



Assessing Devolution To Good Governance Principles In The Implementation Of Societal Protection Policy Programmes In India

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Abstract

Social protection programmes play an important role in reducing poverty and promoting inclusive development, but their effectiveness depends largely on governance systems guiding their formulation and implementation. This study examines adherence to good governance principles in the implementation of social protection policy programmes in India, focusing on financial management, data governance, stakeholder engagement, and institutional collaboration. The study adopts a qualitative descriptive case study design and uses secondary data from government reports, institutional publications, and policy documents. Qualitative content analysis was applied to analyze governance practices. The findings reveal governance challenges including weak financial oversight, limited information integration, inadequate stakeholder engagement, and poor coordination among implementing institutions. These gaps contribute to inefficiencies and limit programme effectiveness. The study concludes that strengthening accountability, data management systems, stakeholder participation, and institutional collaboration is essential for improving the performance and effectiveness of social protection programmes.

Keywords: inclusive development, good governance, fiscal management, Societal Protection and stakeholder

1) Introduction:

Social protection has increasingly become an important policy instrument for promoting inclusive growth and development, particularly in low-income and developing countries. Evidence shows that social protection programmes play a significant role in reducing poverty, improving human capital, and reducing inequality among vulnerable populations (Pouw et al., 2020). As a result, many governments have expanded investments in social welfare programmes such as cash transfers, social assistance initiatives, and public works programmes designed to support disadvantaged groups in society.

Despite the increasing commitment by governments to finance social protection initiatives, the effectiveness of these programmes often varies across countries. In some cases, programmes fail to achieve their intended outcomes due to challenges that go beyond technical policy design. Scholars have therefore raised concerns about governance-related factors that influence the implementation and effectiveness of social protection policies (Haliim, 2025).

Scholars have explored and documented several factors that hinder the success of social protection. These factors include programme design, implementation frameworks, institutional factors, economic factors, and governance structures (Haliim, 2025). When designing and implementing social assistance programmes, it's essential to be familiar with existing governance dynamics at both the local and national levels. This ensures that programmes gain political and social acceptance, further promoting inclusivity and ensuring value for money (Lind, 2022). This paper will therefore focus on the role of good governance in ensuring the success of the social protection policy programme in the context of India's social protection programme. The success of the policy in achieving the expected outcome is highly dependent on the existing governance framework.

According to Umar et al (2025), governance involves the interaction of state institutions, private actors, and civil society in policy formulation and implementation. Key characteristics of good governance include transparency, accountability, participation, responsiveness, effectiveness, fairness, and adherence to the rule of law (Herasymiuk et al., 2020). Strong governance systems can enhance economic growth, improve human capital outcomes, and promote sustainable development (Adebayo et al., 2025).

Good governance creates an enabling environment that supports policy implementation and further empowers stakeholders to have an avenue for sharing their concerns in government programmes. This builds a participatory approach in policy formulation and implementation between the government and citizens (Aloui, Hamdaoui, & Maktouf, 2024) found that, due to good governance, foreign direct investment reduced poverty in Asia, Latin America, Europe, and sub-Saharan Africa during the 1996 to 2017 period. Safeguarding the principle of good governance in social assistance programmes, therefore, deters misuse of funds and politicization (Umar et al, 2025).

Social protection programmes are particularly vulnerable to governance challenges such as political interference, patronage networks, and corruption. Political actors may influence beneficiary selection or programme distribution, thereby compromising fairness and effectiveness (Muhammad, 2021). Weak governance systems can therefore undermine the equity and efficiency of social protection interventions. Countries with low governance scores had poor access to and coverage of COVID-19 vaccines, whereas those with high governance scores had better vaccine access and distribution (Bhuiyan, 2022). This indicates a deficiency in good governance that undermines efforts to promote equity and social inclusion by ensuring equal access to services and resources for all citizens.

