

**CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONAL MANDATE IN GOOD GOVERNANCE: A
CASE STUDY OF SOCIAL ACTION PROGRAMMES IN URBAN AND
RURAL SRI LANKA**

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the perceptions of the Catholic Church and its devotees on the Church mandate for Good Governance, with particular emphasis on some of the fundamental issues relating to governance confronting our country, namely, corruption in public institutions, constraints to freedom of expression, flawed electoral processes and the lack of decorum and dignity in public office. The study is based on qualitative methods including unstructured key person interviews and focus group discussions as the primary means of collecting data. The analysis of the data revealed that the Catholic Church has a mandate for Good Governance and that this mandate has not been fully implemented due to various reasons such as constant deviation from its core teachings on social issues, insufficient catechesis of its devotees and the absence of effective social action programmes designed to denounce bad governance and promote good governance. The study recommends the need for a paradigm shift in the social mission of the Catholic Church which will enhance its public concerns through a proper catechesis of its social doctrine among its devotees and proactive social action to enhance good governance in Sri Lanka.