

Q.1 What are the challenges of governance in India's multifaceted federal polity? Illustrate.

Approach - It expects students to write about role of governance and various challenges of governance in India multifaceted federal polity with illustrations.

Introduction

Governance can be defined as 'the process of decision-making and the process by which decisions are implemented.' Governance refers to the decision-making and administration involved in any federal level, i.e., national, regional, local, etc. Government is a key actor in governance.

Body

Various challenges of governance in India's multifaceted federal polity:

1. **Centralised Planning:** Planning with consultation is important feature of governance. Union Government enjoys unbridled authority over national and regional planning in India. Centralised planning, through the Planning Commission, now NITI Aayog appointed by the Centre, considerable preponderance in legislative power for the Union, the financial dependence of the states on the Centre's mercy. The States only fill the blank spaces meant for in the text for planning. There is no special planning commission for the states in India.
2. **Unequal Representation of Units:** With a view to preventing the evil of predominant influence of larger units over smaller units in a federation. Effective participation of smaller groups and units are crucial for governance. In India, there is no such provision of an equal representation of states in the Rajya Sabha, the Second Chamber and nor the states have any substantial say over the amendments done to the Constitution from time to time.
3. **Lacks fiscal autonomy:** Autonomy being the important facet of governance. The current Goods and Services Tax measure is feared by many states to be against fiscal federalism in India. It has amalgamated the various taxes into a single tax, procurement of which will then be divided among states in a prescribed ratio. Many states in India demand for more financial autonomy in India.
4. **Regionalism:** Demands on grounds of regional aspirations are usually never silent methods of request, rather they tend to take major violent forms; disrupting the governance environment of the nation as a whole. The nation thus faces the challenge of internal security in the form of insurgency and this causes upheavals in the basic notion of Indian federation. For example West Bengal threatened India's Teesta river waters treaty with Bangladesh because of its possible potential costs for West Bengal.
5. **Governor's Office:** The most paramount executive power at governor's disposal is that he can recommend the imposition of constitutional emergency in a state. State of Arunachal Pradesh saw the imposition of President's rule in its territory despite there being an already elected government in the same.

Supreme Court overruled the Governor's decision as unconstitutional. But, what came in the light amidst all this chaos was how the over supportive relationship with the Central government and the Governor of the State can impose serious threats to the quasi-federal style of Indian Governance.

6. Lack of equity and inclusiveness: Good governance assures an equitable society. Differences economic standards and relative economic and fiscal incompatibilities among the constituent states also pose a threat to a federation. Demand for a financial equality of a region creates problems in a federation. In India, some states are declared as poor and on the principle of equalization, are getting grants- in-aid.
7. Inadequate Efficiency and empowerment: Governments at lower levels can only function efficiently if they are empowered to do so. This is particularly relevant for the Panchayati Raj Institutions (PRIs), which currently suffer from inadequate devolution of funds as well as functionaries to carry out the governance constitutionally assigned to them.

Way forward –

- Good Governance Index are to provide quantifiable data to compare the state of governance in all states and Union Territories, enable states and Union Territories to formulate and implement suitable strategies for improving governance and shift to result oriented approaches and administration.
- NITI Aayog plan for cooperative federalism.
- Measure such as 14th Finance Commission increased the tax devolution of the divisible pool to states from 32% to 42% for years 2015 to 2020. It provides more freedom to states to initiate schemes based on local factors.

Conclusion

The effective functioning of governance is the prime concern in the federal polity of the India. The citizens are ready to pay the price for good services offered by the state, but what is required is a transparent, accountable and intelligible governance system absolutely free from bias and prejudices. The government should continue to work on the ideals of Sabka Saath, Sabka Vikas and Sabka Vishwas which will lead to inclusive federal polity.

2. How does transparency affect the efficiency in governance and public administration? Examine.

Approach - It is a straightforward question where it expects aspirants to write about how transparency in governance and public administration impacted efficiency.

Introduction

Transparency refers to unfettered access by the public to timely and reliable information on decisions and performance in the public sector. It helps to strengthen the foundations of democracy. It is used to imply openness and accountability.

