

**1. In any policy framework comprising of public schemes, the most vital factor is measurability of outcomes. Do you agree? Substantiate.**

**Introduction**

Measurability of outcome refers to be able to measure practically and objectively the goals of a scheme/program. For this it is necessary to set the goals in a clearly defined manner.

**Body**

**In any policy framework comprising of public schemes, the most vital factor is measurability of outcomes.**

- General guidance to the program – and motivation to achieve the given target.
- Midterm review and change in strategy – when the outcome is measurable, it is easy to see whether the target is being achieved or not in the mid-term review. Changes in strategy can also be accordingly made.
- Audit and feedback – can effectively happen only when public schemes have measurable outcomes.
- Measurement of efficiency of governance – can be done objectively.
- Citizens participation – can be further enhanced when there is clarity in goal and outcome of public policy.
- Innovative solutions – can be brought about by private sector, NGO's, civil societies, individuals when there is clear set goal of public policy.

[Students must provide example for each of the above points]

**Conclusion**

Formulating policy framework comprising of public schemes is a job of very high responsibility. Government is liable to perform this task with utmost diligence to fulfill its obligation under the social contract. Measurable outcomes can be one tool to achieve this task.

**2. How does financial probity help in the effective utilisation of public funds. How is financial probity different from austerity? Explain.**

**Introduction**

Probity is the act of strict adherence to highest principles and ideals (integrity, good character, honesty, decency) rather than avoiding corrupt or dishonest conduct. It balances service to the community against the self-interest of individuals. Probity contains for things –

- Integrity
- Moral Knowledge

- Decency, Humbleness
- Strong positive emotion

Financial probity means, strict obedience to a code of ethics based on absolute honesty, especially in commercial or monetary matters and beyond legal requirements.

### Body

#### **Financial probity helps in the effective utilisation of public funds**

- Civil servants deal with public fund, given to government by people in trust. Since it is not their own money, unlike private sector, practicing financial probity becomes extremely important for civil servants.
- Justice and rule of law – treat tender participants fairly and equally, and avoid giving one tender participant an improper advantage over another.
- Maintain confidentiality of participants' confidential information, including commercially sensitive information and intellectual property.
- Ensure tender processes, negotiations, evaluation processes, and contract management processes are auditable, transparent and accountable.
- Proactively identify and manage conflicts of interest whether real, potential or perceived appropriately and in accordance with applicable legal and policy requirements, including applicable Victorian Public Sector codes of conduct.
- Financial probity in governance is the antithesis of corruption in public life.

#### **How is financial probity different from austerity?**

Austerity is defined as a set of economic policies a government implements to control public sector debt. Like financial probity it is also a concept in financial ethics. However –

- Austerity measures are in response to public debt. It is a risk management strategy. Financial probity concept comes into picture when government is spending more.
- Austerity may lead to more unemployment. This is not the case with financial probity.
- Austerity is more end-oriented. Financial probity is more-mean oriented.

### Conclusion

Financial probity in governance is an essential and vital requirement for an efficient and effective system of governance and for socio-economic development. Ensuring financial probity in public sector activities by civil servant is part of every public official's duty to adopt processes, practices and behaviour that enhance and promote public sector values and interests.

**3. In general, the quality of medical services provided in government hospitals is far from satisfactory. Why? What measures can be taken to give patients a better experience in terms of service delivery? Suggest.**

### **Introduction**

The recent episodes of children deaths in Kota, Muzzafarpur illustrate the abysmal quality of medical services provided by the government hospitals.

### **Body**

#### **Reasons for low quality of medical services in government hospitals:**

- Lack of value system among doctors: Most of the government hospital doctors practice in private and ignore the quality of service provided in hospital.
- Apathy/insensitivity of the government: with health spending not increased, infrastructure facilities not developed.
- Hygiene: due to low/no profitability along with insufficient government support, funds are insufficient to maintain the hygiene required to avoid infection, quarantine of patients are not possible.
- Lack of healthy work culture: the staff and the doctors often lack empathy and compassion. They forget that they are doing a public service and results in lack of punctuality, responsiveness and discipline which degrades the service quality.
- Medical ethics is missing which is also not taught as a part of curriculum.