In India, the 'Social Protection Policy' aimed to strengthen the country's social protection system by improving income security, social assistance, and social health protection. To achieve these objectives, good governance was identified as a key guiding principle where by policy emphasizes inclusivity, accountability, and transparency in its programs for instance in programme formulation and implementation, stakeholders are involved and in beneficiary selection a clear and fair targeting criteria is strictly adhered while in fund distribution and management State Department for Social Protection is mandated to ensure there is accountability and prudent use of public resources (Government of India, 2012; Handa et al., 2014). Institutional coordination is evident in the provision of social protection services to citizens, where the government has tasked specific ministries and departments with the responsibility for the distribution of specific programmes.

These studies therefore demonstrate that governance structures play a critical role in determining the success or failure of social protection programmes as effective governance ensures accountability in the management of public resources, transparency in beneficiary targeting, and coordination among institutions responsible for programme delivery. This study, therefore, examines the extent to which good governance principles are adhered to in the implementation of social protection programmes in India.

Despite the important role of good governance in ensuring the success of social protection programmes, limited studies have critically examined the full adherence to good governance principles in the formulation and implementation of these programmes. Most current studies have focused on not more than one element of good governance yet good governance is built on several principles; therefore, to effectively observe and justify good governance adherence this study believes governance principles must be adopted in totality. This study will therefore fill this gap by critically examining adherence to more than one governance principle during the formulation and implementation of social protection programmes in India.

2) Theoretical Framework:

This study is grounded in the theory of good governance, which emphasizes transparency, accountability, participation, effectiveness, and the rule of law in public administration. The concept of good governance gained prominence in international development discourse following the World

Bank's governance reforms in the late twentieth century. (Eke, Ugwuibe, & Nnamdi, 2020). Good governance refers to the manner in which public institutions manage public resources and implement public policies in a transparent, accountable, and inclusive manner. In the context of social protection programmes, governance principles help ensure that public resources are used efficiently and that benefits reach intended beneficiaries.

The theory of good governance suggests that public institutions perform effectively when decision making processes are transparent, institutions are accountable for resource utilization, citizens are involved in governance processes, and administrative systems are efficient. (Eke, Ugwuibe, & Nnamdi, 2020). When these principles are weak, public programmes often suffer from corruption, inefficiency, and poor service delivery. However, strong good governance enables social protection programmes to reduce poverty, enhance coordination, accountability, and stakeholders' engagement, reduce resource misuse, increase accuracy in beneficiary identification, and uphold public trust. (Ali et al. 2026).

The theory of good governance is essentially important in understanding how social protection programmes inculcate the principle of good governance during programme formulation and implementation. This study will therefore focus on digital governance, resource management, stakeholders' engagement, and institutional collaboration as essential good governance dimensions during programme formulation and implementation. Effective Financial management plays a critical role in ensuring that resources are utilized as per the approved budgets. Through accurate financial reporting, institutions can account for all allocated funds. Through adherence to financial regulation, beneficiaries receive their allocation without delays thus enhancing the accountability process.

information governance plays an essential role in ensuring the success of social protection programmes. By enabling the sharing of data among organizations, data governance fosters accountability and collaboration among agencies. Availability of reliable data supports quick and accurate decision-making, reduces duplication, and improves compliance and streamlining workflows (Adepoju et al. 2023). Availability of reliable data plays an essential role in supporting the monitoring and evaluation process, which is an important element in promoting good governance within public entities. Public entities involved in the formulation and implementation of social protection programmes encourage the involvement of key stakeholders. Studies show that transparency and accountability can be significantly enhanced through public engagement (Rhamadhani & Edeh, 2024). Stakeholder participation promotes efficient resource utilization, enhances trust, and legitimizes government operations (Lowing & Nehru, 2024).

Institutional collaboration plays a critical role in promoting good governance among stakeholders. By creating strong linkages among organizations, enhancing collective responsibility between clients, service providers, and project sponsors, it helps in strengthening and promoting programme legitimacy. The linkages further facilitate exchange of knowledge, support continuity in programmes

and help form joint client consultancy across programmes, therefore through fostering linkages and facilitating information, institutional collaboration promote good governance by strengthening accountability and transparency during the programme implementation process (Aaltonen & Turkulainen, 2022).