Body

Transparency symbolizes a mechanism of promoting good governance and public trust in a democratic and modern public administration. Transparency contributes four kinds of outcomes in governance and public administration as follows:

Better delivery of services –

- Citizen report cards have considerable impact on local service delivery in some settings.
- Community monitoring of services, when combined with other factors contribute to more responsive delivery of services, such as increased teacher attendance in schools.
- Social audits contribute to exposure of corruption and enhanced effectiveness in programme implementation.
- Participatory budgeting initiatives can – but do not necessarily contribute to multiple outcomes, including improved public services.
- Budget monitoring initiatives contribute to enhanced resources and efficiency in expenditure utilisation.
- Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys, when combined with public information campaigns, contribute to reduced leakages and thereby to improved delivery of services.

Better budget utilisation –

- Public Expenditure Tracking Surveys, when made public and linked to public information campaigns, contribute to reducing leakages in delivery of service-sector budgets locally.
- Complaint mechanisms about service provision contribute to reduction of corruption, by linking citizens directly to managers who can then hold managers to account.
- The Right to Information legislation has been found through 'Peoples' Assessments' to contribute to perceptions of satisfaction in a range of areas, including decline in corruption and curtailing wasteful public expenditure, exposing misuse of power and influence, and redressing grievances.

Greater state responsiveness –

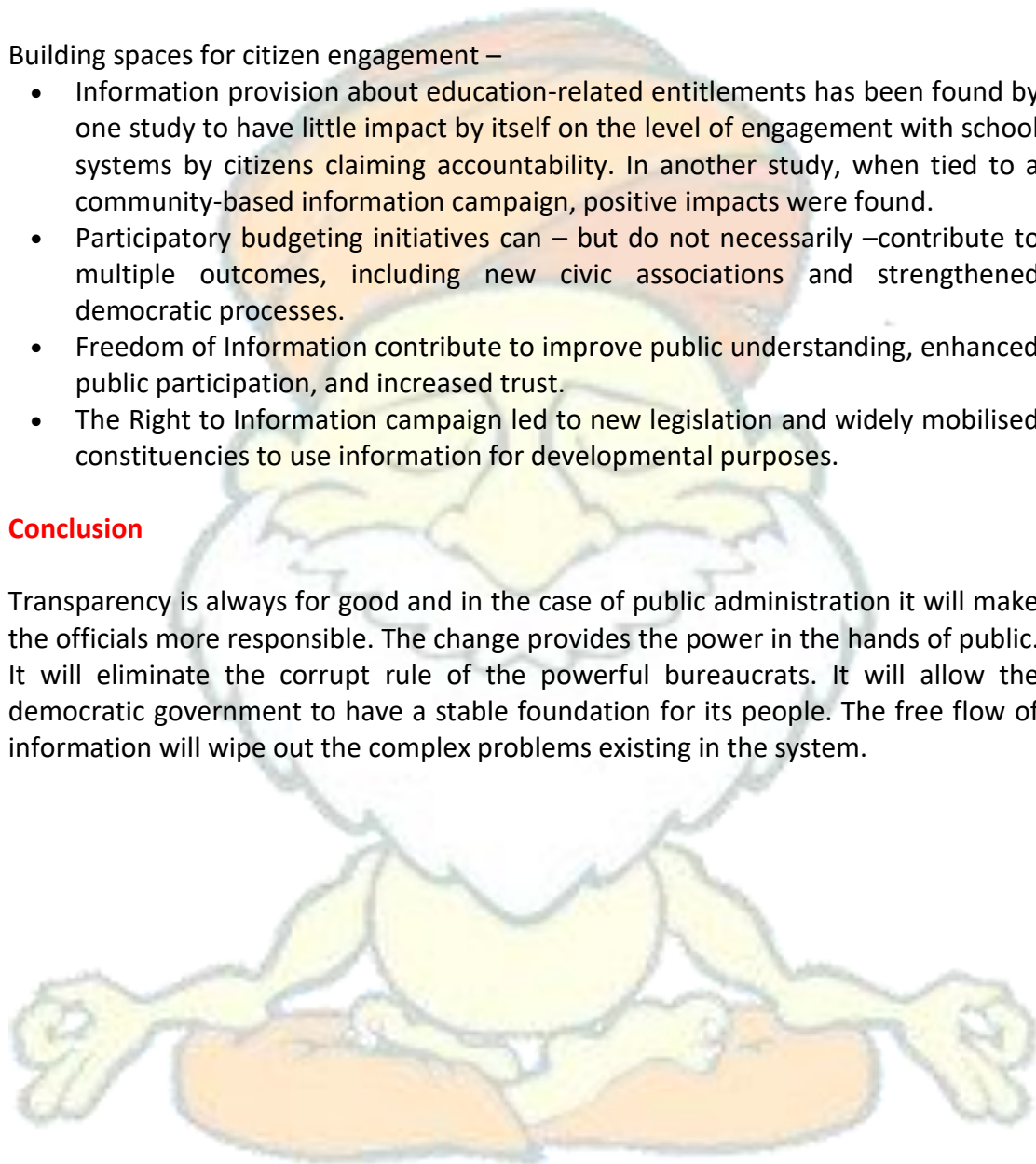
- Community score cards monitoring service delivery contribute to better user satisfaction.
- Freedom of Information contribute to improved government decision-making, public understanding, and increased trust between government and public.
- Freedom of Information requests contribute to responsiveness of public officials, though not always, and highly dependent on status of person submitting request and civil-society pressure.

