

## **Governance Issues and Deep-Rooted Corruption in Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

The concept of governance is based on lessons from history which records both the downfall of nations resulting from bad governance, and also lessons of how nations have risen to great heights as a consequence of good governance. Good governance is the prerequisite for human development. The objective of governance in any society is a social development as well as economic growth and prosperity. Good governance can be seen as the participation of all stakeholders in the political system, leadership, consensus-based decision making, rule of law and justice, transparency in policies and procedure, surety of equity, responsiveness to problems, overall work effectiveness and efficiency, unbiased accountability and a stable economy. Therefore, transparency and accountability have vital roles to play in building good governance, since good governance is believed to be free and immune from corruption and social injustice. The objective of this study is to identify and analyze the issues and challenges of governance and good governance which are the main hurdle in the way of development in Pakistan. This study is a qualitative in nature. The researchers have used the data through secondary sources such as research articles and books. There is a great need to give the special attention towards the utilization of the potential resources for public, civil society groups to perform an active and equal participation in the governmental affairs, and held accountable to the government and political parties for their usage of public resources.

**Key words:** governance, good governance, weak governance, corruption, inefficiency, poor economic condition, political instability, poor expenditure management

### **Introduction**

The term governance is not a new concept, as a lot of literature has been written as well as discussed about governance in various perspectives and concepts, especially good governance has been discussed by the different academics, researchers and national and international policy makers (Aguilera & Cuervo-Cazurra, 2009). Khan et al. (2020) said that after the collapse of the communist regime, when the governance made changes, the transitional economy found it difficult to cope with the growing market economy. The transitional economy faced many problems such as a lack of proper institutions, incomplete contracts, poor civil society, poor insurance systems and poor rights protection (Hashmi, 2017).

Governance is generally regarded as the exercise of administrative, economic, social, and political powers in the public as well as private sectors to administer the affairs of a country for the betterment of the living standards of the public at all levels (Sanusi & Martadha, 2012). Good governance is based on the principles of accountability, equality, equity, fairness, freedom of speech, freedom of thought, honesty and integrity, justice, law and order, responsiveness, and transparency (Weiss, 2000). Aguilera and Cuervo-Cazurra (2009) stated that good governance has more than the authority of the state or the power of political will. Accountability, the rule of law and transparency are not technical questions of the administrative processes or institutional plans (Zubair & Khan, 2014).

The history of the governance of Pakistan indicates that the political situation is very volatile and without direction, even major problems like corruption, drug trafficking, illiteracy, poor policy making, poor health system, poverty, unemployment, are still going on and taking up arms (Khan et al. 2012). In the case of governance in Pakistan's politics, whether small as well as large difficulties have been encountered in different situations created by the administrative sectors and governing bodies which may control the integrity of the country or the purpose of certain administrative rules and regulations that to be followed through the public being the citizens of the country must obey (Mangi, Chachar, & Shah, 2019).

In recent years, the governance concept has evolved from what some believe to be the simplest definition used by the World Bank as "the manner in which power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources" towards the broader definition given by the Commission on Global Governance as "the sum of the many ways in which individuals and institutions, public and private, manage their common affairs" (Ahmed & Basit, 2012). There is a common consent among the thinkers that the best method for sustaining the future growth is to ensuring the good governance. Adnan and Fatima (2018) stated that this can only be done through the reforms in the civil service by enhancing the organization's ability to formulate consistent policies and ensure their consistent implementation over time, controlling over the unproductive public expenditures, developing appropriate measures to seek legal solutions, and mobilizing resources at all levels of government.

In the matter of diversification and integration of the judiciary, a larger judiciary must be required at all times to defend these arrangements and adjustments with the same consent and to protect fraudsters and referees, especially in disputes over freedom, liberty and self-government. As it is said that, "governance is the manner in which public officials and institutions acquire and exercise the authority to shape public policy and provide public goods and services" (Ahmad, Tabi'u, & Mohamed, 2013). However, Jameel, Asif, and Hussain (2019) stated that the relationship between the government, civil society, the media, the press and even the private sector can be clearly separated from the governance.

Governance has a great responsibility to deal with the development of the different sectors under the government (Sanusi & Mohamed, 2011; Nawaz & Mohamed, 2020). If there is an insecure government, it will be very critical and difficult for the country to continue making progress to form state-level locality (Khan & Alam, 2020). According to Mughal (2014), governance is a process in which different opinions and aspirations are met through tolerance and compromise with a spirit of cooperation for the betterment of all. It has three important aspects: the political governance; systems and procedures for exercising powers; and the competency of the government.

