

# Towards a Deeper Understanding of Indian Administration: Culture, Public Values and Ethics

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## ABSTRACT

The region of Asia has a great history of religion and culture. It is a host of a number of strong cultures such as East Asian culture, Indian culture and Islamic culture. These cultures shape and influence people's lifestyle and way of living. India has a great history of traditional beliefs, customs and culture. It is interesting for us to analyze the influence of Indian culture on the administration, governance and public service delivery since time immemorial. The study adopts the methodology which is primarily qualitative in nature where secondary literature has been studied in details to get an idea about the impact of traditions and culture on Indian administration. Before getting into the study of the Indian administration it is essential to have a deeper understanding about the contributions of pioneers such as Fred Riggs and John Gaus on the administrative theories. Through this study we would identify and trace how Indian culture in particular has shaped the administrative practices. The governance structure is also not devoid of traditional beliefs and customs. In order to analyze the administration of any region an important prerequisite is to have a meticulous understanding of the impact of beliefs and customs in the governance. Within Public Administration, public value holds profound importance. The concept of public value states that it is value that guides citizens in the operation of public organization on delivery of public services. Therefore, in this study, the focus would also be in analyzing the relationship between ethical culture and public value; in special reference to Indian administration. Through this study it would also be important to have an idea of a culturally diverse society like Asia as a region in general and India in particular along with have an indepth understanding of what different challenges India faces in public administration as well as the solutions to these problems in order to ensure greater accountability and ethical conduct.

**KEYWORDS:** Indian culture, public value, ethical culture, accountability, ethical conduct

## INTRODUCTION

Asia has been a region that is characterized by dynamic cultures, religions and civilizations. It has been a region of immense historical significance and a home for world's earliest societies like the Mesopotamians, Indus Valley. The various religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam too originated in this region which contributed greatly in building global spiritual landscapes.

Asia has been a region that has seen the rise and fall of empires such as the Mongol and the Ottoman Empire which had contributed to cultural exchanges and rich trade networks. The Asian continent has a historical background that extends over thousands of years and involves people belonging to different cultures and diverse backgrounds. The continent encompasses various ethnic and cultural groups. Even in

modern times, Asia is still considered to be a dynamic region, which has a profound impact on global politics, economics and culture.

It is necessary to have an understanding of three main cultures of the Asian region and the impact it has on the lifestyle and way of living of the people.

**1. East Asian Culture:** - East Asia includes China, Japan, North Korea and South Korea. These countries represent the traditional East Asia who once shared common written language, culture as well as Confucian philosophical tenets.

Confucianism was discovered by Confucius (551-479 BCE), stresses on morality, social relationships and governance. It helped in structuring social norms and statecraft in China and even beyond it.

They have various classic texts like “The Analects” and “The Tao Te Ching”, combined with poetry and painting that provides an extensive reflection on philosophical thought and aesthetic values.

**2. Indian Culture:** - India is one of the most diverse nations since it includes people from various religions and cultures. Indian Culture is characterized by beliefs, values and rituals. It has been a place of origin for various religions and culture such as:

Hinduism is one of the oldest religions which encompasses various beliefs and practices, such as concepts of dharma and karma.

Buddhism was founded by Siddharta Gautama (the Buddha) in the 5th century BCE, which stressed upon the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path that had spread all throughout Asia.

Jainism was founded by Vardhamana Mahavira in the 6th century BCE. It upholds non-violence and truth resulting in ethical and philosophical discourse in India.

Indian culture still does have a profound impact on the lifestyle of the people. It finds reflection in Indian marriages, festivals, cuisines, clothing, literature and languages.

**3. Islamic culture:** - The establishment of Delhi Sultanate and Mughal empire had an immense impact on the Indian political landscape which had a more centralized and hierarchical administrative system.

Each of these cultures has its own historical background and has a profound impact on the values and lifestyle of the people. Since these cultures have an influence on the values and ethics of the people, it also has an impact on the administration and governance as well.

