

Reimagining Public Administration: The Urgent Need for a Government Efficiency Department in India

Dr. V. Govindu¹, Dr. G. Sunil Kumar²

^{1,2}Assistant Professors, Department of Political Science & Public Administration, Vikrama Simhapuri University, Nellore.

ABSTRACT

India's public administration system, despite significant advancements in policy and digital governance, continues to face chronic challenges such as corruption, bureaucratic inefficiency, and lack of accountability. This article argues for the establishment of a dedicated Department of Government Efficiency to systematically monitor, evaluate, and enhance the performance of government bodies. Such a department would focus on eliminating corruption, reducing red tape, streamlining service delivery, and improving transparency through data-driven governance and performance-based evaluation. Drawing on international best practices and models such as the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Singapore's Public Service Division, the article outlines a roadmap for integrating this proposed department within India's existing administrative framework. The initiative is presented as a transformative step toward building a more efficient, accountable, and citizen-centric governance system.

Keywords: Government Efficiency, Public Administration Reform, Corruption Elimination, E-Governance, Transparency and Accountability, Bureaucratic Reform, Performance Evaluation, Digital Governance, Administrative Efficiency and Good Governance in India.

1. INTRODUCTION

India ranks 93rd out of 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index 2024, reflecting deep-rooted challenges in public administration. Despite large-scale reforms and digitization efforts, issues like bureaucratic inefficiency, red tape, and misuse of public funds continue to hinder good governance. For instance, a 2023 Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) report revealed irregularities worth over ₹1.6 lakh crore across various government schemes. These inefficiencies not only affect service delivery but also erode public trust in institutions. To address these systemic flaws, there is an urgent need to establish a Department of Government Efficiency a centralized body responsible for monitoring performance, eliminating procedural bottlenecks, and enforcing accountability across departments. Drawing lessons from international best practices such as the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Singapore's Public Service Division, India can create a robust, transparent, and citizen-centric administrative system. This article explores the structure, role, and significance of such a reform-oriented department.

2. STUDY BACKGROUND:

India's administrative system is one of the largest and most complex in the world, employing over 3.2 crore government employees across central and state levels. Despite this vast structure, inefficiency, delays, and corruption persist in the public service delivery system. According to a 2024 Lokniti-CSDS survey, nearly 62% of Indian citizens believe that corruption is a major barrier to accessing public services such as health, education, and welfare schemes. Similarly, the World Bank's Worldwide Governance Indicators (2023) ranked India below the global average in "Government Effectiveness" and "Control of Corruption." Repeated efforts have been made through initiatives such as e-Governance, Mission Karmayogi, and the Administrative Reforms Commission recommendations. However, these reforms have largely remained fragmented, lacking a dedicated institutional mechanism to ensure performance accountability and inter-departmental coordination. Moreover, reports by the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) and Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) often highlight recurring financial irregularities and procedural lapses that go unaddressed.

In contrast, countries like the United States, Singapore, and the United Kingdom have established efficiency-focused bodies such as the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Efficiency and Reform Group (ERG) to oversee government productivity, audit program outcomes, and recommend structural reforms. These agencies have been instrumental in minimizing wasteful spending and improving public trust. This background underscores the urgent need for India to create a Department of Government Efficiency a centralized body with the mandate to audit, monitor, and improve governance practices at all levels. Such a department would provide real-time performance evaluation, ensure transparency in fund allocation, and foster a culture of data-driven decision-making. It would bridge the gap between reform policies and on-ground implementation, creating a more accountable and citizen-responsive government structure.

3. NEED FOR THE STUDY

Despite ongoing administrative reforms, India continues to face serious challenges in governance, particularly concerning corruption, inefficient service delivery, and wastage of public funds. While bodies like the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) offer oversight, their recommendations often lack real-time enforcement and structural follow-up. There is no single agency dedicated to ensuring operational efficiency across government departments. With India aiming to become a \$5 trillion economy, inefficient governance could hinder progress and undermine public welfare. The study becomes essential to explore how a Department of Government Efficiency, modeled on successful international frameworks, can act as a solution. It highlights the need for institutional accountability, performance monitoring, and transparent governance mechanisms. This study aims to identify the structural gaps in current systems and propose a viable model that can streamline administration, reduce corruption, and restore citizens' faith in public institutions.

4. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- 1. Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2005–2009):** The Commission's reports emphasized the need for performance-based governance, transparency, and simplification of administrative procedures. It recommended the institutionalization of Outcome Budgeting and Results-Based Management for improving efficiency. However, the lack of a centralized monitoring body was identified as a key gap in implementation.

2. **World Bank (2023):** The World Bank ranked India below the global average in "Government Effectiveness" and "Control of Corruption." The report stressed the importance of strengthening institutional frameworks and increasing administrative accountability through digital tools and performance evaluation systems.
3. **Transparency International India (2021):** This study found that one in four Indians had to pay a bribe to access basic services, such as police assistance or municipal approvals. It highlighted that a lack of internal monitoring and citizen grievance mechanisms fueled low accountability in public offices.
4. **Paul, Samuel (2002):** Paul advocates for citizen-led accountability mechanisms and greater public access to service delivery data. He argues that without an independent body to oversee efficiency, reforms are likely to remain on paper and not translate into better outcomes.
5. **United Nations Development Programme (UNDP, 2020):** This report compared administrative practices across South Asian nations and recommended the creation of specialized units for government performance management. It cited global best practices such as the Singapore Public Service Division and the U.S. OMB as models for improving governance quality.

5. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the structural and functional gaps in India's existing public administration system that contributes to inefficiency, corruption, and delayed service delivery.
2. To analyze successful international models such as the U.S. Office of Management and Budget and Singapore's Public Service Division, and assess their relevance and applicability in the Indian context.
3. To propose a framework for establishing a Department of Government Efficiency in India, with defined roles, functions, and mechanisms for improving transparency, performance evaluation, and accountability across government departments.

6. HYPOTHESIS:

The study is based on the hypothesis that the absence of a centralized institutional mechanism to monitor and improve administrative efficiency is a major factor contributing to persistent corruption and poor service delivery in India. It assumes that establishing a Department of Government Efficiency, with powers to audit, evaluate, and streamline government processes, can lead to significant improvements in transparency, accountability, and public trust. The hypothesis further suggests that such a department, inspired by global best practices, would not only reduce bureaucratic delays and misuse of public funds but also promote a performance-driven culture within the Indian administrative system. By introducing data-driven decision-making, real-time monitoring, and citizen feedback integration, the department could become a critical driver of governance reform. Therefore, the study tests whether the creation of such a department can effectively address the structural inefficiencies that have long hindered India's progress toward good governance.

7. METHODOLOGY:

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology supported by descriptive and comparative analysis. Primary data sources include government reports such as those from the Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG), Central Vigilance Commission (CVC), NITI Aayog, and reports from international

organizations like the World Bank, Transparency International, and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). These documents provide insight into the current state of public administration, instances of inefficiency, and levels of corruption in India. Secondary data is collected through a detailed literature review of academic journals, policy briefs, and case studies of international models such as the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and Singapore's Public Service Division. A comparative case analysis is used to assess how these models have improved governance outcomes and what lessons India can learn from them.

Additionally, the study uses SWOT analysis to evaluate the feasibility, potential benefits, and challenges of establishing a Department of Government Efficiency in India. The findings are interpreted thematically to identify patterns, gaps, and reform opportunities.

No field survey is conducted; instead, the study is conceptual and policy-oriented, aimed at developing a practical framework for institutional reform in Indian public administration.

8. STUDY ANALYSIS

Table 1: Corruption Perception Index (2024)

Country	CPI Score 2024	Global Rank
India	39	93
Singapore	83	5
USA	69	24
UK	73	18
Bangladesh	25	147

Table-1 indicates that India ranks 93rd globally with a low CPI score of 39, far behind countries like Singapore (83) and the UK (73). This reflects systemic corruption and the lack of enforcement mechanisms. A dedicated efficiency department could help India improve its governance score through performance audits and transparency reforms.

