



Mains Practice Question

Q. "Corruption is an important manifestation of the failure of ethics." In the light of the statement discuss the various reasons for the prevalence of corruption and measures needed to eradicate it. (250 words)

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Approach

- Start with briefly explaining the given statement.
- Discuss various reasons for the prevalence of corruption emphasising on the ethical reasons.
- Examine the measures needed to eradicate corruption and focus more on the ethical measures.
- Conclude suitably.

Introduction

Corruption is dishonest behavior by those in positions of power. It starts with the tendency of using public office for some personal benefit. Moreover, it is unfortunate that corruption has, for many, become a matter of habit. It is so deeply entrenched that corruption is now considered a social norm. Hence, corruption implies the failure of ethics.

Body

There are many reasons for the prevalence of corruption:

- **Over Centralisation:** The more remotely power is exercised from the people, the greater is the distance between authority and accountability.
 - The large number of functionaries between the citizen and final decision-makers makes accountability diffused and the temptation to abuse authority strong.
- **Weak Enforcement of Law:** Various laws have been made to curb the evil of corruption but their weak enforcement has acted as a hindrance in curbing corruption.
- **Greed for Illegitimate Money:** Various scams like the telgi stamp scam took place due to the inexhaustible appetite for illegal illegitimate funds.
- **Colonial Legacy of Unchallenged Authority:** In a society which worships power, it is easy for public officials to deviate from ethical conduct.

Measures that can be deployed to curb or eradicate corruption:

- **Regulation of Work Procedures:** Work procedures and processes need to be regularly reviewed and it needs to be ensured that such procedures are strictly followed in a systematic manner to make corruption difficult and thus act as preventive measures.
- **Regular Investigations:** The audit system can be an effective tool to suggest systemic improvements and changes in the working procedures of government so that chances of corruption diminish.
- **Free and Fair media:** A free media has a crucial role in prevention, monitoring and control of corruption.

- Such media can inform and educate the public on corruption, expose corruption in government, private sector and civil society organisations and help monitor codes of conduct while policing itself against corruption.
- **Identification of Causes:** Some of the causes of corruption also need to be identified so as to work out the solution.
 - For example, it is suggested by many that the electoral system has become one where vast amounts of money are required to contest elections and that unless appropriate electoral reforms are thought of and implemented, corruption can not be eliminated.
- **Protection and incentivization of the honest people:** The honest need to be encouraged and incentivized in some way the other to promote a corruption-free work environment. They also need protection from the

Conclusion

In India, some recent anti-corruption initiatives have been taken. For example, various Supreme Court's ruling in pursuit of curbing criminalization of politics, many e-governance initiatives will improve transparency and accountability. These measures are indeed steps in the right direction, but bringing behavioural change in society will act as the most potent weapon against corruption.

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