

# Governance : A Triadic Framework for Collaborative Public Management

Dr. Rakesh Kumar<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

Modern governance extends beyond the conventional bounds of the state, progressively shaped by the interlocked forces of state institutions, market systems, and civil society bodies. This article critically examines the triadic model of governance, consisting of the State, Market, and Civil Society, to explain how each pillar uniquely engages in policy development, execution, and public service provision. Based on available theoretical frameworks and empirical data from both Indian and international contexts, the study examines in detail the inherent interdependence, complementarity, and likely tensions between such varied actors. The paper critically assesses the inherent shortcomings of every sector when functioning independently and highlights the transformational possibilities of comprehensive governance models in achieving sustainable development, democratic accountability, and equitable growth. It ends with deliverable policy recommendations aimed at maximizing synergy between these three critical players to produce better governance results.

**Keywords:** Governance, State, Market, Civil Society, Public Policy, Collaborative Governance, Public Management, Tri-sectoral Cooperation

## Introduction

Governance in the 21st century is characterized by rising complexity, ubiquitous pluralism, and deep interdependence. Conventional governance models, under which the state was imagined as the monopoly, omnipotent actor directly responsible for regulation, control, and provision of services, are clearly insufficient in tackling the multiple, fast-changing problems facing contemporary societies. As such, contemporary governance is increasingly reimagined as a dynamic and naturally iterative process, involving three cornerstones: the State, the Market, and Civil Society.

The triadic model of governance suggests that legitimate and effective governance originates from the constructive and interactive interaction of these three different but related entities. The state provides legitimacy, legislation, and means of critical public accountability. The market introduces innovation, efficiency, and important resource mobilization capabilities. At the same time, civil society promotes democratic involvement, voices equality, and develops social capital. This paper scrutinizes this complementary relationship, expressed as Governance = State + Market + Civil Society, to map its theoretical foundations, examine its reality, and delve into its policy relevance.

## Theoretical Framework

### Defining Governance

Governance, in its most general sense, is the complex processes, designated structures, and formal and informal institutions by which collective choices are made, power is exercised legitimately, and public matters are comprehensively administered. It is a notion precisely wider than government, involving a plurality of agents and various arenas, including a wide range of non-state actors (World Bank, 1997).

<sup>1</sup> Associate Professor, Faculty of Law, Teerthanker Mahaveer University, Moradabad, U.P.

## Components of the Triadic Model

**State:** The State is a society of men in number, permanently settled in a definite region of territory, independent or almost so, of external influence and having an organized government to which the mass of population owes habitual obedience.

**Market:** An arrangement where two or more individuals have an exchange of goods, services, and information. In an ideal world, a market is where two or more entities are engaged in selling and purchasing. The two entities that are engaged in a deal are referred to as the buyer and seller. The seller receives money in return for selling goods and services to the buyer. There must be more than one seller and buyer for the market to remain competitive. This includes economic actors, including corporations, private businesses, and individual entrepreneurs, that are mainly occupied with the generation of goods and services, the creation of employment, and the general contribution towards economic growth and wealth creation.

**Civil Society:** A plural space that includes Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), community associations, advocacy groups, social movements, philanthropic institutions, and alternative media. These institutions mostly act to voice citizens' interests, mobilize disparate interests, and check state and market institutions (Salamon, 2002).

## Governance Typologies

It is only through an understanding of different conceptual typologies that the workings of modern governance can be comprehended.

**Multilevel Governance (MLG):** This approach recognizes that governance mechanisms occur along a range of administrative levels, from sub-national (regional and local) to national and international, frequently including complicated interactions between these levels.

**Collaborative Governance:** Refers to public decision-making processes marked by cooperative efforts and shared responsibility between governmental organizations, the private sector, and civil society, especially in the case of mutually shared public issues (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

**Polycentric Governance:** The theory refers to systems of governance where a number of centers of decision-making power exist independently but are linked and function collaboratively to solve compound collective action problems (Ostrom, 1990).

## The Unique Functions of Every Sector in Governance

### The State: Legitimacy and Regulative Power

The state retains a central position within the realm of governance by its distinctive legal power to implement legislation, equitably redistribute wealth, and promote social justice. Its central functions are:

- Maintenance of national security and enforcement of the rule of law.
- Supply and upkeep of vital infrastructure and basic public services.
- Enforcement of social welfare policies and mechanisms of wealth redistribution within society.
- Laying down and enforcement of environmental protection laws and sensitization.

Yet, the effectiveness of the state is often greatly hampered by systemic elements like over-bureaucracy, inherent inefficiencies, and possible political meddling, thus requiring collaborative interaction with other sectors.

