

# Good Governance And Public Administration: A Critical Analysis Of Institutional Effectiveness

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## **Abstract:**

Good governance constitutes a fundamental prerequisite for sustainable development and institutional effectiveness in contemporary public administration systems. This study examines the relationship between governance quality indicators and institutional performance within India's administrative framework, analyzing how transparency, accountability, participation, and rule of law contribute to administrative efficiency. Employing a mixed-methods research design, this investigation surveys 385 respondents across five Indian states to assess governance perceptions and institutional effectiveness metrics. The hypothesis posits that enhanced governance quality positively correlates with institutional effectiveness and citizen satisfaction levels. Statistical analysis reveals significant variations in governance perception scores ranging from 2.8 to 4.6 on a five-point scale, with transparency mechanisms ( $r=0.742$ ,  $p<0.01$ ) and participatory frameworks demonstrating substantial influence on institutional trust. Data indicates that while constitutional provisions exist, implementation gaps persist, affecting overall governance outcomes. India ranks 96th globally on the Corruption Perceptions Index 2024 with a score of 38/100, reflecting ongoing challenges. Digital governance initiatives show promise, with over 6 million RTI applications filed annually demonstrating enhanced citizen engagement. The study concludes that strengthening accountability mechanisms, enhancing bureaucratic capacity through Mission Karmayogi, and fostering participatory governance through decentralization are essential for improving institutional effectiveness in India's evolving public administration landscape.

**Keywords:** Good governance, public administration, institutional effectiveness, transparency, accountability.

## **1. Introduction**

Good governance represents the cornerstone of effective public administration and sustainable socio-economic development in modern democratic societies (Fukuyama, 2013). The concept has evolved significantly since the 1990s when international development organizations, particularly the World Bank, began emphasizing governance quality as crucial for development outcomes (Tawiah, 2023). In the Indian context, good governance encompasses principles of transparency, accountability, responsiveness, equity, inclusiveness, effectiveness, efficiency, and adherence to the rule of law. These principles are enshrined in constitutional provisions and have been progressively reinforced through various legislative and administrative reforms over the past three decades (Kundu, 2023). Public administration in India operates within a complex federal structure where governance responsibilities are distributed across union, state, and local government levels. The effectiveness of public institutions directly

impacts approximately 1.4 billion citizens who depend on government services for essential needs ranging from healthcare and education to infrastructure and social security (Desai & Manoharan, 2024). Despite constitutional safeguards and extensive bureaucratic machinery, India faces persistent challenges in achieving optimal governance standards. Issues such as corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, lack of transparency, and inadequate citizen participation continue to undermine institutional effectiveness (Roehl, 2024).

The twenty-first century has witnessed transformative changes in public administration globally, with digital technologies, citizen-centric approaches, and performance-based management systems reshaping traditional governance paradigms. India has implemented several governance reforms including the Right to Information Act 2005, e-governance initiatives under Digital India, and decentralization through the 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments (Bhattacharjee, 2024). However, the actual impact of

these reforms on institutional effectiveness remains a subject of scholarly debate and empirical investigation. Recent governance indices reveal mixed performance across multiple dimensions. The Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024 place India at 66.7 percentile rank in government effectiveness, while the Corruption Perceptions Index 2024 ranks India 96th out of 180 countries with a score of 38/100, indicating a decline from 93rd position in 2023 (Transparency International, 2024). The Good Governance Index launched by the Indian government in 2019 evaluates state performance across ten sectors including agriculture, economic governance, human resource development, public health, social welfare and infrastructure (IIPA, 2023). These mixed results demonstrate progress in certain areas such as digital service delivery and financial inclusion, while challenges persist in reducing corruption, ensuring judicial efficiency, and maintaining regulatory quality. The COVID-19 pandemic further exposed vulnerabilities in administrative systems while simultaneously demonstrating the potential of technology-enabled governance solutions (Kusumasari et al., 2024). Understanding the relationship between governance quality and institutional effectiveness is therefore critical for policy formulation and administrative reform. This research critically analyzes institutional effectiveness through the lens of good governance principles, examining both theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence from India's administrative landscape. By investigating the interplay between governance mechanisms and institutional outcomes, this study contributes to the broader discourse on public administration reform and developmental governance in emerging democracies.

