



Mains Practice Question

Q. The principle of impartiality is fundamental to good governance. Evaluate how impartiality contributes to the effectiveness of public administration. **(150 words)**

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Approach

- Define impartiality and its importance in public administration.
- Analyze how impartiality enhances transparency, and inclusivity and substantiate with examples of its role in improving policy implementation.
- Conclude by emphasizing the significance of impartiality for ensuring effective governance.

Introduction

Impartiality refers to **unbiased behavior** where decisions are made based on **objective criteria** rather than **personal biases, prejudices, or favoritism**. An impartial decision-maker treats all individuals or groups equally and ensures fairness in action, irrespective of personal beliefs or external influences.

Body

Role of Impartiality in Good Governance:

- **Enhances Transparency and Fairness:** Impartiality ensures that public officials make decisions based on **objective criteria**, leading to **fair and transparent outcomes**. In situations of **unequal circumstances**, impartiality can be complemented by principles of **equity and fairness**.
 - E.g, **separate lines for elderly** citizens and women or the implementation of **reservation policies** to address social and educational backwardness.
- **Promotes Accountability:** Impartiality acts as a safeguard against corrupt practices. When decisions are made impartially, public officials cannot exploit their position for personal gain, ensuring efficient and ethical use of public resources.
 - E.g: Anti-corruption mechanisms such as the **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC)** play a **crucial** role in ensuring that officials remain impartial while conducting investigations.
- **Strengthens Public Trust:** An impartial administration **fosters greater inclusivity** by ensuring that policies and resources are allocated based on need rather than political or personal biases.
 - E.g: **The MGNREGA program's** impartial implementation can empower marginalized communities by providing employment opportunities in rural areas.
- **Encourages Ethical Decision-Making:** Impartiality fosters **ethical responsibility** among public servants, guiding them to make fair, just, and equitable decisions.
 - E.g; **T. N. Seshan (former CEC)** exemplified impartiality in decision-making by enforcing **strict adherence to the Model Code of Conduct**, curbing electoral malpractice.

Measures to Ensure Impartiality in Public Administration:

- **Institutionalise Ethical Training:** Conduct regular training programs for civil servants, elected officials, and law enforcement officers on ethics, impartiality, and conflict resolution.
 - E.g: The **National Centre for Good Governance (NCGG)** provides training for civil servants and **Mission Karmayogi** builds on **deontological ethics**, focusing on **integrity, accountability, and transparency** in public service.
- **Strengthen Whistleblower Protection;** Establish robust mechanisms to protect whistleblowers who report instances of corruption or partiality within the administration. Ensuring their safety will encourage more individuals to come forward and expose biased or unfair practices.
 - E.g; **The Whistleblower Protection Act (2014)** was enacted to protect individuals who disclose information regarding corruption in government functions.
- **Promote Diversity and Inclusivity:** Ensure that public offices and decision-making bodies are diverse and inclusive, representing all sections of society. This will help mitigate biases that arise from homogenous groups.
 - **E.g:** The **Reservation System** in India ensures that marginalized communities, including SCs, STs, and OBCs, have a voice in governance and that decisions do not favor any particular group.

Conclusion

Improving impartiality in governance requires reforms in institutions. The **Right to Information (RTI) Act** ensures transparency, while **social audits** in **MGNREGA** promote public participation. Implementing such measures ensures fair, unbiased decision-making, fostering trust and legitimacy in public administration.

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