

Role of Media in Promoting Good Governance : A Study of Chamba District of Himachal Pradesh

Sapna K Sharma*

The media is an interface for information; it refers to every organization whose primary goal is to enlighten the public. For a democracy to work properly, the media plays a critical role. It is frequently referred to as the fourth pillar of democracy. The media exercises its right to free speech and expression by advancing democratic values in society and by exposing the flaws and failures of the policies. It aids in shaping public opinion on important topics. Print media, radio broadcasts, television and the newest internet medium are the most widely used media types. Even though they may all be extremely different, they are all highly important for successful administration. In a society that is democratic, the media's oversight responsibility is important. The primary democratic function of the media is to act as a check on the state. The media play a significant role in shaping and ensuring a functional democracy and governance. In a democracy, the media

*** Assistant Professor, Department of Public Administration, Himachal Pradesh University, Shimla-171005, HP (India) E-mail: <sapna.gc@gmail.com>**

**JOURNAL OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT, Vol. 36, No. 1 (Summer), 2023
Peer Reviewed, Indexed & Refereed International Research Journal**

is essential to effective governance. The present study is an attempt to examine the role of media in ensuring good governance in the Chamba District of Himachal Pradesh. The paper is an attempt to analyze the perception of administrators and politicians in the context of the role of media in Good Governance.

[**Keywords** : Administrators, Democracy, Governance, Media, Programmes]

1. Introduction

The media as it exists today is a relatively new sector, while good governance has been valued since antiquity. Around 2000 years ago, the ancient Roman Empire came into being as a result of the successful administration of many smaller, different kingdoms. Since then, excellent governance has been necessary for the operation of any society as a whole regardless of whether a state was a republic or a dictatorship. The highest authority responsible for ensuring good governance is the leader, however, if the standard did not satisfy the people, they challenged these authorities to uphold a respectable standard of governance.

A general word used to describe how public institutions manage resources and conduct public affairs is “good governance”. The processes of decision-making and decision-implementation (or non-implementation) are referred to as governance. The decision-making and implementation procedures are what constitute good governance. Making the optimal decision-making process is more important than making the “correct” choice. The idea of “good governance” is centered on the duty of governments and governing bodies to serve the needs of the general population rather than those of a few special social strata.

Democracy is a form of government in which all citizens have an equal opportunity to participate and have a meaningful impact on the political process, as well as to ensure and guarantee certain rights and freedoms to the people who make up the policy. Freedom of speech and expression is one of the most significant of these essential liberties because it provides the people’s “participation” substance and meaning. It is a system of governance that is subject to popular sovereignty over these liberties.

A democratic system needs widespread public engagement to function properly, which is difficult without educating the general public about the many issues. Therefore, trustworthy information

sources play an essential role in a democratic society. The function and significance of the media become evident in this.

Media generally refers to mass media, but it includes any kind of communication that widely distributes information to the public about all current events in any given area. It is the objective reporting of facts via print, radio, television, or the Internet. Conventionally and legally, the media plays no specific role in governing. It lacks the authority to overturn any judgments given by the legislative, executive, or judicial branches of a state. However, one of the most significant roles in every society's operation is played by the media. It raises public awareness of their concerns and conveys them to lawmakers. This gave the media a significant role in the functioning of society. The present study is an attempt to find the perception of administrators about the implementation of government programmes and the role of media in its proper implementation and good governance in the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh.