## **2. Literature Review**

The theoretical foundations of good governance in public administration have been extensively explored in scholarly literature, with seminal contributions from various disciplines including political science, public policy, and development studies. Fukuyama (2013) defines governance as "the ability of a government to make and enforce rules, and to deliver services, regardless of whether that government is democratic or not," emphasizing institutional capacity over regime type. The World Bank's framework defining governance as the manner in which power is exercised in managing a country's economic and social resources has significantly influenced academic discourse and policy formulation globally (Kaufmann & Kraay, 2024). Scholarly research emphasizes that governance quality transcends mere government functioning,

encompassing broader institutional arrangements, participation mechanisms, and accountability systems. Research on institutional effectiveness demonstrates that strong governance frameworks positively correlate with improved development outcomes, economic growth, and citizen welfare (Wang et al., 2018). Studies examining Indian public administration highlight the tension between bureaucratic tradition and contemporary reform imperatives. The steel frame of Indian bureaucracy, inherited from colonial administration, has undergone significant transformation yet retains certain structural rigidities that affect institutional responsiveness (Kundu, 2023). Scholars argue that hierarchical administrative culture, limited performance accountability, and political interference constrain institutional effectiveness despite formal governance structures.

The relationship between transparency and administrative efficiency has received substantial scholarly attention, particularly following India's Right to Information Act implementation in 2005. Research indicates that information disclosure mechanisms enhance accountability, reduce corruption opportunities, and empower citizens to demand better services (Roy, 2019). Over 6 million RTI applications are filed annually in India, demonstrating significant citizen engagement with transparency mechanisms (PMF IAS, 2025). However, empirical studies also reveal implementation challenges including bureaucratic resistance, inadequate information infrastructure with over 400,000 appeals pending across commissions in 2024, and citizen awareness gaps (Journalism University, 2025). Literature on participatory governance through decentralization initiatives presents mixed findings, with successful local governance models coexisting with instances of elite capture and resource constraints (Rajasekharan & Jayalakshmi, 2022). The 73rd and 74th Constitutional Amendments establishing Panchayati Raj institutions were landmark reforms aimed at strengthening grassroots democracy. Digital governance has emerged as a transformative dimension in contemporary public administration literature. Studies examining India's Digital Public Infrastructure demonstrate how technological innovations can enhance service delivery, promote financial inclusion, and facilitate cross-sectoral collaborative governance (Desai et al., 2023). The Digital India initiative launched in 2015 aims to transform India into a digitally empowered society and knowledge economy (Reji et al., 2025).

Comparative governance research highlights the importance of contextual factors in determining

institutional effectiveness. Roehl (2024) conducts a systematic review examining automated administrative decision-making through the prism of good governance, identifying synergies, trade-offs, and limits associated with accountability, efficiency, equality, fairness, and transparency. The study reveals that while digital technologies offer efficiency gains, they also present challenges to traditional public administration values. International governance indices provide comparative perspectives on India's performance. The Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024 assess six dimensions: Voice and Accountability, Political Stability, Government Effectiveness, Regulatory Quality, Rule of Law, and Control of Corruption (World Bank, 2024). India's mixed performance across these dimensions reflects the complex challenges facing its public administration system in balancing democratic participation with administrative efficiency and effectiveness.

### **3. Objectives**

1. To examine the relationship between good governance principles (transparency, accountability, participation, rule of law) and institutional effectiveness in India's public administration system.
2. To assess citizen perceptions of governance quality and identify implementation gaps between constitutional provisions and ground-level administrative performance across different governance dimensions.

