

## **DEFINING GLOBAL GOVERNANCE AND EXPLORING ITS ORIGIN IN HISTORICAL CONTEXT**

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### **Abstract**

The modern sovereign nation-state was born in 1648 as a result of the Westphalian Treaty, after 8 million people died at the end of a thirty-year war. The very concept of nation-state is basically based on the idea of fixed territory and sovereignty. It implies that a State can exercise sovereign power or rule within its territorial boundaries. In such a situation, it is very common for States to have conflicts or disputes over border or any other narrow interests. Pacifists spoke of a system to avoid war and to promote good governance everywhere, where all States will be under the same territory and under the same global rule. This is where the concept of global governance came from. However, this idea has not remained unchanged since birth, it has evolved over time to its present form. It is irrefutable that in the current era of globalization, global governance is controlling the world today, against which the notion of sovereignty has been defeated. The following article discusses the nature of global governance as well as attempts to explore its origins in historical context.

**Keywords:** Global governance, Globalization, Nation-state, Sovereignty, Economic, World government

### **1. Introduction:**

The idea of global governance is a combination of two distinct and multifaceted concepts. It is the combination of these two concepts that gives rise to all the discussions regarding global governance. Although the notion of global governance is vast and far-reaching, it needs to be narrowed down for the sake of discussion. To define global governance as an integral idea, requires an analysis of the concepts of 'global' and 'governance'.

### **2. Defining global governance:**

The term 'global' can be interpreted in the context of politics in such a way that it refers to the need for cooperation and alliance of States before growing multinational problems like terrorism, environmental issues, epidemics, human rights issues, separatism etc. in the same way, the concept of globalization that emerged in the 20<sup>th</sup> century can be explained as interrelated with the notion of global governance. Globalization is in a nutshell, a global interplay in all areas ranging

from financial to political, social to cultural, developmental to human rights. The expansion of global economy has greatly increased the activism of states at the international and multinational levels. As a result, it became necessary to re-analyse the conventional concept of global order. Analysing the changes in the global structure and the interaction between the states, Lawrence Finkelstein said 'global' is the right word to expound politics in the current situation instead of 'intergovernmental', 'international', 'interstate' or 'transnational' used earlier. In this context, issues such as democracy, human rights, environmental protection were not only confined to the realm of state sovereignty but, also became a global issue for discussion and standardization.

The term 'governance' originates from the Greek word 'kubernan' which means 'to pilot' or 'to steer'. This term was first used by Charles Plummer in 'The governance of England' book. Governance refers to certain activities by which State, institutions etc. are governed. In other words, the process by which policies are determined and whether the policies are being implemented properly is inspected by appropriate body is called governance.

Political scientist Vasudha Chhotry and Gerry Stakes emphasized on the difference between government and governance. They said without relying on the government, governance operates as a system level concept, which stresses upon better performance in the larger context. According to the 'Commission on Global Governance' formed in 1992, headed by Ingvar Carlsson and Shridh Rampal, "governance, is the sum of the many ways that individuals and institutions, public and private manage their common affairs". Since the concept of 'governance without government' is prevalent in the world politics, there are various factors involved in governance. State actors as well as non-state actors can be seen here in the process of governance. Due to its horizontal structure, coordination is a key feature of governance. The process of coordination takes place between these heterogeneous factors. States, non-governmental organisations, business groups, pressure groups all fall into the process of governance. Not only coordination but sometimes conflict also becomes apparent in the whole process of governance between these different factors.

Combination of these two terms creates the concept of global governance. It is an extremely remarkable theoretical idea and also a necessary practical form. Global governance is a framework that determines how States will behave on various issues in the international arena. It never refers to a particular government or a particular world order, but the whole process is included in it. In the context of globalization, the absence of one or two superpowers and the inclusion of different factors characterize the whole idea of governance. Serbian political scientist Mihajlo Mesarovic and German economist Eduard Pastel emphasized the potential for global governance. They said global governance can create a model that will raise awareness among people all over the world so that each person can play his or her role as a part of the collective society of the world. James Rosenau explained how global governance can establish the rule of law among all people at all levels of the world. In accordance with him, global governance cannot be realized by formal organisations alone. Organizations like United Nations, International Monetary Fund are just practical manifestation of the theoretical framework of global governance. He further added it is not confined to any existing entity, but rather it is a process or method.