2. Methodology

The present study is based upon primary data collected through well-prepared schedules, which consisted of both open-ended and close-ended questions, which were administered to the respondents selected through the sampling method. For the collection of first-hand data in the present study, multi-stage random-cum-purposive sampling was adopted. The procedure of selection of districts, blocks, gram panchayats and respondents have been discussed as under :

In the first stage, Chamba district was selected to represent Himachal Pradesh. The selection of district was made due to the reason that Chamba was part of old Himachal and it is difficult due to its terrain for the administration to implement the Government programme and also to media which provide information to the stakeholders and make critical analysis of its implementation. In the second stage, the Chamba block was selected, and in the third stage, panchayats were selected. Out of the total panchayats in the selected blocks, 25 percent of panchayats were selected from each selected block. There were 39-gram panchayats in Chamba block, out of these 39 panchayats, 10-gram panchayats (25 percent of the total gram panchayats were selected finally at the fourth stage 51 administrators were selected.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Administrators' Perception : Implementation of Government Programmes

Administrators play an important role in distributing benefits to the general public in welfare nations like India. The administration has undertaken numerous programmes and plans for the well-being of the people and the socioeconomic advancement of the nation. The administrator's attitude towards these programmes has a significant impact on their success. Here at this point, it is important to know the administrator's orientation about the administrative procedure while implementing the development programmes. The success of any programme depends on the effective implementation of the programme. Administrators must implement these programmes and public policy in a good manner. Their outlook towards this aspect is very important. To know their perception about this aspect, responses are categorized in following five Statements :

S-1 : Even if delays in the implementation of development programmes there must be strict adherence to the administrative procedures.

S-2 : Administrators are not well aware of the problems and difficulties in the implementation of programmes.

S-3 : Goals and objectives are not clearly defined.

S-4 : Politicians interfere in the implementation process.

S-5 : In implementing the general and important policies consultation with politicians is quite necessary.

Data collected from the selected administrators are presented in the table-1 on next page. This table depicts that 58.65 percent of administrators agreed that there must be strict adherence to administrative procedure even if it delays the important, 32.69 percent of administrators partly agreed with this, and 8.65 percent of administrators disagreed with it.

Even if delays in the implementation of development programmes there must be strict adherence to the administrative procedures. Administrators are not well aware of the problems and difficulties in the implementation of programmes. Goals and objectives are not clearly defined. Politicians interfere in the implementation process. In implementing the general and important policies consultation with politicians is quite necessary.

Table-1 : Administrators' Perception: Implementation of Programmes

Responses	Statements				
	S-1	S-2	S-3	S-4	S-5
Agree	28 (54.91)	10 (19.61)	5 (9.81)	25 (49.02)	10 (19.61)
Partly agree	18 (35.29)	17 (33.33)	28 (54.90)	23 (45.10)	17 (33.33)
Disagree	5 (9.80)	24 (47.06)	18 (35.29)	3 (5.88)	24 (47.06)
Total	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

Note : Figures in parentheses represent percentages.

Every public policy and programme has some goals and objectives to achieve. If these goals and objectives are not clearly defined then it would create problems in its implementation. In this regard administrator's opinion has been collected about the proposition "goals and objectives are not clearly defined". Regarding this 54.90 percent of administrators partly agreed, 35.29 percent were disagreeing and 9.81 percent were agreeing with the proposition. It can be inferred that the majority of administrators feel that the goals and objectives of development programmes have not been clearly defined which results in delays in implementation.

Another aspect that harms the smooth implementation of development programmes is political interference. The majority of administrators that is 49.02 percent showed their agreement with the statement that politicians interfere in the implementation process. Most of the administrators believed that political interference in the implementation harms the very spirit of the programmes and administrators find it difficult to implement the programme impartially and fairly.

As far as the consultation with the politicians, regarding the implementation of general and important policies, is concerned, 47.06 percent of administrators did not agree with the statement that "in implementing of the general and important policies the consultation with politicians is quite necessary".

3·2 Administrators' Perception : Role of Media in Proper Implementation of Government Programmes and Good Governance

Traditionally and constitutionally, the media has no defined role in governance. It doesn't have the power to change any decisions made by the various arms of a state—the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. Yet, the media plays one of the most important roles in the functioning of any society. It amplifies the voice of citizens and communicates their opinions to the lawmakers.