This study, therefore, recognized resource management, digital governance, stakeholders' engagement, and institutional collaboration as important governance principles that mediate the success of social protection programmes during formulation and implementation. This study, therefore, examines adherence to good governance in the formulation and implementation of social protection programmes in India.

3) Review of Literature:

Existing literature highlights the central role of governance in determining the success of social protection programmes. Studies across developing countries show that weak governance systems often lead to inefficiencies, poor coordination among institutions, and limited programme effectiveness. Research conducted in Botswana found that poor coordination among government institutions and limited capacity among social workers was major challenges affecting the implementation of social protection programmes. The study recommended strengthening transparency and institutional capacity to improve programme outcomes (Gunhidzirai & Rankopo, 2025).

Kazi-Aoul et al. (2023) underscore the importance of good governance and administration for the implementation of social protection. The authors emphasized the need for continuous collaboration and dialogue among policymakers and stakeholders to achieve efficiency, sustainability, and equitable social protection programmes (Kazi-Aoul et al., 2023). A study examining factors determining the health sector's involvement in cash transfers in low- and middle-income countries found that leadership within the health sector, inter-sectoral collaboration, and political interference shaped the health sector's involvement in cash transfers (Owusu-Addo, Renzaho & Smith, 2020). Development assistance to poor countries has exceeded 100 billion US\$ in recent years and has faced challenges such as allocation constraints, evaluation constraints, lack of coordination among agencies, and transparency, accountability, and political interference. Therefore, to achieve programme sustainability, coordination among stakeholders, the involvement of relevant private agencies, and awareness creation among the target audience will guarantee sustainable development (Kaur & Sitlhou, 2017).

Shadare (2022) examined the social challenges concerning social development in Nigeria. The author pointed out the lack of a clear governance structure and fragmentation in social protection initiatives as long-standing problems. Poor coordination among government agencies and limited political support hinder the growth of social protection policies (Shadare, 2022). To enhance social protection services, the study recommends appointing a dedicated minister responsible for these programs. Strengthening local governance structures and investing in capacity building are crucial. Further equip staff with the

knowledge and skills needed for effective program design and implementation, and assist in observing good governance. Finally, active stakeholder participation along with a robust monitoring and evaluation framework should be established (Shadare, 2022).

Cash transfers in south-central Somalia enhanced the trust and legitimacy of local government and clan elders by increasing transparency in program distribution and identifying relevant recipients (Van den et al., 2023). Evidence from Ghana demonstrates how collaborative governance structures improved the implementation of social protection programmes. The Livelihood Empowerment against Poverty (LEAP) programme utilized both vertical and horizontal collaboration between government institutions and international partners, which improved programme efficiency and beneficiary inclusion (Foli, Ohemeng & Kpessa-Whyte, 2025). It is therefore pivotal to include all stakeholders in the design and implementation of cash transfer programmes to ensure that they achieve their key objective of reducing poverty and vulnerability.

Kuntjorowati et al. (2025) observed that excellent multispectral cooperation enables social protection and social security programmes to effectively alleviate poverty among rural communities in West Java, Indonesia. The study recommended the inclusion of all unregistered needy people, thereby promoting good governance by ensuring programme efficiency, effectiveness, equity, and equality. Hazy organizational arrangements derailed implementation of Ghana's food security intervention policies by limiting cooperation, transparency, and accountability. The study recommended governance principles such as transparency, participation, accountability, and consensus-building, especially among government institutions, agencies, youths, and other stakeholders, across departments in policy design, implementation, and evaluation, thus promoting an all-inclusive approach to food policy in the country (Boadu, 2024).

Accountability in social protection ensures the alignment of regulations and institutions, enhances program monitoring and evaluation, and improves human resources and governance (Sri & Faria, 2023). Furthermore, it enhances organizational performance by ensuring that agencies provide services that are of interest to the community (Putra, Anita, & Helmy, 2023). Accountability was observed in Indonesia during the distribution of social assistance funds; however, the authors cited a lack of data match due to late updates. Therefore, there is a need to enhance data integration and improve coordination among stakeholders to ensure that the correct target and well-accounted assistance are recommended (Azzahra, Musyaffi, & Khairunnisa, 2025).

