Q.1) "While laws regulate conduct, a code of ethics elevates it." Discuss the role of a code of ethics in shaping public servant behavior beyond legal obligations. How can ethical conduct be effectively inculcated in public service? (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

Laws establish minimum conduct standards through enforcement, while ethics inspire excellence beyond compliance, elevating public service from mere rule-following to principled governance.

Body

How Code of Ethics Elevates Public Service Beyond Legal Regulation

Ethical codes serve as moral compasses, filling regulatory gaps and cultivating a culture of principled governance that extends far beyond legal compliance.

1. **Bridging Legal Gaps**: Ethics provide direction where laws are ambiguous or absent. **Example:** IAS officer **Sushil Kumar** personally coordinated rescue operations during 2013 Uttarakhand floods despite no legal mandate.
2. **Building Institutional Credibility**: Ethical conduct strengthens public confidence in governance. **Example:** Kerala **Chief Secretary Tom Jose** voluntarily disclosed assets online, going beyond RTI requirements.
3. **Cultivating Internal Motivation**: Ethics inspire action based on conviction rather than coercion. **Example:** IAS officer **Aruna Sundararajan** refused plush government bungalow, choosing modest accommodation.
4. **Ensuring Equitable Service**: Ethical principles prevent favoritism and promote uniform treatment. **Example: DM Kalpana Awasthi** refused VIP movement during board examinations despite political pressure.
5. **Creating Exemplary Leadership**: Ethical leaders model behavior that transforms organizational culture. **Example:** E. Sreedharan's Delhi Metro maintained zero-tolerance for corruption, setting new infrastructure standards.

Measures to Inculcate Ethical Conduct

Sustainable ethical behavior requires systemic reinforcement through training, oversight, and cultural transformation.

1. **Comprehensive Ethics Education**: **LBSNAA** includes ethics modules with Indian case studies while state academies conduct regular ethics workshops as recommended by the **2nd ARC**.
2. **Ethics Advisory Mechanisms**: Establishing independent **ethics boards** and ombudsman offices provide guidance while Maharashtra's Lokayukta and CVC's **integrity pacts** demonstrate institutional commitment.
3. **Transparency and Disclosure Systems**: Following **2nd ARC** recommendations, initiatives like Rajasthan's **'Jan Soochna Portal'** and Delhi's real-time MLA disclosure go beyond legal requirements.
4. **Recognition and Incentive Structures**: PM Awards for Excellence include ethical leadership criteria while Odisha incorporates citizen feedback in appraisals.

5. **International Best Practices**: Singapore's mandatory ethics courses for civil servants and **New Zealand's Public Service Ethics Office** model provide frameworks for continuous ethical development and consultation.

Conclusion

Ethics transform public service from duty-bound compliance to purpose-driven excellence, creating trustworthy institutions where citizens receive not just lawful, but exemplary governance.

"Ethics is knowing the difference between what you have a right to do and what is right to do."

– Potter Stewart

Q.2) Despite well-intentioned schemes, public service delivery often fails to meet citizen expectations. Examine the systemic factors responsible for poor service delivery and suggest measures to address them. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

Public service delivery—how government provides services to citizens—faces a persistent implementation gap. Despite well-intentioned schemes, systemic inefficiencies transform developmental programs into frustrating citizen experiences, undermining public trust.

Body

Systemic Factors Responsible for Poor Service Delivery

The disconnect between policy intent and citizen experience stems from **deep-rooted structural deficiencies** that persist across administrative levels and functional domains.

1. **Bureaucratic Rigidity and Process Orientation**: Administrative systems prioritize procedural compliance over outcome delivery, creating labyrinthine processes that exhaust citizens. **Example**: **MGNREGA** wage payments in Bihar faced delays due to multiple verification layers, causing rural workers to abandon the scheme.
2. **Resource Constraints and Misallocation**: Chronic underfunding combined with inefficient resource distribution creates service bottlenecks. **Example**: **Primary Health Centers** in Odisha operate with 40% staff vacancy, forcing citizens to travel long distances for basic healthcare.
3. **Coordination Failures Across Departments**: Fragmented governance structures create silos where citizens navigate multiple agencies for integrated services. **Example**: **PM Awas Yojana** beneficiaries in Uttar Pradesh face delays due to poor coordination between housing, banking, and municipal departments.
4. **Lack of Accountability Mechanisms**: Absence of meaningful consequences for poor performance reduces incentives for service excellence. **Example**: **Public Distribution System** irregularities in Jharkhand persisted for years due to weak monitoring systems and limited citizen redressal mechanisms.

