

**Public Organization and Management**  
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**Lecture – 17**  
**Accountability and Control – II**

Hello dear learners, let's continue. In the previous session, we have looked at the important definition or very basic understanding of the aspect of accountability. And we have talked about the three important ways to look at the aspect of accountability in terms of transparency, responsibility and responsiveness. And in the previous session, I have also started talking about the importance of accountability in connection with its effectiveness for democracy, efficiency and effectiveness of the organization and for steering the society. Now, I already talked about the impact of, importance of accountability in terms of effective democracy, in terms of ensuring government being transparent in their actions and of course, the open for public scrutiny. also essential for monitoring the executive and executive power and bureaucracy right also in terms of effective democracy if you look at uh you know this particular aspect of accountability it requires that the people who are working in the top level in the public sector organization they value responsibility and transparency So, let's say if there are no accountability mechanisms, there are no checks and balances, then there can be certain situation can go wrong and out of hand because there will be no control on the way they are going to function.

So, the importance of accountability ensures that the people who are working in the public sector organization, they remain responsible and transparent in their actions. Now, second is accountability importance in terms of ensuring efficiency and effectiveness of the organization. Now, accountability if you look at, it provides feedback for improving public service delivery. So, when somebody asks questions, it's not about only questioning, it's also about giving feedback to the policy design and how these policies are implemented.

So, accountability is not only about, we should not look at the accountability in terms of punishment. We should look at it in the aspect of bringing continuous improvement in the actions of the government or When I am saying action of the government, it is thinking about how public policy and implementations can be made more effective. And when this feedback is there from the society, the people at large, so it can go in a bigger way in terms of improvement. So, it provides feedback, accountability mechanisms for improving the public service delivery. Also, it helps to identify inefficiencies or if there are some kind of design flaws in the program.

So, until and unless you do it, you try to implement it and people started experiencing those public policies and the programs or receiving the benefits, will not be able to know about what is wrong. And then hence, when this particular feedback is there, there should also be aspects of bringing more and more improvement. And this has basically been taken care of very well in terms of, if you look at the actions of the government, our government, my government platform, I would say, is one of the way where the citizens can go and provide the feedback about the policy drafts and they can have their say and can also tell the government about their expression of what they feel and think about the government plan. Also, this is one way of telling the government how citizens can also contribute towards the development of the nation. So, it helps in identification of inefficiencies in systems or design flaws and so on.

Also, when we talk about accountability, it also ensures the cost effectiveness and the quality of the services being provided. So, the efficiency and effectiveness are two important considerations we need to look into. When I talk about the aspect of efficiency and public service delivery, at what cost the public policy programs, the government, organizations, they are letting these policies being taken benefited by the public. So, cost effectiveness is an important factor, I would say aspect in relation to the public service delivery. Because it also leads to the aspect of affordability and so on and so forth.

And of course, qualities of services. Efficiency versus effectiveness means, effectiveness means that how in terms of responsiveness government is taking care of and responding to the needs of the people by providing them public service. That's the aspect of effectiveness. But what is the cost associated with that particular program is more to do with the efficiency because it is directly related to the aspect of quality of the services, right? And also, when we talk about the accountability mechanisms, it also supports better financial decisions through tools like cost-benefit analysis. So, when we do have the accountability mechanism in such a way that takes care of the cost-benefit analysis as a process, it will further enhance the efficiency and effectiveness of the organizations.

And finally, in terms of importance for steering the society, this particular aspects facilitates learning from the success and failures of the government policies and the programs. So, because we need to see how these can be further improved when talking about the public policy programs or anything that is being done by the government for the benefit of the society. So, we need to look into how to further enhance the overall improvement in those programs. As I have just mentioned that the idea of accountability is not to hold accountable only people saying that they are wrongdoers or they have not done something good. It's also to do with bringing in more improvement.