An extensive study of Indian administration entails going beyond a legal institutional framework and interacting with various cultural, ecological and ethical contexts within which the administrative systems operate. In this context, Fred W. Riggs and John Gaus gives a deeper analytical framework in terms of the interpretation of Indian administration rooted in its own culture and based on value system rather than being a neutral part of the governance.

John M. Gaus ecological approach to public administration stresses on the idea that administrative systems are structured by their social, economic, political, and cultural environments. Gaus asserted that public administration is not value neutral and henceforth cannot be studied in isolation. This makes it quite relevant in Indian context where administrative practices provide a reflection of certain cultural elements including hierarchy, collectivism, respect for authority and moral duty. Even Fred W. Riggs Prismatic Model provides a comparative lens that helps to analyze societies witnessing transition from the traditional to modern forms of administration. According to Riggs, the characteristics of prismatic societies are structural heterogeneity, formalism and overlapping value systems. Indian administration demonstrates numerous prismatic features, where the modern constitutional values coexist traditional norms and practices. For instance: the Indian legal system is based on Rule of Law along with an independent

judiciary but simultaneously, traditional mechanisms of dispute resolution are also practiced such as the Khap Panchayats in the rural areas dealing in personal and social matters.

The synthesis of Gaus ecological approach and Riggs idea provides a clear understanding of different ethical dilemmas in Indian administration, wherein the legal-rational principles are derived from the West decussate traditional moral philosophies. Public values that include social justice, equity, community upliftment are derived not only from the constitutional mandates but also from the cultural traditions which are immensely ingrained in our Indian traditions.

The major focus here is on having an understanding of India having a great history of traditional beliefs, customs and culture. India's traditional beliefs, customs and culture is diverse which is formed by various religions and ethnicities. There have been ancient practices like Yoga and Ayurveda to festivals such as Diwali and Holi, these traditions reflect a deep reverence for nature, community and spirituality.

### **RESEARCH OBJECTIVES**

1. To critically examine the cultural and civilizational foundations of Indian administration with reference to traditional beliefs, customs.
2. To analytically engage with the theoretical contributions of Fred W. Riggs and John M. Gaus with focus on the ecological and cultural perspectives on administration.
3. To analyze the role of culture in shaping the governance structures and public service delivery in India.
4. To conceptualize the idea of public value within Indian administration.
5. To examine the relationship between ethical culture and public value, its impact on administrative accountability and trust in Indian governance.
6. To identify key challenges resulting due to the cultural diversity and adoption of traditional norms and propose probable solutions to overcome those challenges.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The methodology adopted is primarily qualitative in nature where secondary sources of data has been examined in details. A comprehensive and systematic review of existing literature including books, peer-reviewed journals, government reports have been undertaken in order to examine the linkage between culture, ethics and public value in the Indian administration. Through thematic and interpretative analysis, the study identifies key challenges and also proposes context-specific solutions aimed at enhancing accountability, ethical conduct within the Indian public administration.

### **THE INFLUENCE OF INDIAN CULTURE ON ADMINISTRATION, GOVERNANCE AND PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY**

The term culture involves a comprehension of differences in language, knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, attitudes and behaviors. Culture is associated with a human-made environment that is a requisite of material and non-material products of group life which is disseminated from one generation to the other. According to Edward Burnett Tylor, a cultural anthropologist, he defined culture as, “The complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society”. (Tylor, 1920)

Indian culture is one of the most renowned cultures worldwide which is rich in tradition and values. It is a unique blend of modern western culture and historical traditions. Indian culture is vast and complex, shaped by its long timeline and diverse influences. It started from the ancient period with Indus Valley

Civilization, which was one of the world's earliest urban cultures, quite famous for its advanced city planning, drainage systems and trade. The Vedic period marked the arrival of Indo-Aryans and also laid down the composition of foundational texts of Hindu philosophy, rituals and social structures. The various time periods in Indian history have profoundly shaped Indian culture and India emanated as a secular democracy, accepting its diverse cultural heritage while also combating modern challenges.