### The Market: Efficiency and Innovation

The market domain injects essential entrepreneurial energy, efficiency of resources, and technological innovation into the governance system mechanism. This is translated across numerous mechanisms, such as:

**Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs):** Cooperative arrangements between private sector entities and public institutions for provision of public services or infrastructure projects for work development.

**Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Self-initiated actions by companies to tackle social and environmental issues in their operations and stakeholder interactions for the benefit of society.

**Social Enterprises and Impact Investing:** Business models that integrate commercial approaches with a main purpose to accomplish social or environmental goals.

Whereas markets measurably improve the delivery of services and spur economic growth, their unfettered operation can create large inequities, exploitation, and adverse externalities, hence the need for stringent regulatory intervention.

### Civil Society: Participation and Accountability

Civil society acts as a watchdog conscience and an essential bridge for citizens' participation in the governance system. Its vital roles include:

- Organizing and empowering communities, especially marginalized and vulnerable ones.
- Promoting and reinforcing different modes of participatory democracy.

- Serving as an autonomous watchdog, holding accountable both public and private sector actors through monitoring their performance.
- Filling gaps in public service provision, particularly in key areas like health, education, and humanitarian emergency response.

All the same, civil society organizations typically face inherent vulnerabilities such as limited access to resources, the possibility of state repression or overly burdensome regulatory frameworks, and co-optation by donor interests.

**Interdependence and Cooperation Among Actors**

Good governance is essentially improved when the state, market, and civil society act in a complementary manner and in harmony with each other instead of being competitive. Examples of good collaborative models are:

**Social Accountability Programs:** Processes by which citizens engage in monitoring and assessing public services, sometimes with the use of tools like community scorecards and public expenditure tracking.

**Co-governance Frameworks:** Local governance approaches that involve deep citizen engagement, such as in the case of Kerala's People's Plan Campaign in India, which decentralizes the plan to local institutions.

**Public-Private Partnerships in Infrastructure Development:** Infrastructure projects at large scale, such as India's National Highways Development Project or mass transit systems of cities, that involve private sector funds and capabilities with public regulation.

**Comparative Strengths of the Triadic Actors**

Function	State	Market	Civil Society
<b>Legitimacy</b>	Legal authority, sovereign power	Economic incentives, innovation capacity	Moral and social capital, trust
<b>Efficiency</b>	Bureaucratic, typically deliberative	High innovation, agility, cost-efficiency	Resource-constrained, typically nimble
<b>Equity</b>	Mechanisms for redistribution	Profit-driven, potential for disparity	Advocates for marginalized, inclusion
<b>Accountability</b>	Electoral, judicial, legislative	Regulatory oversight, consumer pressure	Citizen engagement, activism, advocacy

**Global and Indian Experiences in Triadic Governance**

**Global Case Study: United Kingdom's "Big Society" Initiative (2010)**

The "Big Society" policy, introduced in the United Kingdom, aimed to drastically minimize state interference and enable civil society bodies and private actors to take more responsibility for public service provision. Although theoretically pioneering, in practice its execution was widely criticized, most prominently with respect to its alleged function of legitimizing austerity policies and cuts in fundamental

public expenditure. This example illustrates the challenges and risks involved with the rebalancing of governance duties.

**Indian Context: A Tri-Sectoral Collaboration Landscape**

India's complex governance ecosystem offers rich empirical experience of wide-ranging tri-sector collaboration:

**Swachh Bharat Mission:** This nationwide sanitation movement is a quintessential example of a collaborative effort with direct government action, large Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) support from the private sector, and wide-ranging citizen participation and social movements for behaviour change.

**Aadhaar and Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) Scheme:**

These programs are advanced technological collaborations with private stakeholders (e.g., IT companies), implemented on strong public platforms, which facilitate effective and transparent provision of welfare benefits.

**National Rural Health Mission (NRHM):** Although mainly state-supported, the NRHM is significantly supplemented by the very important participation of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and community health workers (e.g., ASHAs), who take healthcare services to inaccessible places and increase community involvement (Government of India, 2005).

**Challenges in Tripartite Governance**

Although the benefits are recognized, the implementation of tripartite governance models is full of a few inherent challenges:

**Fragmentation and Coordination Failures:** One of the key challenges is the possibility of goals being out of sync, varied operating methodologies, and lack of coordination between the three sectors, resulting in inefficiencies and inconsistencies in overall effectiveness.

**Accountability Gaps:** The dispersal of responsibilities among various actors could unknowingly create accountability gaps that make it challenging to identify clear ownership and responsibility for deliverables.