And, you know, not to, of course, if there are certain kind of misconducts being done, of course, those have to be handled as per the rules and regulations set forth by the law. But if this is basically, you know, the chance of improvement in terms of making it a better, so there should be, you know, the aspect of feedback. learning from the various programs should be taken into consideration so that the focus can be on the further enhancing the improvement in the programs, right? So, this particular accountability mechanism is an ongoing process, right? It's never-ending process. Something has been done and there is a continuous feedback pushed into the system. right in the policy making process so that the further enhancement can be done and also accountability enhances the long-term you know policy planning and of course the effective governance so thing is when we talk about the accountability as we have just mentioned in the previous session also it is more to do with the aspect of governance governing the activities of the government and public organizations.

And there is a flexibility being given to the people outside because they are the one who have decided in terms of the public political authority who is going to act on their behalf, their representatives. So, it is very, very important that they are involved in the process of governance. So, it's not only about people asking questions, there are agencies outside, there are many people who are asking information from the government, being it media, interest groups, NGOs, people at large and various other government agencies. So, with this, we have just talked about very basic meaning of accountability and some of the ways to look at the accountability and of course, the importance of accountability. Now, let us look at accountability to whom? When we talk about accountability systems, who is accountable to whom? That's what we need to look into.

Now, when we talk about the democratic systems as ours, the public officials, public employees, they actually face multiple sources of accountability. Many people, they are asking about the actions, how they are doing, the activities, what kind of things they are doing. you know, in terms of budget use, resource use, you know, allocation, how they are optimally utilizing resources, what are the benefits, what are the success or the failure rates, so many things, right. So, it actually creates the complex relationships, right. Now, public managers and employees, they are accountable to different sources of legitimate authority and these broadly classified into intra-organizational and extra-organizational accountability.

Please refer to the sources mentioned here at number 1 and 2 to look into more details about it. First of all, let's look at the aspect of intra-organizational accountability for that matter. Now, when we talk about the intra-organizational accountability, this refers to the accountability within the organizational hierarchy because the word here is intra-organizational. So, it is basically the accountability within organizational hierarchy. I will discuss about it with an example also.

When we talk about intra-organizational accountability, we are talking about the within organizational hierarchy. Now, example is when the subordinates in one particular organization, they are accountable to their superior in the hierarchy. In simple hierarchy, if we look at, we'll say there are some people in the top of the organization and then there are people working down in the hierarchy. Lot of departments and the units are working. If you look at this, these boxes are basically units.

We'll say that these are basically departments and reporting to the top management. So, when we say that the people who are working down in the hierarchy, the lower levels, they are accountable to the people in the hierarchy because there are certain kind of rules and regulations that have to be followed. There is a chain of command and if you remember we have discussed about this when we talked about in the module 2, when we talked about the administrative school of management thought, this unity of direction, chain of command, hierarchy is to be, you know, followed. Why we are talking about this intra-organizational accountability? You see that, see, there are organizational purposes that have to be achieved.

There are goals that have to be achieved by the organization. So, in that way, what is happening is, if the alignment is not there in terms of actions from top to down and if something, if this accountability mechanism system is not there, ultimately what happens is the top official, you know, whatever missions we have for the organization, they will not be you know, in better alignment. So, intra-organizational accountability also is to put in place to ensure that subordinates are accountable for their action to their superiors because there should be some kind of alignment, right. Not only that, the superiors, you know, the top officials here, they are also accountable for their organization actions to the ministers, right. That's also the hierarchical system and also they are held accountable to the legislature, right.

So, this is basically the, you know, the aspect of intra-organizational accountability. Now, when we look at the aspect of extra-organizational, see intra was within. So, when we talk about the extra-organizational accountability, this involves the external accountability mechanism. So, there is an agency, which looks after the accountability mechanisms within the organization by follow the hierarchy and being accountable to the higher up officials in the hierarchy within. When we talk about extra-organizational accountability, it talks about the accountability outside the organizational boundary.