The media has surely changed and intensified its activity over time. In our century, the media has a significant impact on how people live their lives. People from several nations have received information and amusement from them. For a sizable amount of time, print media dominated the mass media. However, television is becoming a rival and it is changing many social attitudes. In addition to offering news and opinions, radio has also shown a talent for entertaining, which has helped it gain widespread appeal. The internet is the leader of the new media, which offers another option. The Internet has indeed made it possible to disseminate information and ideas in real time across the globe. The perception of the administrator of the Chamba district of Himachal Pradesh regarding the role of media in implementing government programmes and good governance was sought on following four statements :

S-1 : Media play a vital role in public and government.

S-2 : Media helps people in making a proper understanding of government programmes.

S-3 : Media play a vital role in good Governance.

S-4 : Can media help in the timely implementation of development programmes?

Responses of administrators regarding the role of media in implementing government programmes and good governance are presented in table-2 on next page.

Data contained in table-2 show that 62.74 percent of administrators agreed and 31.38 percent partly agreed that media play a vital role in the implementation of government programmes, whereas only 5.88 percent of administrators disagreed with the statement. In response to the next statement that media helps people in making a proper understanding of government programmes, 56.86 percent agreed and 35.29 percent partly agreed that media help the

general public to understand government programmes. The majority of the administrator (84.32 percent) agreed that media play a vital role in good governance. In response to the next statement, 41.17 percent of administrators agreed that media can play a role in the timely implementation of the development programmes, whereas 27.45 percent partly agreed to this statement, 31.38 percent of the administrator disagreed with the statement that media can help in the timely implementation of the development programmes.

Table-2 : Administrators' Perception: Role of Media

Responses	Statements			
	S-1	S-2	S-3	S-4
Agree	32 (62.74)	29 (56.86)	43 (84.32)	21 (41.17)
Partly agree	16 (31.38)	18 (35.29)	6 (11.76)	14 (27.45)
Disagree	3 (5.88)	4 (7.85)	2 (3.92)	16 (31.38)
Total	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)	51 (100.00)

4. Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be concluded that administrators gave the highest priority to following administrative procedures than implementing the programme with pace and without delay. It was found that administrators are not only unaware of the problems and difficulties but failed to do any kind of homework to find out what problems could be there and how we could solve those. Moreover, administrators' unawareness of the problems and difficulties may lead to either wrong implementation or it may lead to delay in implementation. Both situations are not good for the successful implementation of development programmes. To the majority of administrators goals and objectives of development programmes have not been clearly defined which results in delay and ineffective implementation. Political interference in the implementation of development plans and policy harms the very spirit of the programmes and administrators found it difficult to implement the programme impartially and fairly. In this regard,

administrators thought that the implementation of programmes is the sole area of administrators and politicians have no right to interfere in it and also need not be consulted. On the other side, the role of media in providing information and proper implementation of government programmes was appreciated and it was concluded that media is one of the major pillars which helps in implementing government programmes in true spirit and help in providing good governance. By reporting on topics honestly, the media ensures checks and balances, which can help to ensure that effective governance by the government is fair and successful. Engaging millions of listeners, readers, or viewers is one of the media's strongest functions. In this way, the media effectively fulfills its essential duty of ensuring that its citizens participate in the national decision-making process.

References

- Arora, Ramesh K., *Indian Administration Perceptions and Perspectives*, Jaipur : Aalekh Publishers, 1999.
- Bava, Noorjahan, "Changing Role of Bureaucracy in India", *Indian Journal of Public Administration*, XXXI(2), 1985, New Delhi : Indian Institute of Public Administration .
- Government of India, *State, and District Administration* (15th Report), New Delhi : Second Administrative Reforms Commission, 2009.
- Singh, S. P., *Perspectives in Indian Politics and Administration*, New Delhi : Uppal Publishing House, 1982.
- <http://hpchamba.gov.in/>
- <http://mindworkzz.in/role-of-media-in-good-governance.aspx>
- <http://www.lawctopus.com/academike/role-media-democracy-good-governance/>

★