

Quadrant II – Transcript and Related Materials

Programme: Bachelor of Arts (T.Y.B.A)

Subject: Political Science

Course Code: POD 103

Course Title: 'Public Administration'

Unit: Unit 5

Module Name: Features and Importance of Good Governance

Module No: 26

Name of the Presenter: Ms. Sonia Xavier

Notes

The terms "governance" and "good governance" are often used in development literature. Bad governance is regarded as one of the root causes of all evil within our societies. Major donors and international financial institutions are increasingly basing their aid and loans on the condition that reforms that ensure "good governance" are undertaken. The concept of "governance" is not new. It is as old as human civilization. "Governance" means: the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented and Government is one of the main actors in governance.

Features of Good Governance

1. Participation - Participation implies that people should be able to voice their own opinions through legitimate immediate organizations or representatives. Participation should include participation by both men and women as well as the vulnerable sections of society and backward classes, minorities, etc. Participation also implies freedom of association and expression. Participation needs to be informed and organized.

2. **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. Impartial enforcement of laws requires an independent judiciary and an impartial and incorruptible police force.
3. **Transparency** - Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. It also means that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media.
4. **Responsiveness** - Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within discriminating. Administrators should respond to citizens' requests, concerns and demands both in terms of speed and accuracy.
5. **Consensus oriented** - There are several actors and as many view points in a given society. Good governance requires mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus on what is in the best interest of the whole community and how this can be achieved.

Good Governance requires a broad and long-term perspective on what is needed for sustainable human development. The goals of such development can be achieved only as a result of an understanding of the various historical, cultural and social contexts of a given society or community.
6. **Equity and inclusiveness** - A society's well being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and do not feel excluded from the mainstream of society. This requires that all groups, in particular the most vulnerable, have opportunities to improve or maintain their well being.
7. **Effectiveness and Efficiency** - Good governance means that processes and institutions

produce results that meet the needs of society while making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of Good Governance also covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment.

8. **Accountability** - Accountability is a key requirement of good governance. All governmental institutions have to be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Accountability cannot be enforced without transparency and the rule of law.

Good governance aims at minimizing corruption, that the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making. It is also responsive to the present and future needs of society. Good Governance is an ideal which is difficult to achieve in its totality. Very few countries and societies have come close to achieving good governance in its totality. However, actions must be taken to work towards this ideal with the aim of making it a reality.