**Power Imbalances:** Natural power asymmetries can result in circumstances where powerful market forces can unduly impact or co-opt state machinery, or where the state and market together sideline civil society voices.

**Civil Society Constraints:** Civil society organizations themselves usually have considerable constraints, such as tenuous funding dependencies, repressive governmental regulations, and difficulty scaling their effective endeavors into wider geographies.

## Recommendations for Strengthening Triadic Governance

In order to maximize the effectiveness and fairness of the triadic governance model, the following policy suggestions are essential:

**Institutionalize Collaborative Platforms:** Formal, inclusive, and multi-stakeholder processes for ongoing dialogue, shared planning, and collaborative problem-solving among government, private sector, and civil society representatives at all administrative levels.

**Make Capacity Building Investments:** Make strategic investments in building the organizational, technical, and human resource capacities of local NGOs and community-based organizations, enabling them to engage more meaningfully.

**Provide Transparent Regulation for PPPs:** Establish strong and transparent regulatory structures for Public-Private Partnerships, with clear social, environmental, and ethical safeguards in place to avoid exploitation and ensure public interest prevails.

**Support Participatory Policymaking:** Regularly embed deliberative democracy instruments, including citizen assemblies, participatory budgeting, and online consultation platforms, into policymaking processes to guarantee sincere citizen participation.

**Foster Balanced Legal Frameworks:** Pass and implement legal systems that not only protect the autonomous functioning space of civil society but also make it accountable through proportionate transparency rules, without restricting reasonable advocacy.

## Conclusion

The interaction between the State, the market, and civil society is a rich and intricate one, with interdependence and cross-influence. Each plays a specific but complementary function in governance and contributes to the well-being and development of society. By recognizing and negotiating the challenges and opportunities of this trilateral relationship, we can strive for more effective and inclusive governance.

The abstraction of Governance = State + Market + Civil Society goes far beyond the simple mathematical formula; it is a deeper conceptual underpinning for understanding the complex processes by which public value is collectively co-produced in modern democracies. It becomes more and more clear that any single actor lacks the monolithic ability to unilaterally orchestrate the profound complexity of modern governance issues. Accordingly, efficient governance is clearly an emergent property of synergistic interaction, deep cooperation, and respectful interdependence between the state's legitimate power, the market's dynamic efficiency, and civil society's necessary moral guidance and activism. Through diligent cultivation and improvement of this triadic cooperation, societies can hope not only to produce better public service provision but also to develop genuinely inclusive, environmentally friendly, and well-anchored democratic development.

## References :

Agranoff, R., & McGuire, M. (2003). *Collaborative public management: New strategies for local governments*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press.

Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). *Collaborative governance in theory and practice*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(4), 543–571.

Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Stone, M. M. (2006). *The design and implementation of cross-sector collaborations: Propositions from the literature*. *Public Administration Review*, 66(s1), 44–55.

Commission on Global Governance. (1995). *Our global neighborhood*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T., & Balogh, S. (2012). *An integrative framework for collaborative governance*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 22(1), 1–29.

Government of India. (2005). *National Rural Health Mission: Framework for implementation*. Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

Huxham, C., & Vangen, S. (2005). *Managing to collaborate: The theory and practice of collaborative advantage*. London: Routledge.

Kooiman, J. (2003). *Governing as governance*. London: Sage Publications.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs. (2020). *Swachh Bharat Mission: Progress report*. Government of India.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). (2001). *Citizens as partners: Information, consultation and public participation in policymaking*. Paris: OECD Publishing.

Osborne, D., & Gaebler, T. (1992). *Reinventing government: How the entrepreneurial spirit is transforming the public sector*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Osborne, S. P. (Ed.). (2010). *The new public governance? Emerging perspectives on the theory and practice of public governance*. London: Routledge.

Ostrom, E. (1990). *Governing the commons: The evolution of institutions for collective action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Peters, B. G., & Pierre, J. (1998). *Governance without government? Rethinking public administration*. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 8(2), 223–243.

Pierre, J., & Peters, B. G. (2000). *Governance, politics and the state*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

Rhodes, R. A. W. (1997). *Understanding governance: Policy networks, governance, reflexivity and accountability*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Salamon, L. M. (Ed.). (2002). *The tools of government: A guide to the new governance*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

United Nations. (2007). *Participatory governance and the Millennium Development Goals*. New York: United Nations.

United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (1997). *Governance for sustainable human development*. New York: UNDP.

World Bank. (1992). *Governance and development*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.

World Bank. (1997). *The state in a changing world: World Development Report*. Washington, D.C.: The World Bank.