### **4. Methodology**

This study employs a mixed-methods research design combining quantitative survey research with qualitative analysis of secondary data from governance indices and scholarly literature. The research design facilitates comprehensive examination of governance-institutional effectiveness relationships through multiple analytical lenses. The study population comprises citizens aged 18 years and above residing in five Indian states selected through stratified purposive sampling to represent geographical, economic, and administrative diversity: Maharashtra (representing developed western states), Uttar Pradesh (representing large northern states), Karnataka (representing southern states with digital governance leadership), Bihar (representing economically challenged states), and Rajasthan (representing states

with strong grassroots governance movements). A sample size of 385 respondents was determined using Cochran's formula with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Respondents were selected through systematic random sampling from each state, ensuring representation across urban-rural divide, age groups, educational backgrounds, and socio-economic strata. Primary data collection utilized a structured questionnaire comprising 45 items measuring governance perception across five dimensions: transparency (9 items), accountability (10 items), participation (8 items), rule of law (9 items), and institutional effectiveness (9 items). Items employed five-point Likert scales ranging from "Strongly Disagree" (1) to "Strongly Agree" (5). The questionnaire was pre-tested with 40 respondents and refined based on feedback. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficient exceeded 0.85 for all dimensions, indicating high internal consistency.

Secondary data was collected from verified sources including Worldwide Governance Indicators 2024 (World Bank), Corruption Perceptions Index 2024 (Transparency International), Good Governance Index reports (IIPA), State of Governance Transformation Index 2024 (SKOCH), RTI implementation data (Department of Personnel and Training), and e-governance performance metrics (Digital India Portal). Data collection occurred between November 2024 and January 2025. Quantitative data analysis employed descriptive statistics (mean, standard deviation, frequency distribution) and inferential statistics including Pearson correlation analysis to examine relationships between governance dimensions and institutional effectiveness. One-way ANOVA tested variance across states. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 26.0 software. Qualitative content analysis of policy documents, governance reports, and scholarly literature complemented quantitative findings, providing contextual understanding of governance challenges and reform initiatives. Ethical considerations included informed consent, anonymity, voluntary participation, and data confidentiality. The study received approval from the institutional research ethics committee.

### **5. Results**

The empirical findings reveal significant patterns in governance perception and institutional effectiveness across sampled states. The following tables present comprehensive data analysis with statistical interpretations.

**Table 1: State-wise Governance Perception Scores (Mean Scores on 5-point Scale)**

State	Transparency	Accountability	Participation	Rule of Law	Overall Governance
Maharashtra	3.8	3.6	3.4	3.7	3.6
Karnataka	4.1	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.9
Uttar Pradesh	2.9	2.8	2.7	3.0	2.9
Rajasthan	3.5	3.3	3.8	3.4	3.5
Bihar	2.8	2.7	2.6	2.9	2.8

Table 1 demonstrates substantial interstate variation in governance perception scores. Karnataka emerges as the highest-performing state with an overall governance score of 3.9, reflecting strong digital governance initiatives and administrative reforms. Conversely, Bihar records the lowest score at 2.8, indicating significant governance challenges. One-way ANOVA reveals statistically significant

differences across states ( $F=45.32$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), suggesting that governance quality varies considerably based on state-level administrative capacity and reform implementation. Transparency scores range from 2.8 (Bihar) to 4.1 (Karnataka), highlighting the digital divide and differential reform adoption across states.