Building spaces for citizen engagement –

- Information provision about education-related entitlements has been found by one study to have little impact by itself on the level of engagement with school systems by citizens claiming accountability. In another study, when tied to a community-based information campaign, positive impacts were found.
- Participatory budgeting initiatives can – but do not necessarily – contribute to multiple outcomes, including new civic associations and strengthened democratic processes.
- Freedom of Information contribute to improve public understanding, enhanced public participation, and increased trust.
- The Right to Information campaign led to new legislation and widely mobilised constituencies to use information for developmental purposes.

Conclusion

Transparency is always for good and in the case of public administration it will make the officials more responsible. The change provides the power in the hands of public. It will eliminate the corrupt rule of the powerful bureaucrats. It will allow the democratic government to have a stable foundation for its people. The free flow of information will wipe out the complex problems existing in the system.



3. Examine the ways in which data and digital technologies are transforming governance in India?

Approach - It expects students to write about – transformation happen in governance due to use of data and digital technologies. To substantiate your points, mention examples and data/facts.

Introduction

Government and public service bodies were the late entrants into the digital world; slow and hesitant at the start they have now embraced digital with gusto. What started as online payment portals for electricity and phone bills has developed into a mission to provide digital access to all citizens.

Body

- In the last few years, governance in India across sectors has been redefined through data and digital technologies. Data and digital technologies is reshaping the way government is designing and implementing programmes. The use of technology has brought in better systems, greater efficiency and is beginning to have a profound impact on governance.
- India has combined the use of unique biometric identifiers and financial inclusion for effectiveness in social benefits and to reduce the vast number of illegitimate beneficiaries under welfare programmes.
- The Direct Benet Transfer (DBT) has been implemented across 437 schemes, and helped save Rs. 83,000 crores. Its implementation has led to 2.75 crore duplicate, fake or non-existent ration cards being deleted, and 3.85 crore duplicate and inactive consumers for liquid petroleum gas (LPG) subsidy being eliminated.
- The Public Financial Management System (PFMS) has led to the creation of a financial management platform for all plan schemes, a database of all recipient agencies, integration with core banking solution of banks, integration of state treasurers and tracking of fund ow to the lowest tier of implementation of plan schemes on real-time basis. PFMS has also led to just-in-time release of funds and efficient management in the use of funds, including ultimate utilisation.
- Digitisation has led to lower costs in collection of direct taxes. Almost 98.5% of all income-tax (I-T) returns have been led online. The I-T Department received 6.84 crore income-tax returns in 2017-18, a growth of 26%, and additionally, more than one crore new tax returns.
- Unified Payments Interface (UPI) and Bharat Bill Payment System (BBPS) have triggered a plethora of private sector-innovated apps, which have significantly eased citizens' bill payments towards services provided by GoI.
- BBPS has more than doubled the number of bills paid digitally from April 2017 when the pilot was launched. The value of bills paid on the platform has jumped by about 46% during this period.
- According to a KPMG report, the size of the bill payments market in India will reach. Rs.9.4 trillion by 2020.