### **Problematic Dilemma For Good Governance**

The governance in the Pakistan as a whole can be seen as a plight experience. The development and political stability of Pakistan is based on the reforming and improving the government (Imran, 2011). Compared to other countries in the world, the governance of Pakistan is going very weak and instable so that's why a lot of political in competencies and shortcomings are noticed. Further, it is analysed that the political support has weakened the government institutions of power compete for influence in the country (Imran & Nordin, 2018). Moreover, corruption, discrimination, energy and financial crisis, favoritism, political instability, poor public administration, and lack in national harmony are the main issues of the governance in Pakistan so there is a great need of the comprehensive policy implementation and evaluation (Soomro & Chandio, 2013).

Focusing on the functioning of the bureaucracy at different levels of government in Pakistan is inefficient and ineffective, especially in the case of inappropriate arrangements and policy-making (Mughal, 2014). Further, there is an urgent need for countries to take immediate reform measures to build the confidence of civil servants and boost their confidence so that they can ensure their jobs with determination and cost-effectiveness. This requires the politicization of the government services and support of certified and competent people. (Shaikh, Shah, & Wijekuruppu, 2016). At the same time, uneven distribution of regional fragmentation, low

human development status and identified ethnic and communal issues are important barriers to achieving long-term sustainable development (Hashmi, 2017).

Now a day, a lot of issues are being faced in Pakistan such as the bloodshed, collapse of rules and laws terror, insecurity, threatened to the national decorum, and violence. The main reason of these issues is the lack of good governance practices (Mahmood et al. 2014). In this way, there is a need to establish the system according to the good governance characteristics because good governance characteristics creates a peaceful environment for the people which leads to the poverty reduction with better environment in society (Khan & Alam, 2020).

Because of the bad governance in three main areas, economically, politically, and socially, the country, despite being a huge natural resource, has now reached a stagnation level, which is actually the worst situation (Ahmad et al. 2013). In tolerance, corruption and thrust can be a troubling situation for Pakistani politics in the future (Javaid, 2010). It can be said that the government in Pakistan had lost its integrity, probability, and trust in the country (Asghar, 2013). Perhaps, the economic sector is also under the control of the government only for its own personal incentives as there is a dispute between the government and the organizations (Farooq & Ahmad, 2020).

### **1. Political Instability**

Yousaf, Ihsan, and Ellahi (2016) concluded that the various political parties, protest groups and the ruling elite classes are making a fuss and commotion with their supporters in the opposition seats in Parliament so that's why, the situation is becoming deemed illegal, undemocratic, and unconstitutional that is the most difficult situation for the people in the country. Moreover, in many cases, it is also happening that the some of the politicians as well as opposition parties are playing very politicized games for the protection of the personal interests and getting the public attention (Shaikh et al. 2016).

Mostly feudal lords, industrialists and politicians, are failed to provide the good governance to the public as according to the constitution. In fact, they betrayed the people's trust in the name of democracy, because of which it is called Pakistan's corrupt democracy (Mughal, 2014). Additionally, Mangi et al. (2019) discussed that the accountability is considered as the key aspect in the Islamic character but unfortunately it is not mentioned in the Pakistan's constitution and cannot seen in the leader's characters.

### **2. Weak Governance**

Pakistan's weak governance can be well linked with that as strong governance has strong stability in political concerns along with the strong ties with the civil-society and the state institutions, similarly weak governance of Pakistan is wholly linked with that of the weak infrastructure, unbalanced political conditions also low-level organizational performance in the country (Faisal & Jafri, 2017). The weak governance in Pakistan can be attributed to this because good governance with strong stability in political aspects along with good relationship with civil society and the institutions of state (Prasad & Nickow, 2016). Similarly, the bad governance in the government of Pakistan can be observed with the unbalanced politics and performance, weak infrastructure, and the lower level institutions in the country (Meo et al. 2020).

### **3. Inefficiency**

There is no doubt that Pakistan is going through a dilemma of bad governance which is constantly eroding trust, and has reduced the efficient and transparent distribution of public services, performance as well as an active implementation of programs (Faisal, & Jafri, 2017). Further, poverty is on the rise at high risk in Pakistan due to starvation and hunger in the country. Commonly, the citizens are struggling and now intensify their efforts to become the owners of the basic necessities of life (Mohamed & Mohamed, 2014). As noted, the level of human development in Pakistan is lower than its income level.