Now, let us look at what kind of the extra-organizational accountability could be there. There could be judicial accountability, The judiciary can actually held accountable public officials or agencies accountable. Public officials for that matter for example can be sued for their actions which are considered unlawful. So this is the external extra organizational accountability. So, this is the way to control the functioning of the

organization, right? Then, of course, there is something to do with citizens' accountability.

Citizens are holding, you know, organizations and officials accountable because the citizens, they ask for what? They ask for transparency through mechanism like I've talked about already, you know, right to information. We'll talk about in detail about when we talk about role of civil society, but example of this is, you know, in terms of citizens' accountability, RTI, citizens' charter and so forth. Okay, then comes the third one is about media accountability. Now, media accountability, media plays a key role, you know, in what whenever something goes wrong, they are the one to report or I will say expose or cover what has happened, right? And of course, then holding the public organization accountable. So, that's another mechanism which also put a tap on, you know, so that the public officials, they remain responsible and transparent in their actions, right? Then, comes the you know another way of look at is the people's movements.

Now, grassroots movements, we have talked about various cases in the context of India, where the group of people who have grassroots presence and then they have the influence, they actually influence the policy and of course, ensure the public organizations, they remain accountable. So, we will talk about this particular case when we talk about role of civil society in terms of understanding people's movement and as extra organizational accountability mechanisms. Now, Why we are talking about these mechanisms in terms of accountability as intra-organizational or extra-organizational? Because these mechanisms, they actually work together. To do what? To ensure that the public organization and government, they are more transparent, they are responsive and of course, just in their actions in terms of public interest and the welfare of the community. Now, with this we understand that what is the meaning of accountability in that way and what are the various ways to look at accountability in that particular sense, so that we now are very clear about why we are talking about the aspects of accountability and control in the public sector organization.

Now, with this particular basic understanding, now when we are set to now understand accountability in little more refined way from the literature and different ways of, you know, different types of accountability frameworks and we will look into various Indian examples also. So, let us continue. See, accountability, as I have just mentioned, is a widely used conceptualization by various researchers. Various researchers have tried to explain the various aspects of accountability with various conceptualization. Now, if you look at the reference number 2 here, mentioned at the source slide, Perez-Duran, 2023-25, years of accountability research in public administration, authorship, themes, methods, and future trends.

So this one will be you know your one you know paper which you can look at to look at the overall literature in the area of accountability and of course people especially people who are working are interested in the area of accountability as per their research area. So, this paper and of course, they are looking into the accountability as their research theme. This paper is a very comprehensive paper which is published in 2023 in the Journal of International Review of Administrative Sciences. I have given the source here, very comprehensive paper. So, this particular content is largely built from the various papers which I have written on the slide here, but I am trying to suggest you that if you want to understand little more about comprehensively about the accountability as a mechanism, please refer to this paper and of course, others are also important, but this is more of a comprehensive because it tries to trace the research in the last 25 years.

Now, let's look at accountability as how it has been defined in the Perez-Duran paper. It says that it's basically a social relationship between actors called as account givers. These are the terms being used in the paper and forums, account holders. These are account givers and account holders. Now, who are these actors who inform and justify their conduct? We are talking about in terms of government and public organizations.

We can say government, or public organizations. Somebody who are following some kind of activities, taking some kind of actions, taking decisions, public policy, program and they are to inform and justify their conduct. Now, who are these forums? According to this particular aspect, those who evaluate and sanction the conduct. People who are maybe within and outside.

We talk about intra and extra. So, forums could be the people who are evaluating and sanction the conduct of these actors. Now, two important dimensions to consider while examining accountability. It's a supply side accountability or demand side accountability. So, when we talk about supply side accountability, supply side means who is giving information in terms of informing and justify their conduct.