- The rollout of the goods and services tax (GST) has resulted in a 50% increase in unique indirect taxpayers compared with the pre-GST system. This translates to a substantial 3.4 million new indirect taxpayers leading to a radical formalisation of the economy.
- Pro-Active Governance and Timely Implementation (PRAGATI) programme, Prime Minister Narendra Modi has used technology to cut across departmental silos and geographical boundaries to ensure speedy project implementation. He has dealt directly with senior central and state officials to monitor, review and evaluate progress of social sector schemes and infrastructure projects that were facing severe bottlenecks.
- A Microsoft-International Data Corporation (IDC) study, 'Unlocking the Economic Impact of Digital Transformation in Asia Pacific', predicts that digital transformation will add \$154 billion to India's GDP by 2021, increasing the growth rate by 1% annually. In 2017, about 4% of GDP was derived from digital products and services created directly through the use of technologies like Cloud, Internet of Things (IoT) and artificial intelligence (AI).
- The Ayushman Bharat scheme digitally link primary and community health centres with district hospitals. Along with the Rs 5 lakh health insurance, which cover 50 crore Indians, it ensures healthcare through a paperless, cashless, portable scheme. The health stack linked to Aadhaar will be transformational.

Conclusion

For years, India has been a complex nation, making it difficult for the common man to access government services. The rapid adoption of digital technology across sectors is making things easy and eliminating all forms of human intervention. This has a major impact on the efficiency and effectiveness of governance.

4. Failure to scale up successful governance models is a critical challenge in India. Do you agree? How can it be addressed? Suggest.

Approach - As no specific directive like comment or critically is given here, it is necessary to answer directly according to the miscellaneous directives i.e. Do you agree, suggest. In the introduction candidate can define the successful governance model. You can cite any report to add a legitimacy to the definition. In the first part of main body part explain in detail the reasons behind it in detail. You need to cite respective data, facts for substantiation of your arguments. In the next part explain a way forward in detail. You can conclude by showcasing the benefits of successful governance model in brief.

Introduction

UNDP describes governance as "a system of values, policies and institutions by which a society manages its economic, political and social affairs through interactions within and among the state, civil society and the private sector". Where, successful governance constitutes complete devolution of powers to local level and their respective successful implementation at the grass-root level.

Body

The World Bank defines governance as 'how power is exercised in the management of a country's economic and social resources for development.' India is ranked 111 in World Bank's Global Governance Indicators (GGI) in 2016.

Critical challenges to scale up successful governance model in India –

- **Lack of Accountability:** A common reason usually cited for inefficiency in governance is the inability within the system to hold the Civil Services accountable for their actions. Seldom are disciplinary proceedings initiated against delinquent government servants and imposition of penalties is even rarer.
- **Low Levels of Awareness of the Rights and Duties of Citizens:** Inadequate awareness about their rights prevents citizens from holding erring government servants to account. Similarly, low levels of compliance of Rules by the citizens also acts as an impediment to successful governance; when citizens do not adhere to their duties they infringe on the freedom and rights of other citizens.
- **Ineffective Implementation of Laws and Rules:** There is a large body of laws in the country, each legislated with different objectives-maintaining public order and safety, maintaining sanitation and hygiene, protecting rights of citizens, giving special protection to the vulnerable sections etc.
- **Red Tapism:** Bureaucracies the world over are expected to adhere to rules and procedures which are, of course, important for successful governance. However, at times, these rules and procedures are ill-conceived and cumbersome and, therefore, do not serve their purpose.

- Hunger and Poverty are the biggest challenges for successful governance in India. Which actually eats up more of resources required to be implemented in to successful governance. For instance, The latest Global Hunger Index (GHI) 2019 has ranked India a lowly 102 among the 117 countries slipped from 95th position in 2010.
- Digital illiteracy in India is also a major impediment for successful governance in India. For instance, As per a report from the Digital Empowerment Foundation in 2018, around 90% of India's population is digitally illiterate. Besides, Limited digitalisation of government offices and inadequate infrastructure has further been a stumbling block in ensuring effective transparency and accountability measures.

In ideal scenario if we observe successful governance is based on four E's of good governance, i.e. Ethos, Equity, Ethics and Efficiency. Hence, to scale up the successful governance model it is necessary to take the following steps.