#### **Measures that can be taken:**

- Building a healthy work culture through training to doctors and other staff. They need to understand that it is a service and they are not doing any favor by working, but it is like any other remunerative job which hinges on quality of service delivery.
- Building ethical values among medical and nursing students and teach them medical ethics so that they work in government hospitals efficiently as well as serve in rural areas.
- Increasing investment in health to 3% of GDP as envisaged by various committees.
- Bringing Transparency and accountability with effective policy monitoring/evaluation, use of technologies in implementing government schemes like PM Jan suraksha yojana, Mission Indradhanush, Ayushman Bharat etc., which are implemented mainly by government hospitals.
- Awareness among citizens regarding their rights in availing services in government hospitals.
- Implementation of citizen charter with effective grievance redressal mechanism under the supervision of district administration.

## Conclusion

“It is health that is the real wealth and not pieces of gold and silver”- Gandhiji. Government hospitals are at the forefront in health services provided to at least 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the population. A positive work culture and sense of moral values has to be cultivated to improve the quality of services in government hospitals.

**4. Do you think customer satisfaction is hardly a priority for public sector organisations like banks, electricity boards, airlines etc? If so, why? Do you think financial bailouts of public sector organisations should be stopped? Critically comment.**

## Introduction

The liberalization of the Indian economy in 1991 set off a chain of paradigmatic changes in most sectors where growth of private participation was seen along with the presence of public organisations. In this environment, every metric saw competition for outperforming the other, including customer satisfaction, which in the digital age becomes all the more important.

## Body

- In the private sector, customer experience has become a core metric of performance in the past decade while public sector organisations around the world are waking up to the implications.
- Some government agencies have caught the wave—reimagining their services end to end from the standpoint of their customers—and employing next-generation levers from the private sector, such as digitization and design thinking, advanced analytics, and automation, to upend traditional ways of working. For example, Rural electrification corporation(REC).
- However, these examples remain the exception, not the rule. Given competing priorities and structural barriers to change, many agencies bet small—making changes piecemeal and spreading investment thinly across services and channels. Such efforts may lead to incremental improvements but fall short of delivering the impact public sector organisations (and citizen customers) expect. For example, Air India airlines.
- The factors for such low performance, with regards to customer experience, can be seen below -
- A monopolistic mind-set is a pervasive obstacle. When customers don't have a choice, it dramatically removes a major incentive for governments to innovate and improve service. It also hampers agencies' ability to set priorities.
- In public sector undertakings there are no clear objectives. In case the undertaking takes social welfare into consideration, then it will neglect other aspects like customer service and these are bound to be a burden on the exchequer.

- In public sector undertakings there are many conflicting interests. On the one hand are workers and labourers who organize themselves into trade unions and wish to bargain with the management. Then are the interests of the technical staff, secretariat staff, who all organise themselves into trade union. Customer interest tends to get neglected in such a scenario.
- In public sector undertakings usually there is red tapism and routine. In fact the whole system becomes so much burdened with red tapism and routines that it becomes almost impossible to come out of the rut. The result is that the things get delayed and the undertaking always suffers for want of policies, decisions and quick disposal of the issues, which eventually affects customer experience.

Many of these public sector entities, such as the national carrier Air India and telecom players BSNL and MTNL, are loss-making, and in the case of BSNL, so cash-strapped that they are unable even to pay their employees' salaries on time. Public sector banks, on the other hand, are carrying the burden of non-performing assets (NPAs) and after a series of mergers and consolidation efforts, they find themselves overstaffed. All this has heightened public apprehensions with regards to bailouts to such public sector organisations.