Social protection in Uganda faces challenges, including budgetary constraints, poor coordination of interventions, and limited institutional capacity to deliver social protection. Excess policies and regulations that lack coherence have caused confusion among government agencies. The failure of social protection in the country is partly due to certain actors occupying dual roles in promoting it. The report recommends increasing budget allocations, enhancing coordination, and boosting collaboration

among institutions and stakeholders during policy development (Guloba, Ssewanyana & Birabwa, 2017).

Lubinga et al (2025) studied barriers to informal social protection intervention among village savings and loan associations in Uganda. The authors found that the knowledge gap on the objectives of social protection was high (Lubinga et al, 2025). Financial constraints were another challenge facing associations, which resulted in delays in processing and repayments. Lastly, the study identified structural challenges, including limited stakeholder engagement and difficulties in beneficiary identification that hindered the effectiveness of social protection interventions. To address these challenges, the authors recommended a radical awareness campaign to promote programme objectives and the provision of leadership training to strengthen stakeholders' relationships and coordination (Lubinga et al., 2025).

In Kenya, governance challenges affecting social protection programmes have also been documented. Institutional conflicts, political interests, and unclear role definitions among ministries have sometimes hindered the development and implementation of social protection policies (Ouma, 2020). During the registration of nationwide social pension beneficiaries in Marsabit, issues such as a lack of transparency, weak state infrastructure, and pressure from government officials were observed. The registration process for social protection programme beneficiaries is often influenced by political motives, with politicians pushing for registration just months before elections. This approach undermines the country's primary goal of providing effective social protection (Mohamed, Porisky, & Muthui, 2021).

3) Methodology:

This study adopts a qualitative descriptive case study design to examine governance practices in the implementation of social protection programmes in India. The research relies on secondary data obtained through a purpose-selected method. Therefore, the study analyzed government reports, policy documents, institutional publications, and media reports related to social protection programmes. Key data sources include Auditor General Reports, Public Service Commission reports evaluating compliance with public service governance principles, and national social protection sector reports. Therefore, documents analyzed include Auditor general report for the state Department for social protection (2019 – 2025), Auditor General report for National Health Insurance Funds (2019 - 2024), Public Service Commission reports evaluating compliance with public service governance principles, and national social protection sector reports (2019 – 2025), and national social protection sector reports for the period 2019 therefore this study analyzed reports.

The justification for the consideration of the above reports on evaluating governance adherence in social protection programmes is due to their thorough examination of public sector adherence to existing regulations embedded in good governance principles guiding the operation of government institutions. The Auditor General's report evaluates institutions on the efficiency of public resource

utilization and adherence to regulations guiding efficiency in service provision; therefore, they offer a detailed report on resource utilization, financial oversight, and detect financial irregularities among public institutions. The report also provides institutional internal efficiency in the provision of public goods. The Public Commission reports observed adherence to good governance principles such as public participation in policy formulation, transparency, accountability, and stakeholders' involvement in projects and programme implementation. The sector reports gives an overview of project performance and highlight challenges encountered during implementation. Therefore, analysis of the document through the lens of good governance provides a clear picture of good governance practices in the social protection programmes.

Qualitative content analysis was used to analyze the data. Information extracted from the selected documents was coded and organized into four governance dimensions: financial accountability, data management systems, stakeholder participation, and institutional coordination. This thematic analysis enabled the identification of governance gaps affecting programme efficiency and service delivery. To enhance the credibility of findings, data triangulation through cross-checking of information from selected documents was performed.

4) Analysis and Findings:

To assess adherence to good governance, the study will evaluate institutional involvement in resource and data management, stakeholder engagement, and institutional collaboration in social protection programmes. In resource Management, the study evaluated the extent of mismanagement of funds arising from weak financial control measures and administrators' misuse of funds. In evaluating stakeholder engagement, the study will seek evidence of public awareness and stakeholder involvement in program implementation. Institutional collaboration: the study will assess the extent of seamless collaboration among the various departments involved in the implementation of social protection programmes in the country. In data management, the study will evaluate efficiency in beneficiary identification and allocation processes. Accurate data support timely decision-making and resource allocation, and enhance transparency.