#### **4. Poor Economic Condition**

Hashmi (2017) stated that due to the country's poor economic condition, investment from Pakistan is rapidly moving and also due to the crisis of energy sector, the main problem has affected the industrial sector and it has stopped working due to shortage of electricity and gas. However, good governance is an important issue of sustainable economic growth because it is a tool of administrative, economic, and political authorities to settled the national affairs of the country. The state of governance in Pakistan is coming to an end (Baber, Bhutta, & Rasheed, 2020). The effects of bad governance have exacerbated the economy that is leading towards the declining in growth rate of GDP, declining the public investment, inflation, poverty, rising the wages burden, and the lowest level of physical infrastructure (Azeem, Muger, & Schilizzi, 2019).

However, the organization of political leaders, which is considered a symbol of dignity and unity, inadvertently elicited demands for segregation of society's grievances, emerging strands and attitudes and attitudes as their ancestors did (Ahmed & Basit, 2012). This is usually occurring when the new government comes into power and blames the previous government for the worst things that should be brought down (Ali, Mohamed, & Ahmad, 2020). From an economic point of view, petrol prices continue to rise sharply, without detecting taxes and showing the negative impact of the country's economy (Shaikh et al. 2016).

#### **5. Poor Expenditures Management**

There is no proper check and balance of resources and allocation of these resources and expenditures. There is a great need of transparent policy-making and accountability. There is only little public involvement which is almost like as no involvement in the budget-making process (Adnan & Fatima, 2018). Budgets are framed without any proper framework. There is no any proper policy of financing and spending of expenditure. No any expenditures plans are prepared and expenditures evaluation is minimal. Analysis of policy is almost absent; therefore, audits focus on the inputs either than the outputs.

#### **6. Corruption**

Corruption in Pakistan can be defined as misuse of political power for getting benefits. Corruption has very deep roots in almost all the departments of Pakistan even in judiciary and legislature (Imran & Nordin, 2018). Corruption affected almost all levels of government; it is common and deep-rooted. The level of corruption in the society basically depends on the norms, values, and morals of that society (Meo et al. 2020). Corruption can be indicating in different forms in Pakistan, including financial and political corruption, nepotism, bribery, misuse of power or authority and many others. Both minor and major corruptions are common in the country (Israr & Islam, 2006). Khan, Khan, and Wariach (2014) stated that the corruption is rampant in Pakistan and a major surgical operation is needed to eradicate this evil from the country.

At the moment, Pakistan really needs an honest leader who represents the symbol of national unity. Moreover, if the current government seems to be running, then there is reason to believe that the challenges that Pakistan is facing, both internally and externally, will become more serious with the passage of time (Hassan, Bukhari, & Arshed, 2020). Corruption is increasing in the public sector departments very enormously such as in the developmental projects and expenditures. In this regard, Javaid (2010) stated that according to one estimation about the corruption, the loss made to the national treasury is over Rs.200 billion per annum and this loss is caused collectively by the departments of government. The most notable in these departments according to the Perception Survey held by Transparency International Pakistan are:

- Health and Education
- Judiciary and Legal Profession
- Land Administration
- Police and Law Enforcement
- Power Sector
- Tax and Customs

## **Roots of Corruption in Pakistan**

The roots of corruption in Pakistan traced from the colonial period when the Britishers granted status and lands their loyalists in the terms of corruption and nepotism. The nationalization policy of 1970s created new opportunities for corruption and gave birth to several corrupt government officers. The rise in corruption in religious and business circles witnessed in the decade of 1980s (Javaid, 2010).

This illness and virus of corruption are to be found in the socio-cultural and political environment of the Pakistani society. Pakistan is presently faced with a gradual loss of value system and even identity. Petty corruption is fundamentally to getting access to open administrations or to side (Javaid, 2010). step and the middle and stupendous corruption relate to public contracting and acquisition. In a pre-dominator industrialist economic order and the expanding adherence to standards of free market, rise in corruption and speedy money obviously makes an economic sense (Khan et al. 2012). Some of these alleged economic reasons can be listed as under:

- Bribe serves as an impetus for the government servants.
- High inequality can lead to greater incentives for the corruption.
- Incomprehensibly in many cases, it reduces exchange cost for the applicants by saving their time and other different expenses on the visits.
- It is a sort of value compares supply and demands in each field and office.
- Likewise, net increase through bribing the voters, score off the cost of the venture.

This is however only the commercial side of it. In the real economic sense, it is a net loss to the society in terms of reduced availability of funds for development, artificial increase in cost per unit of resources use and increased impoverishment of the poor or weaker parts of the society. It also reduces the efficiency of economy. In this regard, Ahmed and Basit (2012) declared that the “corruption and poor governance limit economic growth and restrict the development of a healthy private sector”.