Table 2: Citizens Reporting Corruption by Service

Service	% Reporting Corruption
Police	48
Municipality	36
Electricity	22
Land Records	40
Public Hospitals	18

Table-2 shows that the High levels of reported corruption in essential services Police (48%), Land Records (40%), and Municipalities (36%) indicate that citizen-facing departments lack accountability. A centralized efficiency body could introduce standard operating procedures and digital monitoring tools to reduce these numbers.

Table 3: CAG Report – Financial Irregularities (2023–24)

Sector	Amount (₹ Crore)
Rural Development	35,600
Health	29,850

Education	22,400
Urban Development	18,500
Transport	16,200

Table-3 analyze the ₹1.6 lakh crore worth of irregularities were found in just five sectors, with Rural Development (₹35,600 crore) being the highest. This points to budget mismanagement and fund leakages, reinforcing the need for an authority to track real-time financial flows and enforce corrective measures.

Table 4: Average Delay in Public Service Delivery

Service	Avg Delay (Days)
Building Permit	45
Birth Certificate	12
Land Mutation	30
Water Connection	20
Pension Approval	50

Table-4 discusses the Citizens face long delays in services like pension approvals (50 days) and building permits (45 days). These delays contribute to bribery and inefficiency. A department focused on service standards could reduce waiting times through automation and penalty-linked performance metrics.

Table 5: e-Governance vs Decline in Corruption (Select States)

State	e-Governance Score	% Decline in Corruption
Karnataka	85	22
Gujarat	80	18
Kerala	88	25
Bihar	60	10
Rajasthan	70	15

Table-5 shows that the States with higher e-governance scores like Kerala (88) and Karnataka (85) show greater decline in corruption (25% and 22%). This demonstrates that digital transformation and structured oversight are effective tools, which a Government Efficiency Department could institutionalize nationwide.

Table 6: Number of Government Schemes Audited (2019–2024)

Year	Schemes Audited
2019	45
2020	52
2021	50
2022	58
2023	65
2024	62

Table-6 express the While scheme audits have increased from 45 (2019) to 62 (2024), there is no central body to ensure that audit findings lead to policy reforms or punitive action. A dedicated department could track outcomes, publish compliance reports, and institutionalize follow-up actions.

Table 7: Administrative Efficiency Index by State

State	Efficiency Score
Tamil Nadu	78
Maharashtra	74
Haryana	72
Uttar Pradesh	55
West Bengal	60

Table-7 analyzed States like Tamil Nadu (78) and Maharashtra (74) rank higher in efficiency, while states like Uttar Pradesh (55) lag behind. The absence of uniform national standards and monitoring leads to such disparities. A centralized department could set benchmarks and rate departments annually.

Table 8: Average Time for Grievance Redressal (in Days)

Department	Avg Resolution Time (Days)
Electricity	7
Water Supply	10
Sanitation	8
Revenue	15
Transport	12

Table-8 shows that the Departments like Revenue (15 days) and Transport (12 days) take longer to resolve complaints, causing citizen dissatisfaction. A performance-tracking unit could enforce time-bound grievance handling and monitor department-wise resolution rates.

Table 9: Budget Utilization by Ministries (2023–24)

Ministry	% Budget Utilized
Health	82
Education	76
Agriculture	89
Railways	91
Defence	95

Table-9 examine the Ministries like Defence (95%) and Railways (91%) utilize their budgets well, whereas others like Education (76%) lag behind. The uneven spending pattern shows the need for real-time budget monitoring and target-based fund allocation, which a new department could manage.

Table 10: Citizen Satisfaction with Government Services (Survey 2024)

Service	Satisfaction (%)
Public Transport	68
Online Services	72
Municipal Services	58
Police	45
Education	60

Table-10 indicates that satisfaction levels remain low in Police (45%) and Municipal Services (58%), even with technological advancements. This suggests that reforms are not reaching the grassroots, and a

monitoring body is needed to translate policies into service quality improvements.