It's a supply side. Basically, it focuses or centered around traditional government model. one way of telling giving information right another way of looking at is the demand side of accountability which stresses upon the role of citizens and multiple forms all these are being very well defined in the paper here so demand side accountabilities the accountability is demanded demanded from whom in the people outside role of citizens and multiple forums becomes very important right now looking at this particular conceptualization or the way it has been understood, the paper talked about various types of accountability, the interactions between these two types leads to various types of accountability, being vertical, horizontal, hybrid and social. So, we will try to look at this in terms of the meaning and I will give you some kind of Indian examples to look into what is the meaning of vertical, horizontal, hybrid and social accountability. With this, I am not saying that these are the only accountability types which are there, there are many

others also, but we are covering in this module these many only and as you read more and more about it, you will get to know about more accountability types from the literature. Let us first of all look into the aspect of vertical accountability as been mentioned in the paper here.

It says that the extent, please note the definition here, the extent to which different governments, bodies and agents, they respond to accountability demands within their hierarchical structures. We already talked about, you know, when we talk about the intra-organizational accountability, we already talked about the aspect of, you know, accountable to the people higher up in the hierarchy, the vertical accountability, right. What is happening is in this particular case, the mechanism of hierarchical structures where lower level public officials or managers are accountable to the higher authority. Let's look at the examples of the vertical accountability from Panchayati Raj institutions where local governance bodies are accountable to the state government. because they are part of the that particular government only so their actions whatever activities they are doing in terms of their institution functioning they are held accountable by the state government right but how it is being done how it can be done this particular accountability can be exercised through audits you know whatever activities this institution is doing the the reports can be audited there can also be inspections and of course reporting of the mechanisms right For example, if you look at the CAG, Comptroller and Auditor General, they regularly audit the reports of various institutions to ensure the proper use of public funds and of course the policy implementation.

So, this is an example. This is only one example. There could be many more examples. For example, public sector organization if you look at. So, let's say people reporting to MD. So, departments are actually accountable for their actions to the reporting authority within their hierarchy. And then those people are also responsible to the government. So, vertical accountability is within the hierarchical structure where lower level employees are accountable for their actions to the higher levels in the organization. So, this is one example. There could be many other examples which you can think of in terms of understanding the vertical accountability in the public sector organization context.

Next come the aspect of horizontal accountability. Now, in terms of vertical accountability, we have seen that there is a difference between people at the lower level and people at the higher level. But when we talk about the aspect of horizontal accountability, horizontal accountability, you know, this particularly involves ensuring accountability through independent bodies. So, there is not a vertical hierarchical structure here. There are independent bodies outside, such as oversight agency or we can say civil society. So, these particular institutions or the bodies or the agencies or civil society, they involve in ensuring the accountability, asking for the information.

So, as it is mentioned in the paper, you know, if you look at, it says that instead of superiors and subordinates, when we talk about vertical accountability, that is the case of vertical accountability. So, in this case, instead of superiors and subordinates, this particular accountability, horizontal, what it includes? It includes the citizen's participation. the interest groups and of course the community which get affected as a part of the accountability relationship. So, these are the agencies, oversight agencies with the independent agencies which can hold the government and the public organization accountable for their actions.

Let's look at an example in Indian system. In India, the institutions ensuring, you know, accountability includes the ombudsman system such as Lokpal and Lokayuktas, right, auditor general, for example, CAG, we have talked about the comptroller and the auditor general, or of course, the anti-corruption bureaus such as Central Vigilance Commission. So, they are the, you know, the independent bodies. We could say that oversight agencies or also the courts can also be very important factors here where they can also ask the organizations about their actions. So, if you look at the example of CVC in this case, we will say that how it ensures the horizontal accountability, it ensures it through the checks and balances, you know, among various branches and the departments, basically focusing on, you know, prevention of corruption and, you know, to promote the transparency in the organizational functioning. So, it is crucial because these kind of the bodies when they are present, where there is no vertical hierarchy there, this also is another way of ensuring accountability from the public organizations as well as the government.

So, these are the independent bodies. Please make a note and distinction here that these are the independent bodies, there are no vertical structure involved, there is no hierarchy there. I am repeating time and again so that you get it right, difference between horizontal and vertical accountability. Horizontal accountability, independent agencies, which cannot be influenced by that kind of a vertical hierarchical structure. So, this is another way of looking at the accountability.