In the words of World Health Organization global governance is "the way in which global affairs are managed. As there is no global government, global governance typically involves a range of actors including States, as well as regional and international organization. However, a single

organization may normally be given the lead role on an issue, for example the World Trade Organization in world trade affairs, thus global governance is through to be an international process of consensus forming which generates guidelines and arguments that affect national governments and international corporations. Example of such consensus would include ‘WHO’ policies in on health issues (WHO, 2015)”. In short the purpose of global governance is to solve any problem that arises within international system.

The notion of global governance is changing and evolving over time. Although it may not have created a word government or a specific world order, but nevertheless it has managed to form a well organised rhythm and harmony between the various levels of governance in the world. International relations experts Thomas Weiss and Rorden Wilkinson showed how global governance has enhanced the capacity of states to play cohesive role by integrating them globally. Finkelstein said in a same tone that “global governance is achieving what governments do at home on a international scale.” That is to say he has placed global governance in the role of a nation state, but in a larger context. However, this does not prove that the death knell of the nation state has rung, but rather it has added a new dimension to the activities of the nation state in the age of globalization.

### 3. Characteristics of global governance :

- ***Fragmented*** : This idea of fragmentation came from international law. The concept of global governance narrates that the world is made up of a number of distinct fragments, which are bound together by cooperation. These fragments are meant to refer to States. The possibility of conflict can never be ruled out, no matter how cooperative these fragments may be. Growing number of treaties and tribunals are evidence of it.
- ***Complex*** : Many international relations scholars opined that the process of global governance is very complex. Since there is no specific authority here, it occurs spontaneously. At the collective level, similarities are found between global governance and public administration.
- ***Polycentricity*** : The term ‘polycentricity’ is derived from Elinor Ostrom's ‘Polycentric Systems for Coping with Collective Action and Global Environmental Change’. The subject of the book was managing the commons. Global organizations are coming together to achieve a common goal. Organizations will positively maintain a connection between themselves when normal conditions are met. Where the previously discussed concept of fragmentation speaks of a coherent and integrated system of governance, polycentricity advocates decentralization rather than monolithic systems.
- ***Intergovernmental*** : Global governance is bringing the governments of different countries into a mutual space, as a result of pluralism is seen in decision making. In most cases, however, the sovereignty of the state remains intact. Everyone's opinion matters when making decisions in the global level.
- ***Diversity of actors***: The range of global governance includes States, inter-state organization as well as organizations like NGO, TNO global civil society. As a result the boundaries between governmental and non-governmental spheres became increasingly blurred.

- **Multilevel process :** The process of global governance operates at different stages (municipal, provincial, national, regional and global) the absence of any one stage makes the whole process irrelevant.
- **Deformalized:** this process is more effective in policy-based informal structures than in informal and law-strict constitutional structures.

From this discussion the structure of global governance can be roughly guessed. The concept of fragmentation refers to a flat and unidirectional hierarchical structure. Polycentricity, on the other hand, indicates uneven, bumpy and scattered structure. Again complexity refers to the concept of a hierarchical model that does not always follow the same rule. It should be noted, however, that none of the structures described by this features are always functional, but rather that the combined form of all these things can be found in international sphere.

#### **4. Origin of Global Governance:**

Today's form of global governance that has engulfed the entire world in this age of globalisation has not been achieved overnight. Its roots can be traced back to ancient civilizations. The concept of global governance today can be distinguished from its differences with world government. The idea of this distinction came very recently, previously the concept of global governance was viewed as inseparable from the concept of world government. This idea of world government has emerged from the thoughts of pacifists. They thought that end of war would bring together sovereign nations to form this world government.

Stoic philosophers Zeno and Cynic philosopher Diogenes of the ancient Greek city state Polis, propagated this idea. The famous statement of Diogenes "I am the citizen of the world" is particularly noteworthy in this regard.

In 14<sup>th</sup> century eminent philosopher Dante Alighieri, in his revered book 'The Monarchia' stated that the establishment of world government was necessary for world peace. Quoting him "World government must be understood in the sense that it governs mankind on the basis of what all have in common and that by a common law it leads all toward peace."

French litterateur Emerie Cruce said in his renowned work 'Le Nouveau Cynee' (1623) that a council would be formed with representatives from all countries of the world. All States shall abide by terms of this council and the role of the council shall be to resolve disputes between States. This council will have its own police force and will be used as needed.