9. FINDINGS

- Services like police, land records, and municipalities report over 40% citizen-reported corruption, indicating a lack of transparency and monitoring mechanisms.
- India ranks 93rd in the Corruption Perception Index 2024, highlighting weak enforcement and ineffective administrative reform despite policy initiatives.
- According to CAG reports, sectors like Rural Development and Health show irregularities totaling over ₹1.6 lakh crore, suggesting poor fund management and audit follow-up.
- Average delays in basic services like pensions (50 days) and permits (45 days) show inefficiency and absence of standard service timelines.
- States with higher e-governance scores (e.g., Kerala, Karnataka) show 20–25% decline in corruption, confirming that digitization improves efficiency.
- Though schemes are audited and reports are generated, there is no institution to implement or enforce reforms, leading to repeated inefficiencies.
- States like Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra perform better administratively than states like Uttar Pradesh, indicating a lack of national performance standards.
- Some departments take over 10–15 days to resolve citizen complaints, leading to dissatisfaction and loss of public trust.
- Budget utilization across ministries varies from 76% to 95%, reflecting inefficiencies in planning, execution, or fund allocation.
- Only 45–60% of citizens are satisfied with services like police and municipal bodies, pointing to systemic administrative failure.

10. SUGGESTIONS

- Create a dedicated body at the national level with the authority to monitor, evaluate, and reform administrative processes across ministries and departments.
- Introduce Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) for every department, with regular performance reviews linked to promotions and fund allocations.
- Use technology to enable real-time tracking of government expenditure and scheme implementation, reducing chances of fund misuse.
- Introduce citizen report cards and grievance dashboards to measure service delivery effectiveness and ensure accountability from officials.
- Expand successful digital models from states like Kerala and Karnataka to all states to reduce manual handling and corruption opportunities.
- Define and enforce timelines for all public services, with automatic escalation and penalties for delays.
- Ensure that audit findings are legally actionable, with a timeline-bound compliance mechanism managed by the DGE.
- Rank ministries and states publicly based on efficiency, transparency, and service outcomes to foster healthy competition.

- The DGE should act as a nodal agency to coordinate reforms, reduce duplication of work, and promote integrated governance.
- Provide the DGE with constitutional or legislative authority, ensuring autonomy from political interference and a fixed mandate to eliminate inefficiency.

11. CONCLUSION:

India's public administration faces persistent challenges in the form of corruption, inefficiency, and lack of accountability, which continue to hinder good governance and public service delivery. Despite multiple reform efforts and digital initiatives, the absence of a centralized, empowered institution to enforce administrative efficiency remains a critical gap. This study highlights the urgent need for establishing a Department of Government Efficiency to monitor performance, streamline processes, and ensure real-time transparency across government departments. Drawing lessons from successful global models, the proposed department can institutionalize performance-based governance, audit implementation of public schemes, and create a culture of accountability through citizen feedback and technology-driven oversight. The findings confirm that structural inefficiencies and weak enforcement are central to India's governance problems. Therefore, policy-makers must prioritize the creation of such a department as a long-term institutional solution to eliminate corruption, enhance service delivery, and restore public trust in India's democratic governance system.

12. REFERENCES

1. Second Administrative Reforms Commission. (2008). *Promoting e-Governance: The Smart Way Forward* (12th Report). Government of India.
2. Transparency International. (2024). *Corruption Perceptions Index 2024*. www.transparency.org
3. Comptroller and Auditor General of India (CAG). (2023). *Audit Reports on Central Government Schemes*. Government of India.
4. World Bank. (2023). *Worldwide Governance Indicators*. www.worldbank.org/wgi
5. United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). (2020). *Institutional Effectiveness in South Asia*.
6. Paul, Samuel. (2002). *Holding the State to Account*. Books for Change.
7. Lokniti-CSDS. (2024). *Citizens and Corruption: Survey Report*.
8. Central Vigilance Commission (CVC). (2023). *Annual Report on Vigilance Activities*.
9. Government of India. (2020). *Mission Karmayogi: National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building*.
10. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), USA. (2023). *OMB Performance and Budgeting Guide*.
11. Government of Singapore. (2022). *Public Sector Transformation Strategy*.
12. United Kingdom Cabinet Office. (2015). *Efficiency and Reform Group: Strategic Report*.
13. NITI Aayog. (2022). *Performance-Based Monitoring and Evaluation: Framework for India*.
14. Press Information Bureau (PIB). (2023). *E-Governance Achievements in India*.
15. Basu, Rumki. (2019). *Public Administration: Concepts and Theories*. Sterling Publishers.