Third is hybrid accountability. Now, as the name indicates, hybrid accountability, we'll say that accountability that incorporates dynamics derived from multiple accountabilities from multi-level and multi-actors perspective. This is the definition. But how this particular accountability, you know, came into existence, came into being, that's also we need to understand. Now, if you look at the way the public policy programs and these policies are implemented, designed, lot of collaboration is happening between the different sectors. Public sector organization collaborating with the private sector organization, with the NGOs, government forming relationship with the private sector and the NGOs in terms of the public sector service delivery.

In the context like these, when the public organization, they collaborate, you know, as I've just mentioned, you know, with the NGOs to deliver services. Now, this particular



arrangement, when multiple people at the multi-actors, at the multi-level, they come into the picture, it creates challenges, you know, due to involvement of various stakeholders coming with a different perspective, right. different motivations for example public sector organizations they have different motivation private sectors they have different motivation so when they come together how they form that kind of collaboration to ensure the public sector delivery so there is always you know the different perspective involved right so now This particular accountability, hybrid accountability, it is very significant in the collaborative efforts which involve multiple agencies and networks, right, where responsibility of the government, private sector and NGOs, they intersect. Because they are involved, there's a partnership, they are in the collaborative effort where they are trying to ensure the public sector delivery. So, in that case, what happened is accountability is to be ensured by multi-actors, right? So, in this case, what happened is who is going to be held accountable for it? there is involvement of public sector, there is involvement of government, there is involvement of private and NGO who is going to be held accountable.

So, each one of them will have a responsibility, right. And you know it is not only that there are ways in which they are grouping you know come together, there are partnership agreements, there are rules and regulations which you know they will decide before entering into collaboration for example how performance is to be evaluated right what are the mechanisms how they are going to deal with the issues that it comes up so accountability is to be ensured by the various actors involved right so it requires the coordination and of course shared responsibility among various stakeholders for effective accountability so coordination is important in terms of hybrid accountability and we are talking about this in terms of Collaboration, when we talk about the module on NPM and collaborative governance, I will then also highlight there the aspect of hybrid governance. So, when multiple people are involved in ensuring the public sector service delivery, so accountability is ensured from the multiple actors there. right i hope this particular aspect is clear to everyone last in this is basically a social responsibility uh you know accountability social accountability as type of accountability as the name indicates social society citizens engagement it is about citizens engagement through non-government organization in holding public officials accountable right Now, we talk about civil society. We are talking about social accountability, civil society. Now, civil society derives social accountability including citizens, NGOs, advocacy groups and the other social actors.

Now, it is more of a, you know, if you look at the bottom-up approach. People, they have, you know, these groups. citizens and the people working at the grassroots level, they know what is happening in the lives of people at the ground level. This is basically a bottom-up approach where these non-government actors, as NGOs or advocacy groups, they engage in oversight of public officials and organizations to hold them accountable.

Basically, in terms of putting pressure in terms of you know passing on the perception of the society towards the government what people want from the government so this is one way of ensuring accountability from the government and public sector organization so these actors what they demand they demand transparency They demand responsiveness and of course, justification from the public institutions for their actions and decisions through civic engagement.

So, there can also be another way of looking at this type of accountability when people outside NGOs, the citizens or the advocacy groups, when they have the information with them about what is happening at the ground, they can again, you know, this can also be one way of providing information to the government in terms of what public want and the sense that accountability can also be ensured in that particular context, right. So, with this what happens is we are now, you know, done with the important definitions of accountability and we talked about types of accountability, importance of accountability. What I'm going to do in the next session is to talk about one important accountability framework in the public sector and we'll talk about various Indian case studies to understand that particularly accountability framework to build further on the accountability mechanisms. So, I will stop here in this session. I will see you in the next sessions with the Accountability in the Public Sector Framework by Romzek and Dubnick.