**Concept of Governance**

**Introduction**

Pakistan has been concerned for the improvement of its institutional and human capacity to improve the livelihoods of its citizens since its inception. This surge for improvement in the lifestyle of its citizens is assessed by the level of **good governance** in the country. Pakistan lags far behind in the field of **governance**, as the same is evident from the world reports on governance. Pakistan needs to review and revise its policies to earn effective and efficient governance practices. Law and order, energy, economy, political stability and national harmony are the key **governance issues in Pakistan**, which need comprehensive policy response. Pakistan has to overcome its shortcomings in the corruption control, accountability and mal-administration through legal frameworks in support, to ensure the good governance. Pakistan can achieve the good governance by introducing integrity, coordination, cooperation among individuals as well as institutions, besides the economic sustainability and proper policy process implementation.

**Meaning of Governance**

**“Governance means governing together”**

The English word governance derives from Latin and ancient Greek and originally meant control, guidance and manipulation.

Basing on its etymology, governance refers to the manner of steering or governing, or of directing and controlling, a group of people or a state.

Its meaning had long overlapped with the word “government” and was mainly used to refer to administrative and political activities related to national public affairs.

Governance in public administration indicates that the decision-making process is carried out in cooperation with the participation of all stakeholders and that administrators/managers act in a apparently, transparent, accountable, effective and responsible manner.

In other words, government is run not only by a group of elected but also with the involvement of other types of groups such as civil society organizations, professional chambers, private sector organizations, universities, etc.

Within the concept of governance, it is expected that the managers take decisions in ways open to the public and that they involve all stakeholders into the process while demonstrating a government model based on information and consensus.

According to a Turkish Special Ad Hoc Committee Report on Good Governance in Public Administration prepared by the State Planning Organization, that governance is; “… a concept used to define an understanding which is based on the mutual cooperation and consensus of all societal actors instead of the classical hierarchical government concept that was based on top-down dominance of the central authority, which brings participation and civil society organizations in the forefront, and which takes transparency, openness, accountability, devolution of power and subsidiarity as a basis.”

Moreover, governance is essentially related to politics, in that politics is often defined as the art of governance. Just as politics talks about governments, institutions, power, order, and the ideals of justice, governance also deals with the public sector, power structures, equity, and ideals of public administration.

Nevertheless, they are distinct from each other in the sense that politics is broader than governance. Traditionally, the study of politics entails the concept of the “good life” and the “ideal society,” which are so broad they include a web of subjects and every possible form of government. The study of governance, on the contrary, is generally attuned to the concept of democracy, and on how the government and the civil society arrive at a decision in meeting their needs.

**Definition of Governance**

Governance is commonly defined as the exercise of power or authority by political leaders for the well-being of their country’s citizens or subjects. It is the complex process whereby some sectors of the society wield power, and enact and promulgate public policies which directly affect human and institutional interactions, and economic and social development. The power exercised by the participating sectors of the society is always for the common good, as it is essential for demanding respect and cooperation from the citizens and the state.

**World Bank**

The World Bank uses the following definition: "By governance we mean the manner in which power is exercised... in the management of a country's social and economic resources”. It makes a clear distinction between the political and economic dimensions of governance.

The Bank identifies the following components of governance: public-sector management, accountability, legal framework, transparency and information.

**DAC-OECD** (Development Assistance Committee -Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development)

The DAC uses a definition of governance that echoes the World Bank's definition, but also considers the political, social and economic aspects of the concept. Governance is thus defined as "the use of political authority and exercise of control in society in relation to the management of its resources for social and economic development".

This fairly general definition reflects both the role of public authorities in creating the framework for the activities of economic agents and in making decisions about the distribution of benefits, as well as the nature of the relationship between government and the governed.

Governance has the following attributes: accountability, efficiency and effectiveness, independent legal framework, responsible and equitable administration at all levels of government.

**UNDP**

UNDP defines the concept of governance by relating it to that of sustainable human development. Thus, Under the parameters of Sustainable Human Development, sound governance has come to mean “a framework of public management based on the rule of law, a fair and efficient system of justice, and broad popular involvement in the process of governing and being governed. This requires establishing mechanisms to sustain the system, to empower people and give them real ownership of the process.”

Governance is also defined as “the exercise of political, economic and administrative authority to manage a society's affairs. It is a broad concept that encompasses the organizational structures and activities of central, regional and local government, the parliament and the judiciary and the institutions, organizations and individuals that comprise civil society and the private sector insofar as they actively participate and influence the shaping of public policy that affects people's lives.” governance is the proper and effective utilization of resources.

**What does Governance Do?**

* Brings public administration closer to the citizen.
* Makes public administration more effective.
* Ensures combating corruption.
* Ensures the participation of different stakeholders to government
* by voicing their opinion, which enriches the content of the decisions
* Improves the effectiveness of their implementation.
* Strengthens democracy.
* Improves the legitimacy of institutions
* Ensures that decisions and processes are open and understandable.