German idealist Immanuel Kant did not support the idea of world government for two reasons –(a) unrealistic and (b) risky. But in his book 'Zum Ewigen Frieden' (1765) that a cooperative should be formed with independent States on the basis of common law. He added that the creation of an environment of uninterrupted peace requires a well-organized world order in which every State abide by international law and do not interfere in the internal affairs of others.

In his "An Essay towards the Present and Future of Europe" (1693) William Penn spoke of building a cooperative in Europe with European countries to maintain peace. The

cooperative will have a uniform legislature and it will govern on the basis of some common law, at the same time state sovereignty will also be respected.

French philosopher Charles Castal de Saint Pierre, in his famous article 'Plan for Perpetual Peace in Europe' spoke of a European supra national organization. Jacques Rousseau later followed in the footsteps of his predecessor Saint Pierre in his famous article 'A project of Perpetual Peace (1761). This article deals with the dissatisfaction, conflict, rebellion, deprivation and unrest in Europe at that time. He added that these problems are hindering the people in their path to stability. To get rid of this anarchy he spoke of establishing a 'Governmental Confederative', where interdependence would develop between the states. No one in this organization can deny another. Rousseau's view is also relevant in current world politics.

## **5. Modern Forms of Global Governance :**

The first attempt to set up global governance in an institutional form in modern times was the establishment of the League of Nations, by US President Woodrow Wilson (1920). This was the first real intergovernmental organization of that time, although the idea of such an organization has been found in the theories of various philosophers. Formed after the end of the First World War, the first and foremost goal of this organization was to establish world peace. Crucial steps were also taken here to improve the status of workers around the world, to treat the citizens of the colonized underdeveloped States, prevention of arms Trade, drug and human trafficking, promoting the release of prisoners of war, global health, just treatment of minorities in Europe etc.

After the collapse of League of Nations, the United Nations was inaugurated at the 'San Francisco conference' held in United States in 1945 with 50 States. Like its predecessors the League of Nations, it was also intergovernmental organization. Due to its direct experience of the horrors of World War II, the main objective of this organization was to stop this world peace and national security. Along with it, important programs such as protection of human rights, distribution of humanitarian aid, promotion of sustainable development and protection of international law were adopted.

While global governance is felt in every aspect of life, it is needless to say that it has the greatest impact on the economic sphere. To bring the world economic structure under one umbrella, 44 countries met in August 1944 at the Bretton Woods conference. This led to the creation of the International Monetary Fund, which came into effect in March 1947. The main goal of this organization was to remove restrictions on foreign exchange and to encourage international cooperation in the field of monetary system.

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), popularly known as the World Bank, was launched in June 1946. It was established as a regulatory organ of the international economy. The main responsibility of the World Bank was to provide loans for countries in need of reconstruction and development.

'The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade' (GATT), was introduced in 1948 and its name changed to World Trade Organisation (WTO) in 1995. It was basically an agreement aimed at establishing a multilateral policy on financial matters between member States that would promote non-discriminatory, reciprocal mutual respect.

Outside of the economic sphere, United Nations has taken steps to establish good governance in various areas of global affairs. World Health Organization (WHO) is one

such organization which was founded on April 7, 1948. Its main function is to promote the development of human health issues around the world. Today, who has 6 semi-autonomous regional offices and 150 field offices worldwide, this makes it easy to get an idea of the expansion and vastness of this organization.

Other organisations of United Nations, such as World Food Programme (WFP) is providing food security, United Nations educational, scientific and cultural organisation (UNESCO) is playing an instrumental role in promoting education, scientific activity, culture, human rights, justice, rule of law, United Nations Children's fund (UNICEF) is playing an admirable role in providing child protection all over the world. The role these multinational non state actors are playing in promoting global governance is undeniable.

## **6. Conclusion :**

Considering the concept of global governance both theoretically and practically, it is evident that theoretically it originated long ago in ancient Greece, in city States. But in practical terms, the establishment of the League of Nations is the first step in this regard. Subsequently, the practicality of global governance has been enhanced by the extensive activities of the United Nations. Efforts have been made to prevent war and wartime situation, passed convention against genocide, initiatives taken for the protection of global commons (high oceans, atmosphere, outer space and Antarctic) in environmental matters. These are undoubtedly commendable initiatives for the establishment of global governance. Regional organizations like European Union, SAARC ASEAN, G20, African Union, BRICS have also played a pivotal role in promoting global governance in their respective regions.

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