

L2012-08: Governance and Ethics: A Philosophical Perspective

Akuloba M. Abwire¹ & Ntabo M. Mabururu¹,
¹Moi University, mosabwire2002@yahoo.com

Abstract

Broadly speaking, governance can be perceived to refer to the competent management of public affairs in a government. Governance therefore is the act of governing. It relates to decisions that define expectations, grant power or verify performance. It consists of either a separate process or part of management or leadership processes. These processes and systems are typically administered by a government. On the other hand ethics is mainly held as a characteristic way of life of some people. Ethics generally prescribes what ought to be done in a given social system, a prescription that always reflects a characteristic and acceptable way of behaviour of some group. It is therefore a set of standards that society places on itself and which helps guide behaviour, choices and actions with an envisaged goal in view. Ethics and governance is a very important area of study in today's world where governance poses a great challenge to many states. It is also an area that provides its candidates with the analytical and decision-making skills and knowledge to identify and resolve professional and ethical issues. The skills and knowledge obtained are also important for segments that specialise in the functional disciplines. Many governments have struggled to achieve good governance, and especially free from corruption. Corruption is an important manifestation of the failure of ethics. The word 'corrupt' is derived from the Latin word *corruptus*, meaning 'to break or destroy'. This hence implies lack of appropriate governance. However, good governance is not necessarily ethical. The main objective of this paper is therefore to inquire into whether it is possible to come up with the objective ethic of governance. This paper shall adopt philosophical methods of inquiry, and especially the Socratic critical method. This is a method of persistent inquiry by constant question of any nature until one finds reasonableness in a question at stake. The main hypothesis of this paper is that the competent management of public affairs need not occur only in popular and preferred forms of government like democratic governments, but also in other forms of governments.