5) Fiscal Management:

The successful implementation of a social protection programme is exclusively dependent on effective management of financial resources. Effective financial management not only enhances institutional accountability but also ensures efficient resource utilization and instills citizen trust in public entities. Findings from this research highlight the existence of weak financial regulation frameworks within institutions implementing social protection programmes. This weakness has continued to affect the effectiveness of social protection programmes in addressing poverty and shocks, and to hinder effective responses to emergencies.

The reports revealed widespread mismanagement of funds, highlighting the ongoing dysfunction of internal control systems. A weak financial oversight framework, coupled with a weak audit system and limited enforcement of financial regulatory standards, has led to overpayments to beneficiaries in excess of the recommended amount. These practices indicate irregular monitoring across agencies, often due to poor management directives and insufficiently stringent supervisory controls, resulting in inadequate tracking of real-time expenditures and financial leakages. These findings align with the observation by Gegeza (2025), who noted that poor financial management in public institutions leads to irregular, unapproved, and wasteful expenditures, which contribute to reducing service delivery, public trust, and rural poverty.

Inaccuracy in bank reconciliation confirms serious institutional inabilities. Poor reconciliation of bank balances highlights staff incompetence, lack of capacity building, and laxity in enforcing financial regulatory mechanisms. Studies such as Mishi, Mbaleki & Mushonga (2022) confirm that deficiencies in knowledge, unskilled employees, and political involvement resulted in financial mismanagement. Poor reconciliations impede the timely detection of financial irregularities and further facilitate fraud, misallocation of funds, and resource diversion. This manifestation reflects institutional problems of weak monitoring, thereby facilitating officials' ability to operate with compromised accountability to citizens. As Pramitha & Susilowati (2025) noted, late bank reconciliation results in ineffectiveness in internal control, resulting in delays in financial reporting and inconsistency in the reporting framework. Internal control and financial information management systems can assist institutions in strengthening the integrity of financial reporting.

The study further found that despite the availability of funds, a continued delay in fund disbursement persists among beneficiaries. These delays the unpacking of structural failure embedded within institutions that implement and support social protection programmes. Delay in releasing funds endangers the ability of the vulnerable to respond to shocks, which in the long run erodes public confidence in government-sponsored programmes, reduces programme uptake, and thus leads to policy failure. This aligns with Muisegia, Barasa & Hanson (2022) observation that late disbursement of funds compromises service delivery, results in demonization among agencies, reduces the ability to honor commitments, and creates an avenue for corruption, thus reducing public trust. It also compromises the ability to plan spending among beneficiaries and agencies. And compromise the ability to meet the project's deadline.

These research findings confirm that financial mismanagement goes beyond technical problems and reflects systemic institutional challenges in design, accountability, and monitoring frameworks. Therefore, to overcome mismanagement challenges, institutions need to strengthen internal control, improve reconciliation systems, and improve inter-sectoral coordination.

6) Information Governance:

Data governance plays a pivotal role in ensuring efficient management of social protection programmes. Informed data support correct beneficiary identification, ensure efficient in resource distribution, support timely decision making, and further support institutional accountability. Data accuracy reduces duplication cases, reduces inclusion and exclusion errors and strengthens transparency among implementing organizations. In this study, systemic weaknesses in social protection data governance were underlined in various analyzed reports.

