

A BRIEF STUDY OF THE EFFORTS MADE BY THE GOVERNMENT OF INDIA TO ESTABLISH GOOD GOVERNANCE SINCE THE YEAR 2014

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ABSTRACT

In 1992, the World Bank defined good governance as the effective management of a country's economic and social resources. In the current Indian context, good governance plays a critical role in managing the country's diverse population, rapid economic growth, and evolving social landscape. The primary focus is on increasing transparency, accountability, and citizen participation through initiatives such as Digital India, e-Governance, and the Right to Information (RTI) Act. In India's federal democracy, good governance supports decentralization by empowering Panchayati Raj institutions and urban local governance, as outlined in the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments. These measures facilitate grassroots decision-making, address local needs, and promote inclusive development. Efforts to improve governance in India also target corruption reduction, enhancement of public sector efficiency, and ensuring environmental sustainability. India's commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) underscores the role of governance in driving economic growth, social justice, and environmental protection. Through technological advancements, empowerment of marginalized communities, and global partnerships, India's governance system continues to evolve to address both domestic and international challenges. Therefore, good governance is indispensable for India's democratic stability, economic prosperity, and the overall welfare of its citizens.

KEYWORD: *Good Governance, Social Justice, Transparency, E-Governance, Digital India, Narendra Modi, Make in India.*

INTRODUCTION:

The origins of good governance in India can be traced back to the administrative reforms implemented during the colonial era. However, its formal development in modern India commenced after independence with the drafting of the Constitution and the establishment of a democratic system. The administrative frameworks put in place during British rule, particularly the Indian Civil Service (ICS), served as the groundwork for good governance in India, even though their primary objective was to safeguard British interests rather than the welfare of Indian citizens. In post-independence India, the Constitution laid a robust foundation for good governance by establishing democracy, the rule of law, and the fundamental rights to protect citizens' rights. The

fundamental principles of good governance, including justice, equality, liberty, and fraternity, were enshrined in the Constitution, which also included comprehensive provisions for ensuring justice, law enforcement, and equal opportunities for all citizens. Following independence, the establishment of the Planning Commission and the introduction of Five-Year Plans marked significant strides towards good governance. These plans were focused on promoting inclusive and balanced development, with an emphasis on rural development, industrialization, education, healthcare, and infrastructure, all of which were vital for enhancing governance efficiency and inclusivity.

Another crucial pillar of good governance in India is the regular electoral process within the democratic system. Since independence, the establishment of electoral democracy has enabled the formation of governments at the central and state levels based on public mandate. The creation of independent institutions such as the Election Commission has been instrumental in ensuring free and fair elections, a cornerstone of good governance. **Good governance is a crucial aspect of any society or nation that aims to function effectively and reach its full potential. It refers to the system of practices and regulations that ensure transparency, accountability, and participation in decision-making processes, ultimately leading to the betterment of the community (Donohue, 2022).ⁱ**

The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments in India, enacted in the 1990s, expanded the authority of Panchayati Raj institutions and local bodies in rural and urban areas, thereby enhancing governance at the grassroots level. This move aimed to decentralize governance and facilitate greater public involvement in decision-making. Additionally, the economic reforms and liberalization introduced in 1991 emphasized market-oriented policies, administrative efficiency, and privatization of public sector enterprises, all geared towards revitalizing India's economy and enhancing governance transparency and accountability.

In today's context, governance plays an increasingly vital role in ensuring the effective operation of various social, economic, and political systems. Modern governance is characterized by principles such as transparency, accountability, and active citizen engagement, extending beyond government rule implementation to encompass participation from all stakeholders, including citizens, private sector entities, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and international organizations. **In recent years, the concept of good governance has garnered significant attention as a vital element in the development and progress of a country. It encompasses various principles such as inclusivity, rule of law, fairness, and sustainability. Good governance also promotes efficient and effective management of resources, both financial and natural, to ensure optimal utilization for the benefit of the people (Tang Xianbin, 2021)ⁱⁱ**

Key features of contemporary governance:

- *Transparency*: Implementation of laws like the Right to Information (RTI) ensures citizens have access to government workings.
- *Accountability*: Leaders are responsible and answerable to the public for their actions.
- *Citizen Participation*: Active involvement of the public in governance ensures policies reflect their needs accurately.

- *Legal Framework:* A strong and impartial legal framework is essential for effective enforcement of rules and laws.
- *Decentralization:* Efforts to decentralize power and strengthen local governance for swift problem resolution.
- *Technological Development:* Initiatives like Digital India, e-governance, and Smart Cities facilitate citizen participation and service delivery through technology.