Poor governance leads towards the corruption in several ways, like bribery, nepotism, fraud and embezzlement. In Pakistan, corruption is unique because it occurs up stream common to other South Asian countries (Javaid, 2010). It is weakening the capital and being lower the position of judiciary. Corruption is not a problem that can be attacked in insulation. It is not adequate for the criminal law to search for bad evils and punish them (Adnan & Fatima, 2018). Therefore, the state has great need to establish reliability by punishing highly reputed and well-recognized political officials. Pakistan is going through a number of administrative, economic, social and political issues regarding the governance. Some of these issues are discussed here:

- Bureaucratic turmoil and ambiguity have disrupted and changed the situation at the inter-state level.
- Energy and gas load-shedding are the main problems because of which public is facing the difficulties.
- Lack of access to national, indigenous and metropolitan management.
- Lack of administrative and political ties.
- Lack of basic healthcare facilities and services to the public.
- Lack of fair and balanced leadership.
- Lack of humanitarian and social development.
- Lack of infrastructure development.
- Lack of parliamentary-democratic responsibility.
- Lack of political will.
- Lack of proper establishment of basic as well as advance level of education and institutions.
- Lack of the equity, justice, and independent judiciary.
- Libertarianism and unconventionality.
- Local self-government does not work properly.
- Poverty is going towards at the peak due to the lack of the provision of basic needs of life.
- Reliance on foreign aid gives the impression that a country depends on its own goals and objectives.

- Religious and ethnic has disrupted the entire society.
- The challenges of security because of the continuous terrorism attacks and threats and the increase rate of assertiveness and insecurity
- The rate of unemployment is highly rising and the public do not have the adequate facilities for working at different workplaces.
- The societal disturbance has created a hurdle for the public.
- The water crisis has been become the major issue of the need and proper construction of the dam in the country.
- There is a need for peace and stability and a system that is economically, politically and socially organized.
- Widespread fraud, deception and epidemics.

### **Solutions & Recommendations**

There is a great need to change the scenario of administrative structure in Pakistan to resolve the issues of governance. Good governance has to be built on the quality of organisations so that development is based on this rather than simply relying only on political will, personal will of a strong leader and state power, which may not be sustainable over the longer term.

- A national anti-corruption bureau be established as an independent watchdog.
- Accountability started from the top level.
- Active and independent judiciary.
- Clarification of the responsibilities of individual, community expectations and the role of government and state agencies.
- Community and student's participation must be ensured.
- End all unnecessary and old laws.
- Ensure the disciplined practices of rules and laws.
- Ensure transparency at all levels.
- Ensuring people's right to information and access to government data.
- Equality in the distribution of capital and funds.
- Establish time bound reforms in offices.
- Establishment of the balanced democracy in the favor of public.
- Increase the community participation in political processes and public participation at all levels.
- Make sure, people enjoy freedom of access to independent media and information, association, peaceful protest, and speech.
- One of the implications for the international political economy is that Pakistan must be involved in rapid political and economic development.
- Organized and managed executive position.
- Proper and effective policy making.
- Proper check and balance at all levels from upper to lower level of hierarchy.
- Protection of the human rights.
- Provide a free and comprehensive legal identification, i.e. birth registration.
- Public engagement and participation in the policy making and decision making.
- Reduce discrimination, corruption and bribery, and ensure that officials are held accountable.
- Require public officials to declare their assets.
- Strengthen the economic resources.
- Use independent private sector auditors.

## Conclusion

In recent years, Pakistan has done a number of efforts to eradicate corruption, increase accountability, and improve the level of governance in a country. In this regard, it can be said that it is an important and interesting development in the country. However, the lack of a reliable compass to tell where a country is at a particular time and where that country can lead to absenteeism or accept reform proposals that can lead to catastrophic mistakes. Therefore, there is a great need to give the special attention towards the potential for public, civil society groups to perform an active and equal participation in the governmental affairs and holding governments accountable for their usage of public resources.

Improving governance stressed on the need for a holistic analytical framework that allows different countries to analyse their current situation, identify areas for improvement, and take the necessary steps to promote them and their potential. A country specific analysis needs to be comprehensive, in the sense that it includes the four concepts of accountability, anti-corruption, governance, and transparency in calculus. Without such an analytical analysis, any reform effort fails due to fundamental difficulties and a lack of common sense about possible improvements. Without an analytical framework, any reforms and efforts are likely to be failed due to a lack of common understanding of major issues.

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