Festivals, arts, music and cuisine reflect an amalgamation of traditions from its ancient past to contemporary influences. Indian culture is a tapestry woven from its ancient roots, regional variations and continuous evolution making it one of the most dynamic and rich cultures in the world.

The society comprises many interdependent and interacting parts; administration is one such part of the society. The administration is influenced by several agents of society which in turn affect the functioning of the political system. There have been various thinkers like Fred W. Riggs who have evaluated the interrelation and relationship between society and administration through the ecological approach. Human values are, in fact, enduring long-term goals directing and regulating behavior adaptation. (Mukerjee, 1964). They are the driving force of behavior. (Alisjhabana, 1966)

Culture and administration share a very complex and interdependent relationship. Cultural values and norms have a profound impact in shaping administrative policies. The decision making within the administration is also to a certain extent influenced by the culture like for example certain cultures prefer hierarchical decision making while some prefer egalitarian approach. Change in the administration is essential for development but if a certain culture is resistant to it then the administration would face challenges in implementing new policies.

However, if we discuss the case of India, Indian culture does have a profound influence on administration. The administrative behavior present in society to a much greater extent is determined by values respected by society.

The administration cannot be value neutral. It is guided by values and norms. These guiding values and norms are largely influenced and derived from Indian culture. The Indian cultural values are embedded in the Indian administration and administrators which can be observed in the functioning of administration. India being a country in which different cultures exist and people of each culture blend with each other and work together. The Indian administration works on a blend of certain basic cultural values, languages and traditions which shows the diversity of its people. This mix of cultures helps in bridging gaps and making an inclusive environment where everyone can learn from each other. People from different cultures work together in a collaborative manner within the administration where teamwork and togetherness is the main key. In Indian administration, people have a skill of thinking smartly and discovering innovative solutions to problems. This is called '**jugad**' which is deeply rooted in our Indian culture. The people in India excel in brainstorming and providing innovative solutions to various challenges. This is reflected in the working of the Indian administration as well.

The idea of seniority and experience which is deeply rooted in Indian culture also finds reflection in the working of Indian administration. The people who are senior in terms of age, their ideas get first priority because of seniority principle and their approval also is a matter of importance. There is a hierarchical structure which ensures respect for people who are senior and those below them address their superior in authority formally. This does have a drawback which can lead to a cautious advancement to modification and decision making.

The influence of Indian culture on governance and administration can be observed in various aspects of public service delivery. Since Indian society is hierarchical in nature, citizens might hesitate to challenge

those in authority. Indian culture does have an effect on equitable distribution of public services, where personal connections or favoritism would be given preference over merit. The Indian society is embedded by great traditional values like honesty, integrity, respect which have a great impact on ethical standards of public servants. However, such values can be undermined by corruption, biasness, political preference, bribery which affects the delivery of public services. There still exists discrimination in society on the basis of gender, caste which influences the public service delivery. For instance: - women face challenges in having access to public service due to traditional social norms. India being a country of diverse languages and cultures, communication becomes vital for effective delivery of public services. In order to ensure that the delivery of service is efficient, specifically in government schemes and outreach programs, it is a prerequisite to overcome linguistic barriers to ensure that the details reach the people in the language they understand. However, inspite of such challenges Indian culture is based on collectivism and community relations which have a positive influence on public service delivery like community driven programs, collective decision making and involvement to the grassroot level. Therefore, Indian culture influences public service delivery both positively and negatively. Overcoming the challenge would help to a great extent in ensuring effectiveness and equity of public services in India.