Multiple registrations of beneficiaries and multiple beneficiaries registered under a single identification number across social protection programmes, contrary to existing regulations revealed structural deficiencies in verification and cross-referencing frameworks within social protection programmes. Such revelations not only elaborate on the existence of administrative challenges among social protection institutions but also show fragmented data systems. These findings validate the observation by Ibrahim, Ibrahim & Satar (2021) who highlighted several factors hindering quality data in organization this factors include: staff competency, support from top management, trainings, knowledge on data quality and systems, internal controls, among others. This reinforces findings by Kidd, Athias & Mohamud (2021), who observed that the use of social registries with high beneficiary errors resulted in the exclusion of many vulnerable populations from benefiting from various programmes, causing significant harm. The government should continue to raise funds commensurate with the 'Housing for All' targets. The Union Budget 2018-19 announced the setting up of an Affordable Housing Fund in the National Housing Bank (NHB). It would achieve greater synergies among agencies that are implementing government housing schemes. It would also enable the NHB to mobilize larger funds for housing projects. The Budget for 2018-19 has already announced increased allocations for PMAY (Gramin) to INR 33,000 crore and to INR 25,000 crore for PMAY (Urban) through internal and extra budgetary resources.

The research revealed poor tracing of programme beneficiaries, which further indicates a lack of existing technology to support effective monitoring. Weak data integration impedes effective monitoring and evaluation; thus, detecting inconsistencies is problematic. These findings align with a study by Alberro Encinas & Geschwind (2025), which found that integrating data from different government agencies facilitates rapid data exchange and supports the verification process, thereby enhancing coordination and support from all actors and improving programme efficiency.

The research observed delays in beneficiary identification and claims processing, particularly for social health insurance. This illustrates the weak institutional and systems capacity to integrate data for efficient service delivery. Weak systems are prone to cyber-attacks and susceptible to manipulation; this creates an open window for opportunistic behavior, such as data manipulation, which might result in double claims and diversion of resources, as observed in the case of cash transfer programmes and social health insurance. This further affects the efficiency of social protection programmes, reduces

equity and credibility, and erodes public trust. These findings are consistent with Ogbeta, Omotosho, & Isatou (2025), who argued that outdated data, inadequate funding, and accessibility challenges hindered the institution's ability to manage the social protection program effectively. Therefore, the government of India must put in place strong mechanisms to support data governance through technological upgrades and institutional reforms.

7) Stakeholder's involvement and Awareness Gaps:

To ensure public accountability, inclusivity, and the legitimacy of social protection programmes, meaningful stakeholder involvement, coupled with widespread awareness-raising, is paramount. In participatory governance, emphasis is placed on inclusivity during policy design. This is because stakeholders' involvement in policy design instills accountability and helps build public ownership. The research findings demonstrated a gap in stakeholders' involvement and in the creation of awareness during the formulation and implementation of social protection programmes.

The study observed a lack of stakeholders' involvement during Policy formulation, for instance, in the case of social health insurance policy. This manifestation reveals micromanagement of the social protection programme by delivery institutions and the absence of a participatory governance framework. The findings demonstrate the challenges experienced by stakeholders in Indian states during the public policy process. These challenges include a lack of trust, selective engagement, and tokenistic involvement; therefore, to ensure their impactful contributions during the policy process, public institutions must empower them through top-down engagement efforts. These findings confirm observations made by Nungo, Filippon, & Russo (2024), who observed that during policy formulation of the social health insurance fund in Kenya, stakeholders experienced challenges such as limited engagement, their input not being considered, and limited time for participation. Therefore, there is a deficiency in stakeholders' involvement in public policy formulation and implementation. Public institutions must ensure meaningful involvement of key stakeholders for the successful establishment and quick adoption of social protection programmes in general. Bypassing stakeholders' involvement limits opportunities for feedback, programme improvement, and an opportunity to win public trust. Evidence has shown that failure to include relevant actors in policy formulation will result in public resistance and derail policy success.

The study identified a deficiency in awareness creation during the implementation of social protection programmes. For instance, the Inua Jamii cash transfer programme did not conduct awareness campaigns during the 2024/2025 period, despite recommendations to implement such campaigns nationwide. Furthermore, the Nyota program, designed to improve the lives of vulnerable youth, did not conduct awareness campaigns in more than 70% of counties. Lack of awareness during policy implementation reflects poor planning among implementing agencies, financial constraints, poor communication strategies, and a top-down approach to implementation. This deprives beneficiaries of important programme information, thereby limiting enrollment rates and reducing programme uptake.