5. **Technology Implementation Gaps**: Digital initiatives fail to translate into improved citizen experience due to poor design and implementation. **Example**: **e-Governance** portals in several states remain citizen-unfriendly with complex interfaces that exclude digitally disadvantaged populations.

Measures to Address Systemic Deficiencies

Transforming service delivery requires comprehensive reforms addressing structural, technological, and cultural dimensions of public administration.

1. **Citizen-Centric Process Reengineering**: Redesigning service delivery from citizen perspective rather than administrative convenience, as recommended by **2nd ARC**. **Example**: **Haryana's** single-window **'Saral'** portal integrates 380+ services with guaranteed timelines, reducing citizen interface points.
2. **Technology-Enabled Service Integration**: Leveraging digital platforms for seamless, integrated service delivery. **Example**: **Andhra Pradesh's AP Land Records** system provides real-time land documentation with citizen tracking facilities.
3. **Performance-Based Accountability Systems**: Implementing outcome-focused evaluation mechanisms with citizen feedback integration, as advocated by **2nd ARC**. **Example**: **Delhi's 'Mohalla Clinic'** model uses patient satisfaction surveys and health outcome metrics for performance assessment.
4. **Capacity Building and Skill Development**: Systematic training programs focusing on citizen service orientation and technical competencies. **Example**: **Mission Karmayogi** provides competency-based training for civil servants, emphasizing service delivery excellence and digital literacy.
5. **Grievance Redressal Mechanism Strengthening**: Creating robust, time-bound complaint resolution systems with escalation matrices. **Example**: **Himachal Pradesh's 'CM Helpline'** provides 24/7 citizen services with automated escalation and mandatory response timelines.
6. **Transparency and Information Disclosure**: Proactive information sharing about service standards, procedures, and performance metrics. **Example**: **Rajasthan's 'Jan Soochna Portal'** provides real-time access to scheme information, beneficiary lists, and service delivery status.

Conclusion

Effective public service delivery requires systemic reform placing citizen experience at the center, building transparent, accountable administrative systems that consistently translate policy intentions into positive outcomes.

> "Public service is a public trust, and every man, woman and child in this country who depends on it deserves nothing less than integrity." – Bob Riley

Q.3) "A healthy work culture is not imposed, it is cultivated." Analyze this statement in the context of public administration. Discuss the factors influencing work culture and suggest measures for cultivating ethical governance. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

Work culture in public administration refers to the **shared mindset, conduct, and institutional habits** that determine how public servants operate, interact with citizens, and fulfill their duties.

Body

Nature of a Healthy Work Culture

The statement "A healthy work culture is not imposed, it is cultivated" emphasizes that such a culture emerges from **consistent practices**, **ethical leadership**, and **mutual respect** rather than being forced by authority.
A nurtured culture fosters genuine commitment, sustains good practices, and outlasts leadership transitions, whereas imposed rules often fail to inspire long-term change.

Factors Influencing Work Culture

Creating a healthy administrative culture requires attention to key internal and external factors that shape the day-to-day work environment and long-term institutional ethos.

1. **Leadership Influence and Role Modeling:** Ethical and action-oriented leaders inspire similar conduct in their teams, creating a cascading effect of positive behavior. **Example:** IAS officers who resist pressure and maintain transparency set standards for others in the system.
2. **Clear Communication and Transparency:** Open lines of communication help reduce confusion, build trust, and empower civil servants to act decisively and responsibly. **Example:** Regular departmental briefings and transparent decision-making processes boost team confidence and reduce bureaucratic delays.
3. **Focus on Continuous Learning and Development:** Encouraging civil servants to pursue skill enhancement and ongoing training nurtures a growth-oriented culture. **Example:** Officers participating in e-learning platforms and capacity-building workshops improve service delivery through modern practices.
4. **Sense of Community and Teamwork:** A supportive environment where civil servants collaborate rather than compete enhances coordination and morale. **Example:** In districts where joint departmental teams operate, welfare schemes are implemented more efficiently and with greater outreach.
5. **Respect for Diversity and Inclusion:** Promoting inclusive values and respecting different perspectives ensures all voices are heard, especially in a plural society like India. **Example:** Gender-sensitive and community-driven policymaking improves outreach to marginalized sections.
6. **Psychological Safety and Innovation Culture:** A work environment that tolerates well-intentioned risk-taking and encourages innovation promotes learning and creativity. **Example:** Officers allowed to test digital tools or welfare models often drive administrative improvements.