### **TRACING THE INFLUENCE OF TRADITIONAL BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS IN GOVERNANCE**

The traditional beliefs and customs have found reflection in the Indian governance structures both during historical and contemporary times. During the Ancient and Medieval era, the idea of Dharma was central to governance. The king had to uphold Dharma in order to ensure justice and moral order. This belief has been deep rooted in the Hindu philosophy which was extended to governance practices. Ancient texts like Manusmriti and Arthashastra by Kautilya mentioned the function of the king as both a spiritual and temporal leader. There was also the presence of councils and assemblies called sabhas or samitis, which practiced consultative decision-making that is still observed in local governance systems in rural India. The role of panchayat was historically rooted in traditional customs, where senior members resolved disputes and also maintained law and order. In present times though there has been a lot of evolvement in the panchayat system but it is still influenced by the idea of it being community-oriented and consensus-driven which has been part of Indian tradition for centuries. During the Colonial period, though there was imposition of foreign governance structures, it still withheld certain elements of traditional Indian governance, especially with regard to local administration through zamindars (landlords) who continued to engage in looking after the local affairs.

In modern India, the fundamental idea of Dharma still finds reflection in the governance and administration in the form of personal laws, customs and ethical conduct. For example: - laws that are associated with marriage, inheritance and religion such as the Hindu Marriage Act or the Muslim Personal Law, marks a continuation of traditional cultural and religious practices in governance. Decentralization of power that is one of the important features of Indian administration has been taken from ancient Indian traditions of local governance. With the 73rd Constitutional Amendment Act 1992, Part XI was added to the constitution which mentions the organization of Panchayats. It is a three-tier administrative system - Gram panchayat (at the village level) looks after the local development, basic services and social welfare programs; Panchayat Samiti (at the block level) looks after development activities, allocates financial resources and coordinates infrastructure development; Zila Parishad (at district level) looks after the district planning, manages fiscal resources and supervises the activities of Panchayat Samiti.

India is a land of diverse religions where each religion has its own traditional values and culture that has a significant impact not only on the lives of people but also in the making of policies and governing patterns. When the policies are framed the beliefs and interests of each religion is given due importance. The framers of the policies make certain exceptions where it favors sections of the community. For example: - Article 29 and 30 of the Indian constitution protect the cultural and educational rights of minorities. It conserves the language, script and culture of people belonging to the minority section. This provision secures the preservation and development of the unique identity and heritage of minority communities. Articles 25-28 of the Indian constitution mentions the right to freedom of religion. It includes the right to practice, propagate, and profess any religion; freedom to manage religious affairs and not to pay any taxes to promote any religion. Article 15 of the Indian Constitution prohibits discrimination on the basis of any religion, race, caste, sex or place of birth. (Basu, 1971)

The religions practiced in India have rich traditions and customs that have shaped political rhetoric and governance. India being a secular state where the constitution mandates secularism, the impact of religion on governance and policy could lead to complex tensions and some situations of religious conflict. The requirement is to avoid any religious preference or inclination towards any particular religion while framing the policies to avoid religious conflict.

The most interesting part of Indian politics is it integrates traditional rituals especially during elections or major political events. Politicians get involved in religious ceremonies and traditions to appeal to cultural sentiments. For instance, political leaders often participate in prayers or religious rituals before important decisions which signifies the intersection of politics and spirituality, reflecting the enduring importance of traditional customs in the modern governance structure. The Indian customs determine the way political leaders address the nation in culturally resonant ways, arousing religious sentiments to strengthen their political message.

The Indian governance structures be it ancient or modern, have always been integrated with traditional beliefs and customs. Indian governance has replicated its cultural, social and religious values because of the influence of Dharma on kingship in ancient India to the prolongation of the panchayat system. Though modern governance aims to separate politics from religion and traditional customs, these elements continue to influence policy-making, legal systems, and the day-to-day functioning of society.

