, ways to build new normal and sustainable recovery. Rules of good governance applies more than before. Several evidence-based policies like public trust, availability of digital data on COVID-19 patients, risk of governance, rules and regulations have greater relevance. Besides, the public sector innovations, establishment of public health sectors on wider scale, question about public integrity, additional budgetary provisions, countering illicit business, public procurements, evidence-based evaluations, policy coherence and coordination; all need to be examined [8]. Trust on governance, policies and implementation need wider academic and public debates.

GOOD GOVERNANCE: AN ASSESSMENT

Even since India entered into the race of globalization, debates and discussions are going in the academic and professional circles about the role of good governance. No government whether Congress, left or ruling BJP took serious notice. Issues related to administrative corruption, secularism, demonetization, regionalism, and ethnic variations have rocked the visionary policies of government. The very spirit of transparency, equity, accountability, bureaucracy, judicial decisions and freedom of media; the promises of good governance on issues related to delivery of services, basic education, medical system, participatory democracy, rules of law, social security, and electoral freedom are serious concerns. Good governance in India has failed at several fronts. Intertwined applications like mismatched relations between PPP, conflict between Domestic and Multinationals mismanagement of NGOs, high handed online frauds, financial scams, monetary deficits, and industrial sickness; all are alarming.

Despite odds and challenges, the role of good governance remains crucial. Digital India equipped with ICT norms are important for consensus making decisions and policies. RTI-(2005) promotes openness, transparency and accountability in administration by making the government more open to public scrutiny. Furthermore, the National e-Governance Plan envisions to make all government services accessible to the common man through common service delivery outlets; and ensure efficiency, transparency and reliability of such services at affordable costs. Host of online services dramatically strengthened the scope of good government in-line with Maximum Applications, Proactive governance, Digital Transactions, Make in India, Theme Parks, Business Environment, NITI Aayog, Lok Pal, Citizens' Charter, Cooperative Federalism, 24x7 Services, Knowledge Bank, Think Tank, Aadhar Seva, and Mega Award Projects. It is definitely an innovative revolution to replace India's traditionally outdated economic policy being replaced under the umbrella of modern and scientific revolution of good governance.

CONCLUSION

Recent IT Boom has added priorities to India as beckons to a better world by 2025. Only good and transparent governance can promise for accountability to deliver services in a more convenient and comfortable way. In a fast-changing world, good governance has become necessity for the stakeholders which need holistic visions and creative approach at several levels. In today's world, large number of policy matters are decided by policy makers and members of civil society who insist for direct participation in major sectors through e-readiness. widespread application of digital governance through ICT, enriching digital democracy (E-Vote, media, political parties), Electronically Integrated Legislature, transparent judiciary, peoples friendly Executive and Bureaucracy are important parameters of Good Governance Model. Rich Demand of Rebooting the Government in e-Model, revolution in the field of *e-Seva*, *e-Khazana*, and *e-Panchayat*; Gateway for MNCs-ideal to promote globalization are also significant moves. But it is yet to be seen as how far the application of good governance is brought to the mainstreams of Indian democracy as large sections, especially the rural community are still unaware about the role of civil society.

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