**Table 2: Correlation Between Governance Dimensions and Institutional Effectiveness**

Governance Dimension	Pearson Correlation (r)	Significance (p-value)	Interpretation
Transparency	0.742	<0.001	Strong positive
Accountability	0.698	<0.001	Strong positive
Participation	0.623	<0.001	Moderate positive
Rule of Law	0.711	<0.001	Strong positive

Table 2 presents correlation coefficients demonstrating the strength of relationships between individual governance dimensions and institutional effectiveness. Transparency exhibits the strongest correlation ( $r=0.742$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), indicating that enhanced information access and openness significantly contribute to perceived institutional effectiveness. Accountability mechanisms show strong positive correlation ( $r=0.698$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), validating theoretical assertions that answerability and

responsibility frameworks enhance institutional performance. Participation demonstrates moderate positive correlation ( $r=0.623$ ,  $p<0.001$ ), suggesting that citizen engagement mechanisms contribute meaningfully to effectiveness though perhaps facing implementation constraints. Rule of law correlation ( $r=0.711$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) underscores the critical importance of legal frameworks and judicial effectiveness for institutional functioning.

**Table 3: RTI Implementation and Citizen Engagement (2020-2024)**

Year	RTI Applications (millions)	Appeals Pending (thousands)	Average Response Time (days)	Compliance Rate (%)
2020	5.8	320	28	68
2021	5.4	345	29	66
2022	5.9	380	27	69
2023	6.2	410	26	71
2024	6.3	425	25	72

Table 3 tracks RTI Act implementation trends demonstrating progressive increase in citizen engagement from 5.8 million applications in 2020 to 6.3 million in 2024, reflecting growing awareness and utilization of transparency mechanisms. However, the concurrent rise in pending appeals from 320,000 to

425,000 reveals systemic capacity constraints and backlog accumulation, potentially undermining RTI effectiveness. Average response time has marginally improved from 28 to 25 days, approaching the statutory 30-day limit. Compliance rates show modest improvement from 68% to 72%, indicating persistent

challenges in information disclosure despite legal mandates. These trends validate scholarly

observations regarding implementation gaps between legislative intent and ground-level execution.

**Table 4: Corruption Perception and Governance Quality (2020-2024)**

Year	CPI Rank (out of 180)	CPI Score (0-100)	Government Effectiveness Percentile	Control of Corruption Percentile
2020	86	40	64.4	48.6
2021	85	40	65.9	49.0
2022	85	40	66.2	48.1
2023	93	39	66.7	47.1
2024	96	38	66.7	46.6

Table 4 presents longitudinal data on corruption perception and governance quality from authoritative international indices. India's Corruption Perceptions Index rank deteriorated from 86th position in 2020 to 96th in 2024, with scores declining from 40 to 38 on the 100-point scale, signaling concerning trends in corruption control (Transparency International, 2024). Paradoxically, the Government Effectiveness percentile from Worldwide Governance Indicators

remained relatively stable at 66.7%, while Control of Corruption percentile declined from 48.6% to 46.6%, indicating divergence between administrative capacity and corruption control outcomes. This divergence suggests that institutional capacity improvements have not translated proportionately into corruption reduction, highlighting the need for targeted anti-corruption interventions beyond administrative modernization.

**Table 5: Digital Governance Adoption and Service Delivery (2020-2024)**

Year	E-Services Available	Digital Transactions (billions)	Aadhaar-linked Services	Digital Literacy Rate (%)
2020	1,250	45.2	315	38
2021	1,580	52.8	412	42
2022	1,920	68.3	538	47
2023	2,340	89.7	671	52
2024	2,850	112.4	824	58

Table 5 demonstrates remarkable expansion in digital governance infrastructure and adoption. E-services availability more than doubled from 1,250 in 2020 to 2,850 in 2024, reflecting aggressive digitalization under Digital India initiative (Reji et al., 2025). Digital transactions surged from 45.2 billion to 112.4 billion, indicating substantial citizen adoption of digital governance platforms. Aadhaar-linked services

expanded from 315 to 824, facilitating targeted service delivery and reducing leakages. Digital literacy rates improved from 38% to 58%, though the 42% digitally illiterate population represents a significant digital divide challenge. These metrics validate scholarly assertions that digital public infrastructure enhances service delivery efficiency and institutional responsiveness (Desai & Manoharan, 2024).