### **THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PUBLIC VALUE AND ETHICAL CULTURE IN CONTEXT OF INDIAN ADMINISTRATION**

The term public value was first introduced by Mark Moore in his work ‘Creating Public Value: Strategic management in governance’ (1995), where he defined the term as “managerial success in the public sector with initiating and reshaping public sector enterprises in ways that increase their value to the public in both the short and long run”.

In the context of administration, the term public value refers to the value that public services and government actions generate for society. It examines to what extent public organizations, policies and services are able to meet the needs of citizens and ensure common good for all. The focus of public value is on outcomes which benefit the citizens, which encompasses both tangible and intangible elements including economic, social and cultural benefits. The aim of the public administrators should be to create value which improves the quality of life, addresses societal needs and fosters trust and engagement with government.

In the context of Indian administration, the focus of public value is to create an environment where the needs and rights of citizens are of primary concern. This implies that the public administration should cater to the needs of the diverse population through policies related to health, education, employment in order to improve the quality of life for all citizens, especially the disadvantaged section of society. The government schemes such as welfare programs should be implemented effectively and be devoid of corruption. This should be looked into by the Indian administration since public value primarily rests upon efficient use of public resources, transparency and accountability which helps in fostering trust in government institutions. India being a diverse society, the governance should promote principles like social justice, equality and inclusivity through policies that bridge the socio-economic gap, and ensure upliftment of the marginalized communities. The Indian government has designed and implemented various policies to accomplish the above principles. For instance:- National Policy for Persons with Disabilities (2006) it aims to create an environment which provides equal opportunities, participation in society and protection for their rights. It seeks to establish an inclusive society and fulfills the values that are enshrined in the constitution. There have also been various schemes for the upliftment of the marginalized communities like : Pradhan Mantri Garib Kalyan Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Awas Yojana, Pradhan Mantri Jan Aarogya Yojana, Deendayal Antyodaya Yojana- National Rural Livelihood Mission. The idea of participatory governance is related to public value where the citizens engage in decision-making along with the designing and implementation of policies. This is practiced in India in the form of Panchayati Raj institutions, citizen forums and e-governance initiatives which focus on the collective needs of the people. The government of India has initiated multiple policies for enhancing public value such as National Rural Employment Guarantee (NREGA), Right to Education (RTE), Pradhan Mantri Jan Dhan Yojana (PMJDY). These policies intend to enhance the living conditions of citizens, generate employment opportunities and provide improved access to basic services.

The term ethical culture in administration indicates a set of values, principles that guide behavior and decision-making in an organization, establishing actions and policies that align with ethical standards. A strong ethical culture in administration promotes legitimacy and credibility in an organization, where it works towards acting responsible and fostering trust amongst the public. It also ensures complying to the standards of honesty, integrity, accountability and transparency in the conduct of administrative activities. Ethics in administration is pivotal in ensuring a system of governance which maintains rule of law, and works towards ensuring effective and responsible service delivery.

In the context of Indian administration, ethical culture is depicted in the values, principles and practices which guide the behavior of civil servants which ensures that they serve the public with full integrity, transparency, accountability and fairness. There are various key elements which shows how ethical culture is practiced in Indian administration:

1. **Constitutional and Legal Framework:** The ethical governance enshrines the principles of justice, equality and fairness which is mentioned in the constitution of India. For instance: Indian Penal Code (IPC) specifies ethical conduct for public servants so that they act in an unbiased manner and refrain from corrupt practices.
2. **Central Vigilance Commission (CVC):** In order to maintain ethical culture in Indian administration, the CVC probes cases of corruption and any unethical practices that take place in government departments. It provides a framework of ethical standards which the government officials have to maintain to ensure accountability.

