

CONCEPT OF ACCOUNTABILITY

1. Accountability an ethics and governance, answerability, blame, worthiness, liability and the expectation of account-giving
2. It is an aspect of governance, it has been central to discussions related to the problems in the public sector, non-profit and private i.e. corporate world
3. In leadership roles, accountability is the acknowledgement and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions and policies including the admission, governance and implementation within the scope of the role or employment position and encompassing consequences
4. It is frequently described as an account-giving relationship between individuals e.g. 'A is accountable to B when A is obliged to inform B about A's i.e. past or future actions and decisions, to justify them and to suffer punishment in the case of eventual misconduct'
5. Absence of accounting means an absence of accountability
6. Accountability is comes from the Latin word *accompitare* i.e. to account
7. Types of accountability—mainly 8 types—moral, administrative, political, managerial, market, legal/judicial, constituency relation and professional

Political accountability

Political accountability is the accountability of the government, civil servants and politicians to the public and to legislative bodies such as a congress or a parliament. Recall elections can be used to revoke the office of an elected official. Generally, however, voters do not have any direct way of holding elected representatives to account during the term for which they have been elected. Inquiries are usually held in response to an allegation of misconduct or corruption. The legislature may have the power to impeach the individual, remove them, or suspend them from office for a period of time. The accused person might also decide to resign before trial. Impeachment in the United States has been used both for elected representatives and other civil offices, such as district court judges.

Ethical accountability

Within an organization, the principles and practices of ethical accountability aim to improve both the internal standard of individual and group conduct as well as external factors, such as sustainable economic and ecologic strategies.

Administrative accountability

Internal rules and norms as well as some independent commission are mechanisms to hold civil servants within the administration of government accountable. Within department or ministry, firstly, behavior is bound by rules and regulations; secondly, civil servants are subordinates in a hierarchy and accountable to superiors. Nonetheless, there are independent

“watchdog” units to scrutinize and hold departments accountable; legitimacy of these commissions is built upon their independence, as it avoids any conflicts of interests.

Individuals within organizations

Because many different individuals in large organizations contribute in many ways to the decisions and policies, it is difficult even in principle to identify who should be accountable for the results. If individuals are held accountable or responsible, individuals who could not have prevented the results are either unfairly punished, or they “take responsibility” in a symbolic ritual without suffering any consequences. If only organizations are held accountable, then all individuals in the organization are equally blameworthy or all are excused. Various solutions have been proposed. One is to broaden the criteria for individual responsibility so that individuals are held accountable for not anticipating failures in the organization.

Constituency relations

Within this perspective, a particular agency of the government is accountable if voices are heard from agencies, groups or institutions outside the public sector representing citizens’ interests from a particular constituency or field. Moreover, the government is obliged to empower members of agencies with political rights to run for elections and be elected; or, appoint them into the public sector as a way to make the government representative and to ensure that voices from all constituencies are included in policy-making.

Public/private overlap

With the increase over the last several decades in public service provided by private entities, especially in Britain and the United States, some have called for increased political accountability mechanisms for otherwise non-political entities.

Accountability in education

Student accountability is traditionally based on having school and classroom rules, combined with sanctions for infringement. Students are personally responsible for their acts, freedom of choice, freedom of action, freedom to bear the results of action, personal responsibility. Students are given complete responsibility for their own education and the school is run by a direct democracy in which students and staff are equals.