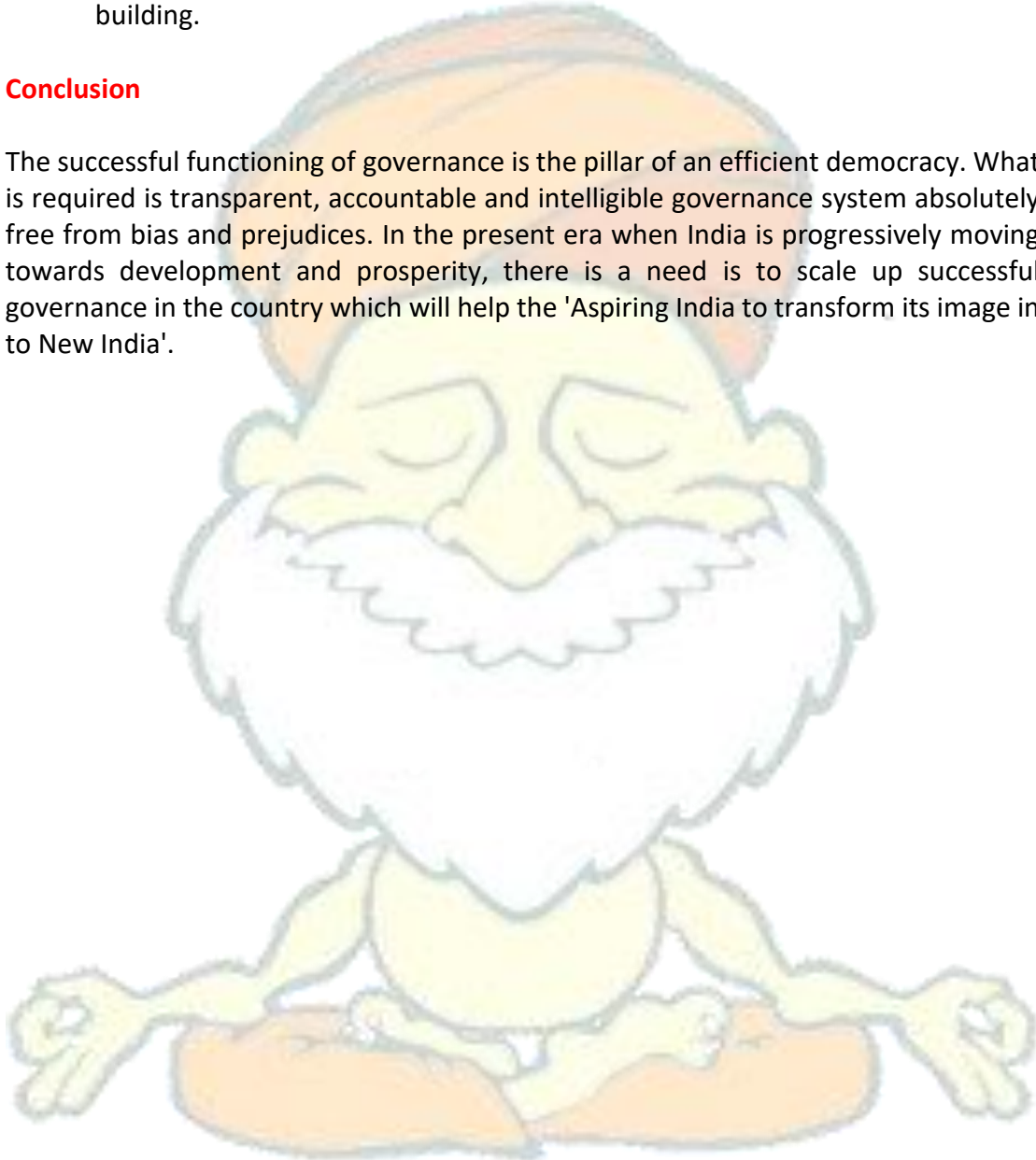
- Transparency is broadly accepted as a major principle of successful governance. Transparency allows stakeholders to collect information that may be critical to uncovering abuses and defending their interests. Likewise, transparency increases accountability of the Government officials. Hence, increasing transparency through governance will scale up successful governance in India.
- The declaration of Right To Information Act (2015) set the stage for transparency in the functioning of the government and its various agencies. Under this Act, access to information from a public agency has become a statutory right of every citizen.
- Accountability become another crucial concept in maintaining successful governance. Accountability means being answerable for the performance of tasks assigned to a person. Additionally, it is also important to be clear about the responsibility for performance of those tasks; person responsible and whether it is clear to them.
- For instance, Citizens Charter Bill 2011 aims at providing rights to citizens for time bound delivery of goods and services and provide a Grievance Redressal Mechanism. Such a bill was previously recommended by the Second Administrative Reforms Commission.
- E-Governance initiatives for providing an accountable administration and swift delivery of services include a framework for efficient handling of public grievances through the Centralised Public Grievance Redress and Monitoring System (CPGRAMS) which is already in place. Which will scale up the successful governance in India.
- Rule of law: Without rule of law successful governance can't be ensured. It is also important that laws must benefit every individual of the society. Thus states must ensure rule of law in the territory.
- Democratic decentralisation: Participation of the people either direct or indirect in the development and decision making process is one of the cornerstones of good governance. Democratic decentralisation should be