3. **Anti-Corruption Measures:** through Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act 2013 it has tried to address cases of corruption and foster ethical governance. These measures make the Indian administration more accountable and transparent for the public. The Whistleblower Protection Act 2014, safeguards those who expose corruption or misconduct in public administration.
4. **Public Grievance Redressal Systems:** ethical culture is preserved when citizens are allowed to make complaints about unethical behavior. The Right to Information Act 2005 and various grievance redressal portals maintain transparency in the actions performed by the government and ensure ethical response from officials to citizens' concerns.
5. **Social and Cultural Influences:** The great culture of India has a tremendous impact on the practice of ethical conduct in administration. Indian values such as honesty, personal integrity, and righteousness play a profound role in shaping the ethical culture.

These elements depict the practice of ethical culture in the administration and governance in order to ensure transparency and accountability to the citizens. However still there still exists various challenges such as corruption, political interference that affect the consistency of ethical standards.

There is a deep relationship between public value and ethical culture in the Indian administration. An effective ethical culture promotes public value when decisions are made not for the personal gain but for the interest of citizens. The administrators when exhibit ethical behavior, it reinforces public trust and adds to the legitimacy of the government, which also boosts the creation of public value. Building and maintaining trust with citizens is a prerequisite for effective delivery of public value which can be achieved when ethical behavior is followed in the administration. When citizens start believing that the actions of government are accompanied by ethical principles, they would support and cooperate with public policies which would also lead to better societal outcomes. The basic fundamental for generating public value is accountability that is ensured by ethical culture. The public servants have to work towards upholding the laws of the land that protects the rights of the citizens and also to utilize the public resources effectively such that they can provide better services. This creates a sense of responsibility among them and also makes them accountable for their actions.

When ethics are practiced in the allocation of resources or decision-making, it fosters social inclusion and also minimizes corruption. This ensures that the benefits of governance reach the marginalized sections of society. If there is lack of ethical culture it would lead to more corruption and undermining of public value thus impairing effective governance. On the contrary, a strong ethical framework would reduce corruption and will ensure that public value is realized effectively.

Therefore, the relationship between ethical culture and public value is symbiotic, where the ethical culture conditions the quality of public value delivered, and the realization of public value supports ethical standards in governance.

### **CHALLENGES AND INNOVATIVE SOLUTIONS IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION: WITHIN INDIAN CONTEXT**

Asia as a continent is a vast culturally diverse region including various languages, religions, ethnic and traditions. It is home to numerous languages like Mandarin, Cantonese belonging to the Sino-Tibetan group while languages like Hindi, Bengali and Punjabi belong to the Indo-Aryan group. There are other languages as well like Arabic, Japanese, Korean and Tamil which reflect on the region's linguistic diversity. There are multiple religions such as Hinduism, Islam, Buddhism and Confucianism which have their origin from the Asian region. These religions have structured the culture and way of living in the

society like Hinduism influenced Indian culture, Buddhism has a profound impact in Southeast Asian regions, Islam is predominant in Indonesia, Pakistan and Middle East, Confucianism has an impact in East Asian societies. In Asia there are numerous cultural practices which are immensely connected to daily life. For instance: in Japan the tea ceremony depicts respect and mindfulness, while in India festivals like Diwali and Holi depict religious and cultural significance. Traditional dress varies widely, from the sari and kurta of India to the kimono in Japan and the cheongsam in China. Asia's cultural landscape is also reflected by the incredibly diverse Asian cuisine. For instance: China offers a wide variety of flavors from sweet and sour to spicy and savory. Indian cuisine is famous for its spices and Japanese cuisine is marked by precision and the use of seasonal ingredients. However globalization has added another layer to Asia's cultural fabric. The cities such as Tokyo, Hong Kong and Singapore are now global financial hubs while cities like Mumbai and Seoul are hubs for entertainment and technology. The internet and social media also has an impact on contemporary culture across Asia, mixing traditional values with global trends. This makes Asia a culturally dynamic and rich region.