IMPORTANCE OF GOVERNANCE IN INDIAN POLITICS:

The idea of good governance is as old as Indian civilization. A number of initiatives have been taken to improve the quality of governance in India. The present BJP led NDA government of Prime Minister Narendra Modi is committed to the principle of 'minimum government and maximum Governance and has also initiated many measures to achieve the objectives of Good governance in India.

- *Strengthening Democracy:* Good governance builds citizens' trust in democratic institutions.
- *Social Justice and Equality:* Governance enforces equal rights and empowers marginalized groups.
- *Economic Development and Inclusion:* Governance promotes economic development and inclusion of all sections of society.
- *Decentralization and Local Governance:* Strengthening local governance through constitutional amendments drives grassroots development.
- *Prevention of Corruption:* Initiatives like the Lokpal and Lokayukta Act, RTI, and CVC ensure transparency and accountability.
- *Strategic and Global Impact:* Efficient governance enhances India's global image and diplomatic capacity.
- *Social Harmony and Peace:* Effective governance is necessary for maintaining social harmony and establishing peace, preventing conflicts.

In the context of contemporary India, the significance of good governance has experienced a notable upsurge, owing to its pivotal role in the holistic advancement of the nation and the welfare of its population. In the context of India's diverse and expansive democracy, good governance connotes a system of administration that is characterized by transparency, accountability, and active citizen participation. This system is designed to effectively address the needs and aspirations of the population. It plays a critical role in fortifying the burgeoning economy and expediting economic progress in India.

Good governance ensures the efficient and equitable dissemination of government programs and resources across all segments of society. Notable examples of such programs include the Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana, Make in India, and Startup India, all of which are integral to initiatives aimed at fostering economic empowerment. Corruption stands as a significant impediment in

contemporary India, and good governance serves as a bulwark against it by promoting transparency and accountability. Measures such as the Right to Information (RTI) Act and the digitization of government processes are instrumental in enhancing transparency and fostering trust between the public and the government. Furthermore, good governance guarantees that all citizens have equal access to rights and opportunities, with a particular focus on integrating marginalized sections of society into the mainstream. Programs like the Mid-Day Meal Scheme, MGNREGA (Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act), and the Ujjwala Yojana exemplify efforts toward social justice and inclusion, providing a safety net for vulnerable segments of society. Technology assumes a central role in the paradigm of good governance in India. Initiatives such as e-governance and Digital India have simplified and expedited access to government services. Digitization has bolstered transparency and efficiency in service delivery, proving especially beneficial to people residing in rural and remote areas.

An important aspect of good governance is the decentralization of power. The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments have empowered Panchayats and local bodies to involve the public in decision-making at the local level, promoting governance at the grassroots level and extending development to the ground level. Good governance is not only crucial for economic and social development but also for environmental sustainability. In light of contemporary challenges such as climate change, pollution, and depletion of natural resources, India is formulating policies to address these issues. Initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission and the National Green Tribunal (NGT) are steps taken toward environmental sustainability. Active citizen participation is a major element of good governance in India.

Public participation is necessary to strengthen the democratic system. Initiatives like Swaraj Abhiyan and the MyGov platform provide opportunities for citizens to directly participate in the decision-making process, ensuring that public opinion is included in policies and schemes. Strengthening law and order in the country is another important aspect of good governance. When there is a rule of law and a fair justice system, peace and stability prevail in the country. Efforts like police reforms, judicial reforms, and simplifying legal procedures in contemporary India are steps toward good governance. One of the significant goals of good governance in contemporary India is achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). These goals focus on issues such as poverty eradication, quality education, gender equality, and environmental protection. Good governance ensures the implementation of necessary policies and programs to achieve these goals. The passage of the Right to Information (RTI) Act in 2005 was a milestone for good governance in India. This law gave citizens the right to bring transparency and accountability to government functions.

Through RTI, people can access information about government policies, schemes, and decisions, helping curb corruption and ensure accountability in government operations. Initiatives like Digital India and e-governance have added a new chapter in the direction of good governance in India. Through technological advancements, efforts have been made to simplify and speed up the delivery of government services. Under e-governance, government services are being delivered directly to the public through online platforms, improving transparency and efficiency.

