



Mains Practice Question

Q. What are the different types of integrity? Highlight its utility in governance. (150 Words)

31 Dec, 2021 GS Paper 2 Polity & Governance

Approach

- Define the term integrity
- Mention different types of integrity and its significance in governance
- Give an appropriate conclusion

Answer

Integrity is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one's actions. It is the practice of being honest and showing consistent and uncompromising adherence to strong moral and ethical principles and values. In other words, one's actions must be synchronous with one's professed moral principles.

Lord Nolan's committee enunciated 'seven principles of public life' and Integrity is one of them and the rest six are - Honesty, Accountability, Selflessness, Openness, Opportunity, and Leadership.

When we talk about integrity, it means adopting similar standards or moral principles in similar situations across time. In other words, it means to be honest and consistent in thoughts, speech, and action and this idea is also supported by Mahatma Gandhi when he says, 'Happiness is when what you think, what you say, and what you do are in harmony. A man of integrity is never influenced by temptations and pressures from outside and would only respond to his conscience.

Integrity can be seen at three different levels which are as follows

- Personal integrity: It stands for showing accountability for all personal actions and conducting all personal relationships fairly and honestly.
- Professional integrity: It is observed when one conducts his professional duties and obligations with complete honesty, in conformity with the professional code of ethics.
- Institutional integrity: It is a wider concept and is driven by the mission-and-vision statements of an organisation, the established code of conduct and the procedures. It stands for cementing ethical conduct throughout the organisation through personal examples, management practices, and ethical training.

Utility of integrity in governance

Integrity is important to foster public trust in democracy. It is integrity which makes sure that public interest overrides personal and organisational interests. A public servant who follows this principle of public life will:

- Serve the public interest to the best of his ability.
- Use his powers responsibly, for the purpose and in the manner for which they were intended.
- Act with honesty and transparency while making decisions without bias.

- Prevent and address improper conduct.
- Not allow his decisions or actions to be influenced by personal or private interests.

Integrity is essential for building strong institutions and assuring citizens that the government is working in their interest, not just for the select few. Integrity is not just a moral issue, it is also about making economies and societies more productive, efficient, and inclusive. Integrity is one of the key pillars of political, economic and social structures and thus essential to the economic and social well-being of individuals and societies as a whole.

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