**Table 6: Citizen Satisfaction with Institutional Effectiveness (Percentage Distribution)**

Satisfaction Level	Public Services	Grievance Redressal	Administrative Responsiveness	Overall Satisfaction
Very Satisfied	14%	11%	9%	12%
Satisfied	38%	32%	28%	33%
Neutral	25%	27%	31%	28%
Dissatisfied	18%	22%	24%	21%
Very Dissatisfied	5%	8%	8%	6%

Table 6 presents citizen satisfaction distribution across institutional effectiveness dimensions. Combined satisfaction levels (Very Satisfied + Satisfied) for public services reach 52%, grievance redressal 43%, and administrative responsiveness 37%, indicating moderate citizen satisfaction with institutional performance. However, approximately 27% express dissatisfaction (Dissatisfied + Very Dissatisfied) with overall institutional effectiveness, highlighting persistent service delivery gaps. Administrative responsiveness records the lowest satisfaction at 37%, suggesting that while digital infrastructure expands, responsiveness to citizen needs requires substantial improvement. The high neutral response rates (25-31%) may indicate either ambivalence or limited direct interaction with governance institutions, warranting further investigation into citizen-state engagement patterns.

## 6. Discussion

The empirical findings reveal complex dynamics between good governance principles and institutional effectiveness in India's public administration system, aligning with and extending existing scholarly literature while identifying critical areas requiring policy intervention. The substantial interstate variation in governance perception scores (Table 1) validates theoretical propositions regarding the fragmented nature of public administration in federal systems (Kundu, 2023). Karnataka's superior performance reflects sustained investment in digital governance infrastructure and administrative modernization, while Bihar's challenges stem from historical underdevelopment, limited fiscal capacity, and governance deficits. This variance underscores the importance of context-specific governance reforms rather than uniform national approaches. The strong positive correlation between transparency and institutional effectiveness ( $r=0.742$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) empirically validates the theoretical argument that information access enhances accountability and service delivery quality (Roy, 2019). The RTI Act's implementation data (Table 3) demonstrates growing citizen engagement with transparency mechanisms, with 6.3 million applications in 2024 representing substantial democratic participation. However, the mounting backlog of 425,000 pending appeals and 72% compliance rate reveal significant implementation gaps between legislative intent and ground-level execution. Research indicates that penalties on Public Information Officers were applied in only 2% of eligible cases in 2024, weakening enforcement mechanisms (PMF IAS, 2025). These findings suggest that while transparency frameworks

exist, their effectiveness depends critically on robust enforcement, adequate institutional capacity, and cultural shift toward openness in bureaucratic functioning.

The deteriorating corruption perception trends (Table 4) present a concerning paradox wherein India's CPI rank declined from 86th to 96th position despite stable government effectiveness scores. This divergence suggests that administrative modernization and digital service delivery improvements have not adequately addressed underlying corruption vulnerabilities. Scholarly analysis indicates that corruption is concentrated in specific sectors including land administration, public procurement, and regulatory approvals, requiring targeted interventions beyond general governance reforms (Tawiah, 2023). The modest improvement in Control of Corruption percentile from 48.6% to 46.6% indicates that existing anti-corruption mechanisms including the Lokpal and state Lokayuktas have achieved limited effectiveness, potentially due to political interference, inadequate resources, and weak prosecution frameworks. The digital governance transformation documented in Table 5 represents perhaps the most significant positive development in India's governance landscape. The expansion from 1,250 to 2,850 e-services and the surge in digital transactions from 45.2 billion to 112.4 billion validate scholarly assertions that Digital Public Infrastructure enhances service delivery efficiency, reduces transaction costs, and minimizes corruption opportunities through automated processes (Desai et al., 2023). The India Stack ecosystem comprising Aadhaar, UPI, and DigiLocker demonstrates how integrated digital platforms can facilitate seamless service delivery and financial inclusion. However, the persistent 42% digital illiteracy rate identified in the data highlights significant inclusion challenges that could exacerbate existing socio-economic inequalities if not adequately addressed through comprehensive digital literacy programs.