Therefore, poor awareness contributes to programme illegitimacy, while information asymmetry undermines the accountability process by limiting the information available for cross-referencing. These findings therefore show that awareness and stakeholder gaps in social protection programmes are largely attributable to weak institutional structures. Therefore, to promote efficiency of social protection programmes, institutions must prioritize stakeholders' involvement and awareness through inclusive communication strategies.

8) **Intuitional Collaborations:**

In an environment where social protection programmes are implemented across various agencies, institutional collaboration becomes an important determinant of their success. The research has documented the existence of poor collaboration among institutions implementing social protection programme in India. Poor collaboration among institutions was observed in the Auditor General's report where incidences of delayed disbursement of funds at various level was noted for instance the national treasury failed to disburse full funds to finance social protection programme to the state department for social protection while the Social health authority failed to honoring hospital claims and finally financial service providers failed to disburse funds to beneficiaries despite receiving allocations from the State department. This fragile coordination reaffirms the existence of symbolic collaboration among key actors, which undermines the success of social protection programmes due to unclear governance structures, poor coordination, lack of commitment, and institutional competency as observed by Onyango (2025). Studies by El-Jardali, Fadlallah & Daher (2024) showed that weak coordination among agencies is largely due to a lack of clear mandate, resource allocation, regular reporting, and a coordinated communication strategy, which weakens the timely availability of resources and delays quick decision-making, thus compromising programme efficiency and hindering the monitoring and evaluation process.

The lack of a clear mandate between organizations executing social protection programmes has led to a fragmented approach in the implementation of the social protection policy, which is under the state department for social protection. The policy has several programmes; however, the implementation mandate of these programmes is scattered across several agencies that have varying missions, visions, and reporting frameworks. Therefore, this fragmented approach in policy implementation has hindered effective coordination among institutions. Additionally, implementing institutions lack a uniform integrated information management system that can support effective reporting; therefore, accountability and transparency become a challenge. This fragment approach in programme implementation results in duplication of programme roles and responsibilities, which weakens accountability, reduces transparency, reduces citizen trust, and results in inefficient use of resources.

The huddles in funds distribution for social protection programmes depicted the existence of a fragmented implementation framework. This observation is echoed by Listiana, Yumame & Pugu (2025) who noted that poor inter-agency coordination can result to conflict of interest, coinciding

duties which hinder effective integration and implementation of policies and programmes. This way, effective accountability and controls are frustrated by weak coordination among government institutions, and a further lack of positive collaboration creates room for corruption.

9) Conclusion:

The research highlights the challenges that arise when organizations fail to uphold good governance in the design and implementation of social protection programmes in India. Enhancing accountability, accurate data management, and stakeholder involvement is essential for the optimal utilization of public resources. The study demonstrates that good governance is critical to the success of social protection programmes, as it promotes prudent resource use through transparency, accountability, and effective data management. By ensuring active stakeholder participation, good governance also fosters inclusive decision-making, reducing resistance during programme rollouts.

The research further emphasizes the negative consequences of poor coordination among agencies involved in the design and implementation of social protection interventions. Lack of coordination undermines programme effectiveness and delays service delivery. Conversely, strengthening collaboration among institutions improves the timely provision of social protection services, enhances community resilience, and mitigates the impact of shocks and emergencies.

10) RECOMMENDATION

- From the research finding this study recommends several measures that need to be adhered to ensure good governance is adhered to in the design and implementation of social protection interventions in India.
- The study recommends strengthening financial oversight mechanisms to improve accountability in the management of social protection resources.
- Integrated digital databases should also be developed to enhance beneficiary identification and improve programme monitoring.
- In addition, government institutions should expand public awareness campaigns to improve accessibility and understanding of social protection programmes. Finally, stronger coordination frameworks among institutions responsible for programme implementation should be established in order to improve service delivery efficiency.

Data Availability Statement

The study relies on publicly available secondary data obtained from government reports, policy documents, and institutional publications related to social protection programmes in India.

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