The governance model under the Modi government since 2014 has prioritized enhancing various aspects of good governance, including administrative reforms, transparency, accountability, and citizen participation. Several key policies and initiatives have been implemented to improve governance efficiency and inclusivity. **Modi's political journey has not only impacted India but**

has also propelled him to the global stage. He has represented India at numerous international forums, including the United Nations General Assembly and the G20 summit. He has also strengthened India's relationships with other countries, particularly with the United States and Israel (Benjamin Parkin, 2023).ⁱⁱⁱ

Here are some of the major highlights-

- *Digital India and E-Governance*: Launched in 2015, the Digital India initiative aimed to enhance transparency and accountability in government operations. It promoted e-governance, facilitating direct access to government services and benefits online. This led to more transparent, efficient, and citizen-centric processes. Apps like UMANG and digital payment platforms like BHIM app and UPI reduced cash transactions and promoted financial inclusion.
- *Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY)*: Introduced in August 2014, PMJDY aimed to integrate the economically disadvantaged into the formal banking system. Millions of bank accounts were opened, providing financial inclusion and direct benefits from government schemes. The Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) scheme under PMJDY ensured the direct transfer of government subsidies and benefits to beneficiaries' bank accounts, reducing corruption and intermediaries.
- *Make in India and Aatmanirbhar Bharat*: Launched in 2014, the Make in India initiative aimed to position India as a global manufacturing hub, promoting industries, job creation, and foreign investment. The Aatmanirbhar Bharat (Self-reliant India) campaign, launched in 2020, emphasized self-reliance and boosting local production. This supported local entrepreneurs, MSMEs, and startups, contributing to economic growth.
- *Swachh Bharat Abhiyan (Clean India Campaign)*: Launched on October 2, 2014, this initiative aimed to achieve cleanliness and Open Defecation Free (ODF) status in India. It led to the construction of millions of toilets across rural and urban areas, improving sanitation levels and emphasizing health and environmental sustainability.
- *Anti-Corruption Measures*: The government prioritized anti-corruption efforts by linking Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, and mobile numbers to ensure direct benefit transfers to beneficiaries. Reforms like GST and the Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code simplified taxation and business processes while e-tendering and online procurement processes ensured transparency in government tenders. Demonetization in 2016 aimed to curb black money in the economy.
- *Ujjwala Yojana*: The Pradhan Mantri Ujjwala Yojana provided LPG gas connections to families below the poverty line, improving living standards for rural and urban poor. This initiative benefited millions of women by providing smoke-free kitchens, thereby improving their health and the environment.
- *Ayushman Bharat (Pradhan Mantri Jan Arogya Yojana)*: Launched in 2018, Ayushman Bharat aimed to provide health insurance coverage to poor and vulnerable families. It is the world's largest health insurance scheme, offering free treatment up to ₹ 5 lakh for eligible families, thereby improving access to healthcare services.

- *Labor Law Reforms and Agricultural Reforms:* The government simplified labor laws to be more employment-oriented, benefitting both workers and industries. Agricultural reforms allowed farmers to sell their produce beyond traditional markets to obtain better prices, although these reforms faced significant debate and opposition, particularly from farmers.

Overall, the governance approach under the Modi administration has focused on transparency, financial inclusion, economic self-reliance, anti-corruption efforts, sanitation, and health, with the overarching goal of making government services more accessible and citizen-friendly through technology and decentralization. After assuming office as Chief Minister in 2001, Modi prioritized an economic development agenda driven by private investment. He stressed the importance of creating a supportive environment for private industry to feel secure in bringing in investments.

Modi understood that investment alone was insufficient; ensuring the well-being and social upliftment of the people were also essential. **After assuming office as Chief Minister in 2001, Modi prioritized an economic development agenda driven by private investment. He stressed the importance of creating a supportive environment for private industry to feel secure in bringing in investments. Modi understood that investment alone was insufficient; ensuring the well-being and social upliftment of the people were also essential.**^{iv}

CONCLUSION:

The evolution of good governance in India has been shaped by historical, political, and technological factors. Key elements such as constitutional construction, decentralization, transparency, and citizen participation have played pivotal roles. Today, digital advancements and technological innovations have revolutionized governance, making it more effective and citizen-centric. The primary objective of good governance is to establish a system that protects people's rights while driving social, economic, and political development.

The importance of good governance is evident across various sectors in contemporary India, from economic development to social justice and environmental sustainability. It is the linchpin for overall national development by ensuring governance effectiveness, transparency, and accountability. This approach not only fosters economic progress but also underpins a just and inclusive society, securing the needs and rights of every citizen. Good governance has far-reaching and multifaceted implications in Indian politics. It not only drives the success of government and policies but also fortifies the democratic framework. The long-term development of any political system is unattainable without good governance. It serves as the backbone of Indian politics, upholding justice, equality, and progress.

The governance system under the Modi government has focused on enhancing accountability and efficiency through administrative reforms, transparency, and citizen-centric policies. Government initiatives such as Digital India, Swachh Bharat, Ujjwala Yojana, and Ayushman Bharat have directly improved citizens' lives. Additionally, economic reforms and anti-corruption campaigns have significantly bolstered governance effectiveness. In essence, good governance is the cornerstone of India's development, steering it towards comprehensive and inclusive progress.

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ENDNOTES

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