Measures for Cultivating Ethical Governance

To promote ethical governance, focused strategies are required that build on institutional capacity, behavioral change, and systems of integrity.

1. **Leadership Development and Mentoring Programs:** Investing in leadership training that emphasizes empathy, accountability, and decision-making builds a more responsible bureaucracy. Programs like **Mission Karmayogi** aim to align competencies with ethical leadership, as advocated by the **2nd ARC**.
2. **Values Integration and Ethical Frameworks:** Conducting regular workshops on public service values and linking ethical performance with evaluations builds internal alignment. **Integrity pledges**, ethics codes, and workplace guidelines reinforce these principles in practice.
3. **Peer Learning and Collaboration Platforms:** Creating networks for interaction, idea exchange, and **cross-learning** helps sustain a community of practice that values ethics. Regular conclaves or digital forums enable officers to learn from one another's experiences.
4. **Recognition and Reward Systems:** Acknowledging and celebrating honest, effective service acts as a motivational tool for others. Recognitions such as the **Prime Minister's Excellence Awards** inspire replication of successful models.
5. **Transparency and Accountability Measures:** Establishing robust mechanisms for oversight, citizen feedback, and timely grievance redressal helps build trust. Tools like the **RTI Act** and online dashboards ensure public servants remain answerable to the people.

Conclusion

Cultivating healthy work culture requires sustained effort to align leadership behavior, organizational values, and peer influence toward citizen-centric, ethical governance that transforms policy intentions into positive citizen outcomes.

Q.4) Digital governance has transformed citizen-state interaction, yet digital exclusion remains a challenge. Critically evaluate the impact of e-governance initiatives on inclusive and transparent governance. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

According to the **World Bank**, digital governance refers to the use of digital technologies to enhance public services, improve transparency, and strengthen citizen participation in governmental processes.

Body

Digital Governance and Its Role in Inclusive and Transparent Governance

E-governance has revolutionized public administration by making services more accessible, efficient, and accountable. However, it also brings challenges in terms of digital literacy, access, and equity.

Positive Role of E-Governance Initiatives

1. **Improved Accessibility and Service Delivery:** Digital platforms reduce delays and simplify access to services for citizens. **Example:** DigiLocker allows citizens to store official documents like PAN and driving licenses securely online.
2. **Enhanced Transparency and Accountability:** E-governance systems make government processes auditable and minimize corruption. **Example:** CPGRAMS enables citizens to file and track complaints against public officials.
3. **Wider Citizen Participation and Feedback:** Digital platforms encourage participatory governance. **Example:** MyGov portal enables public input on policy issues like budget priorities and flagship programs.
4. **Cost and Time Efficiency:** Automation of services minimizes red tape and curbs leakages in welfare delivery. **Example:** The Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) system credits subsidies directly into beneficiary accounts.
5. **Boost to Last-Mile Delivery and Inclusivity:** E-governance bridges geographical barriers, bringing services to remote populations. **Example:** Common Service Centres (CSCs) operate in over 2.5 lakh rural locations.

Limitations of E-Governance in Ensuring Inclusion

1. **Digital Exclusion and Access Barriers:** Unequal access to smartphones, computers, and internet connectivity creates a digital divide. **Example:** Rural women and the elderly often remain cut off from online platforms.
2. **Issues of Data Privacy and Trust Deficit:** Absence of robust safeguards leads to concerns over surveillance and misuse of personal data. **Example:** Citizens have raised apprehensions about the linking of Aadhaar data with multiple services.
3. **Low Digital Literacy and Awareness:** A large segment of the population lacks digital skills. **Example:** Uptake of the e-Shram portal among informal workers has been inconsistent.
4. **Language and Design Barriers:** Poor localization and user interface design reduce usability for many marginalized groups. **Example:** Government apps often lack regional language support and accessibility features.