emphasised which entails power to the Gram Panchayats and people at the lowest level of political hierarchy.

- There is imperative need to strengthen and widen the national public information infrastructure through developing information networks for wider access of digital information through wider use of information technologies.
- Changing the mindset of the government employees is important. This will be addressed to organizing programmes for orientation, training and capacity building.

Conclusion

The successful functioning of governance is the pillar of an efficient democracy. What is required is transparent, accountable and intelligible governance system absolutely free from bias and prejudices. In the present era when India is progressively moving towards development and prosperity, there is a need is to scale up successful governance in the country which will help the 'Aspiring India to transform its image in to New India'.



Q.5 Effective two-way communication is the cornerstone of democratic governance. Do you agree? Substantiate.

Approach - It expects students to write about democratic governance and importance of effective two way communication in democratic governance.

Introduction

Democratic governance giving citizens a say in how decisions are made—is fundamental to ensuring that democracy delivers for all of society. Strong democratic governance is characterised by transparency and accountability in both the public and private sectors. An open, participatory governance process responds to citizen and business needs, resulting in better and fairer government policies.

Body

Communication process and structure in democratic governance –

- Communication processes can be one-way for example providing information and conveying messages or two-way for example dialogue, deliberation. Communication has evolved away from its traditional focus on one-way communication for the purpose of propaganda, social marketing, awareness-raising, and influencing attitudes, opinions and behaviour, towards a much greater emphasis two way communication more participatory and deliberative processes of dialogue.
- Communication structures include free, plural, and independent media systems, robust civil society, and the legal and regulatory framework that enables or precludes the free flow of information from government to citizens and vice versa. These form the framework through which citizens and government can communicate and engage in dialogue. They are essential components of the so-called democratic governance and play an important role in forming public opinion.

Role of communication in supporting democratic governance and stimulating economic growth is increasingly recognised in policy statements of the so-called 'good governance' agenda. Importance of effective two way communication for democratic governance -

1. **Capability:** Consultation and dialogue between state and citizens can in principle improve public understanding of and support for government policies and encourage citizen ownership of reform. Without the support of the public, governments often lack the capability to get things done.
2. **Accountability:** Access to information with two way communication and government transparency are in theory vital for enabling citizens to monitor and hold government to account for its actions. There is significant evidence that transparency can reduce opportunities for corruption.
3. **Responsiveness:** An informed and politically active electorate in theory strengthens the demand for governments to be accountable. There are several

examples where communication processes for example debate through the media, public information campaigns, social accountability mechanisms have encouraged government responsiveness to citizens' demands and resulted in better public services.

4. Agenda-setter: The communication can raise awareness of social problems, informing elected officials about public concerns and needs. A number of studies have demonstrated that the issues the communication through media present as important are the same as those the public subsequently think are important.
5. Gatekeeper: The communication with dialogue and deliberation can be a forum for the public debate and discussion of social issues and it can represent a plurality of perspectives, including those of poor and marginalised groups.
6. Watchdog: The effective discussion can provide a check on powerful sectors of society, including leaders within the private and public domains. Debate, in particular, can uncover corruption and monitor public interests.

Conclusion

Communication structures include free, plural, and independent media systems, robust civil society, and the legal and regulatory framework that enables or precludes the free flow of information from government to citizens and vice versa. These form the framework through which citizens and government can communicate and engage in dialogue. They are essential components of the so-called 'democratic public sphere' and play an important role in forming public opinion.