The moderate correlation between citizen participation and institutional effectiveness ( $r=0.623$ ,  $p<0.001$ ) reflects the complex reality of participatory governance implementation in India. While constitutional amendments establishing Panchayati Raj institutions created formal participatory structures, research documents persistent challenges including elite capture, inadequate devolution of functions and finances, and limited capacity of local governance institutions (Rajasekharan & Jayalakshmi, 2022). The study's findings on Rajasthan's higher participation scores (3.8) compared to other states may reflect the state's pioneering role in the RTI movement and strong civil society activism, demonstrating that participatory

governance effectiveness depends on both institutional frameworks and social capital mobilization. The citizen satisfaction data (Table 6) revealing only 52% satisfaction with public services and 37% with administrative responsiveness underscores the persistent delivery deficits despite governance reforms. These findings align with scholarly observations regarding the "implementation puzzle" in multilevel governance systems wherein policy intent fails to translate into ground-level outcomes due to bureaucratic capacity constraints, coordination failures, and accountability gaps (Roehl, 2024). The high dissatisfaction with grievance redressal mechanisms (30% dissatisfied) suggests that existing platforms including CPGRAMS require substantial strengthening to provide effective citizen recourse. Research indicates that addressing these satisfaction deficits requires not merely technological solutions but fundamental shifts in administrative culture toward citizen-centric service delivery orientation (Kusumasari et al., 2024).

The study's findings collectively suggest that improving institutional effectiveness in India requires multidimensional interventions addressing technological infrastructure, human capacity, accountability mechanisms, and cultural transformation. The Mission Karmayogi initiative launched in 2020 to create competency-based civil service represents a promising approach to enhancing bureaucratic capacity through continuous learning ecosystems. However, realizing its potential requires sustained political commitment, adequate resource allocation, and integration with broader governance reform agendas. Similarly, the ongoing development of the National Digital Governance Architecture must prioritize inclusion, data protection, and interoperability to maximize benefits while minimizing risks of digital exclusion and privacy violations.

## 7. Conclusion

This research critically examines the relationship between good governance principles and institutional effectiveness in India's public administration system, revealing complex dynamics, significant achievements, and persistent challenges. The empirical analysis demonstrates that transparency, accountability, participation, and rule of law dimensions significantly correlate with institutional effectiveness, validating theoretical propositions about governance-performance relationships. However, substantial implementation gaps between constitutional provisions and ground-level execution undermine optimal governance outcomes. India's

deteriorating position in the Corruption Perceptions Index from 93rd to 96th rank alongside stable government effectiveness scores indicates that administrative modernization alone is insufficient without targeted anti-corruption interventions and cultural transformation toward ethical governance. The RTI Act's growing utilization with over 6 million applications annually demonstrates citizen empowerment potential, yet mounting backlogs and compliance challenges reveal systemic capacity constraints requiring urgent attention.

Digital governance initiatives emerge as transformative forces, with 2,850 e-services and 112.4 billion digital transactions in 2024 demonstrating substantial progress in leveraging technology for service delivery enhancement. However, 42% digital illiteracy necessitates comprehensive inclusion strategies to ensure equitable access to digital governance benefits. Interstate variations in governance perception scores underscore the importance of context-specific reforms recognizing diverse administrative capacities and socio-economic conditions across India's federal structure. Moving forward, strengthening institutional effectiveness requires multidimensional approaches including enhanced accountability enforcement, bureaucratic capacity building through Mission Karmayogi, robust anti-corruption mechanisms beyond Lokpal institutions, expanded digital inclusion programs, and fundamental cultural shifts toward citizen-centric service orientation. The study contributes empirical evidence advancing scholarly understanding of governance-institutional effectiveness dynamics while providing actionable insights for policymakers pursuing administrative reform and democratic governance strengthening in India's complex federal landscape.

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