Measures to Make Digital Governance More Inclusive and Transparent

1. **Bridging the Digital Divide:** Expanding internet connectivity through fiber optic networks will ensure access to services in rural and tribal regions, as emphasized by the **2nd ARC.**
2. **Digital Literacy and Capacity Building:** Programs offering basic computer skills to marginalized citizens help close the knowledge gap and enable broader participation.
3. **Inclusive Design of Digital Platforms:** Interfaces must support regional languages and accessibility tools to allow universal usage across diverse populations.
4. **Strengthening Data Protection and Cybersecurity:** Robust legal frameworks and encrypted systems are essential to build public trust in digital platforms.
5. **Community Participation and Feedback Mechanisms:** Involving local communities in the design and evaluation of platforms ensures services are relevant and user-friendly.

Conclusion

Digital governance has enhanced transparency and service delivery, but inclusive access must be prioritized to ensure equitable benefits and strengthen participatory democracy, as envisioned under the **National e-Governance Plan (NeGP)**.

Q.5) Non-performance of duty by a public servant is a form of corruption. Do you agree with this view? Justify your answer. (150 words, 10 marks)

Introduction

According to **Transparency International**, corruption is defined as **"the abuse of entrusted power for private gain."** Non-performance of duty by public servants represents a critical dimension of corruption that undermines governance effectiveness and public trust.

Body

Agreement with the View: Non-Performance as Corruption

1. **Breach of Public Trust:** Public servants are entrusted with specific responsibilities and are compensated from public funds to fulfill these duties. **Example:** A teacher who regularly remains absent from school violates the social contract with students and society.
2. **Indirect Financial Loss to the State:** Non-performance leads to wastage of public resources and salaries paid without corresponding work output. **Example:** Revenue officials who delay tax collection cause financial losses to the government exchequer.
3. **Denial of Public Services:** Citizens are deprived of their rightful services, creating barriers to accessing government benefits and programs. Example: A **Block Development Officer** who fails to implement welfare schemes denies benefits to intended beneficiaries under Schemes such as **MGNREGA or Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana**.
4. **Erosion of Administrative Efficiency:** Non-performance creates bottlenecks in governance machinery and hampers policy implementation. **Example:** Delayed file processing in government offices affects timely decision-making and service delivery, impacting Digital India initiatives.
5. **Moral Hazard and Systemic Impact:** Non-performance sets a precedent for others and gradually corrupts the entire administrative culture. **Example:** When senior officials are negligent, it encourages similar behavior among subordinates.

Counter-Arguments: Limitations of the View

1. **Definitional Ambiguity:** Corruption traditionally involves active wrongdoing for personal gain, while non-performance may be passive negligence. **Example:** An officer facing personal health issues may be unable to perform duties without corrupt intent.
2. **Systemic Constraints:** Non-performance might result from inadequate resources, poor infrastructure, or systemic failures rather than individual corruption. **Example:** A doctor in a remote health center cannot perform effectively without medicines and equipment.

3. **Lack of Criminal Intent:** Legal definitions of corruption often require mens rea (guilty mind) and specific intent to gain improperly. **Example:** Incompetence due to lack of training differs from deliberate misconduct for personal benefit.
4. **Institutional Failures:** Non-performance may reflect broader governance failures, unclear job descriptions, or inadequate supervision. **Example:** Employees may not perform due to ambiguous role definitions or lack of performance monitoring.
    However, **Despite these limitations**, **non-performance is a form of corruption** as it misuses public trust and resources for personal convenience. The harmful impact on citizens and governance makes it a serious corruption issue that needs immediate action.

Measures to Address Non-Performance

1. **Strengthening Accountability Mechanisms:** Regular performance appraisals and monitoring systems can identify and address non-performance promptly, as envisioned under the Annual Performance Appraisal Report **(APAR)** system.
2. **Capacity Building and Training: Mission Karmayogi** (National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building) focuses on continuous skill development to ensure public servants are equipped to perform their duties effectively.
3. **Clear Job Descriptions and Performance Standards:** Well-defined roles and measurable targets help establish clear expectations and accountability, supported by the Central Secretariat Manual of Office Procedure.
4. **Incentive and Penalty Systems:** Performance-based rewards through schemes like **Performance-Related Incentive Scheme (PRIS)** and appropriate disciplinary measures under CCS (Conduct) Rules can motivate effective service delivery.
5. **Citizen Feedback and Social Audits:** Public participation in monitoring government services through platforms like **MyGov** and **social audits** under **MGNREGA** creates external pressure for performance improvement.

Conclusion

Non-performance constitutes **passive corruption**, violating public trust and wasting resources. While different from active corruption, it equally undermines governance effectiveness and requires comprehensive accountability measures.