- True capitalism should accept business failure as a normal hazard, not a point of social shame. But bailout is an act of giving financial assistance to a failing business or economy to save it from collapse.
- A fiscally constrained government can ill-afford to throw good money after bad in the fruitless enterprise of keeping sick units on life support. An honest consideration of the reasons why some of these public sector units are in such a pitiable plight must acknowledge the role of successive governments in gaming the system in favour of new entrants, particularly in the private sector.
- For example, BSNL and MTNL were actively denied critical technology interventions that would have enabled them to make a quantum leap in the quality of services they provided.
- Similarly, in the case of public sector banks, it is the unwillingness on the part of successive governments to give effective functional autonomy to the banks' chairman – and, worse, to use PSBs to underwrite political projects, including farm loan waivers - that contributed substantially to the overall rotting of the financial system.
- In such a scenario, bailout by governments becomes necessary to overcome the deficiencies due to its past actions. But frequent bailouts affect the productivity and efficiency as well as producing a lax work culture. In this regard, disinvestment and privatisation measures can be helpful.
- Recently, the Government's announcement of a full sell-out of BPCL is historic. To put a perennial profit-maker like BPCL on the block shows genuine intent for privatisation. It breaks a taboo that profit-making PSUs can't be sold. Such a move will also bring down the need for bailouts by governments.

## Conclusion

The state of our sick public sector needs surgical intervention, for sure. But bailouts should be based on standard guidelines and sell out should be preferred if the organisations isn't improving. In addition to the obvious benefits of creating liquidity for the government and driving productivity, a successful privatisation strategy will not only attract foreign participants across a range of sectors, but also underpin the innovation and entrepreneurship India needs to achieve its growth ambition to a US\$5tn economy and beyond.

## 5. Examine the significance of robust grievance redressal mechanism for creating a trustworthy ecosystem of public services.

### Introduction

Public Grievance Redressal is said to be the cornerstone of any well governed democracy. No administration can claim to be accountable, responsive and user-friendly unless it has established an efficient and effective grievance redress mechanism. In fact, the grievance redress mechanism of an organization is the gauge to measure its efficiency and effectiveness as it provides important feedback on the working of the administration.

### Body

- The government shares the concern for ensuring responsive, accountable, transparent, decentralized and people friendly administration at all levels. Good Governance is the key to a Nation's progress and an important step to make the entire system transparent and faster.
- Public Grievances are a significant indicator of the state of governance in any system. In a democracy, the legitimacy of the government depends primarily on public trust and support, which is often contingent upon its capacity to deliver quality governance.
- Efficient and Effective public institutions provide the foundation on which the story of public trust can be developed, building on public satisfaction and with administration and service delivery. The public grievance redressal mechanism serves as an indicator to gauge the efficiency and effectiveness of administrative processes.
- Citizen-Centric online services are one of the most important aspects of an efficient and effective public administration system. It leads to transparency and accountability in governance and also fosters equitable growth. Technology is the empowering tool for citizens and a measure of accountability for the government.
- Public grievance redressal is very important component of a responsive administration and it is an instrument to measure efficiency and effectiveness as it provides important feedback on the working of an organisation. Public Grievance Redressal mechanism was also central to the Sevottam model.

- For effective public grievance redressal, an important tool is regular analysis of public grievance received in order to help the identification of the problem areas. A Grievance Analysis Study was conducted through Quality Council on India for identifying grievance prone areas, undertake root cause analysis and to recommend systematic analysis and to recommend systematic reform.
- While public grievances reflect the problem areas and challenges that confront the institutions involved in service delivery and administration, these also offer the opportunity to address these problems before they explode in the form of public discontent.
- The awareness of grievances is the first condition for effectively addressing them. Expression rather than repression of voice, therefore, should be encouraged if the objective is to win public trust or improve the state of governance.
- Timely capture and appropriate analysis of public grievances offers an opportunity to public institutions to address the performance appropriately. It is important to realise that participatory approach is necessary, where suggestions to improve the functioning of institutions or policy are invited from public and considered with an open mind.
- Redressal of complaints and grievances is an important part of health service delivery and quality of service standards. With the recent high profile cases of some private hospitals in Delhi and Gurgaon as well as public health care hospitals in various parts of the country, it is clear that there is an urgent need to devise and implement a clear and practical swift grievances and complaint redressal mechanism that is patient and public friendly and improves access, availability and quality.

### Conclusion

Grievance Redress Mechanism is part and parcel of the machinery of any administration. There is, however, considerable frustration and dissatisfaction amongst the people, especially the weaker section of society, with regards to the government's grievance redressal abilities. Thus, effective and timely redressal of public grievances becomes an important hallmark of responsive and responsible governance.