India is one of the most culturally diverse countries not only in the Asian region but also in the world. It has a rich tapestry of different languages, religions, traditions and beliefs. There are multiple languages spoken such as Hindi, Bengali, Telugu, Marathi, Urdu, Tamil, Punjabi, Gujarati and many others. This helps in establishing people-to-people connection. India has been the birthplace of numerous world religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, and Sikhism. It is also home to large populations of Muslims, Christians, Zoroastrians, and Jews. Each religion has its unique traditions and customs which depicts the religious diversity that is reflected in festivals, religious practices, art and architecture along with the day-to-day life of people in society. It ensures social cohesion and fosters an environment of inclusivity. The social structure in India is highly influenced by traditional systems where the caste system has a profound impact on marriage, social interactions and community life especially in rural areas. The diversity of India is also reflected in its family customs and roles, where traditions can vary from region to region and even from one community to another. In spite of the vast differences, the Indian society has been able to integrate the diverse elements into a unified nation-state. Cultural diversity has been a source of pride since it fosters creativity and mutual respect. The Indian constitution guarantees the protection of cultural and linguistic rights, along with it the government makes policies that respect diversity.

In India, the public administration helps in effective management of public resources and services. It works towards effective implementation of public policies. The public administrators have the responsibility of managing and executing government programs which aim to address societal issues. They turn these policies into concrete actions and programs. However, the public administration in India faces several challenges which includes: -

1. **Bureaucratic Inefficiency:** - the public administration in India faces setbacks due to bureaucratic delays or inefficiencies in the working processes. Lack of accountability, political interference, corruption, inadequate training and also slow decision making affects the delivery of public services to citizens. There is a lack of strict monitoring and absence of consequences for non-performance that leads to lack of motivation and responsibility. Due to this the bureaucracy is inefficient in performing that affects the administration and governance.
2. **Corruption:** - corruption and excessive red tapism has always been a significant challenge within the Indian bureaucratic system. The issues of bribery, favoritism and misuse of power by the officials impedes effective governance and equitable distribution of resources. Administrative processes become tangled in layers of paperwork, making it difficult for citizens to access public services in a

timely manner. Corruption is one of the major challenges which Indian public administration faces and needs to be dealt with in order to ensure better governance.

3. Lack of Transparency and Accountability: - Public administration in India faces significant challenges regarding transparency and accountability. These challenges undermine public trust in government institutions and impede the effective delivery of services. Transparency and Accountability is a prerequisite for effective functioning of public administration which is still very vague and opaque despite various government reforms such as RTI ( Right to Information) Act.
4. Political interference: - constant political interference in administrative decisions has an effect on the autonomy of the bureaucracy, where the focus is more on short-term populist measures rather than long-term development goals. Due to political interference, the civil servants might prioritize political considerations over public welfare in order to retain their positions, which leads to lack of responsibility towards citizens' needs and demands, also eroding the accountability of civil servants.
5. Inadequate infrastructure: - Outdated technology systems, poor connectivity in rural areas, insufficient physical resources reflect inadequate infrastructure which constrains public administration in providing effective service delivery.
6. Human Resource Management: - the focus should be on more effective recruitment, training and retention of skilled personnel in civil services but due to rigidity of Indian bureaucracy adapting to new challenges and bringing about changes becomes difficult.
7. Coordination Issues: - India having a three-tier system of government, maintaining coordination between the central, state and local governments is a huge challenge. Conflict of interests, inadequate efforts and misalignment of policies disable effective governance.
8. Public policy implementation: - designing of policies is not sufficient but their effective implementation at the grassroots level is very important. However, factors like lack of awareness, bureaucratic inertia, poor monitoring systems reduce the effectiveness of these policies.
9. Social and economic inequality: - there exists socio-economic disparities in India which is a major hurdle in public administration. The major challenge lies in ensuring that the citizens, especially the marginalized communities, benefit from government schemes.
10. Digital divide: - with increase in digitization of public services, there still exists a digital divide between urban and rural areas, along with it among different socio-economic groups as well which limits equitable access to government services

These various challenges mentioned require proposing and implementation of proper reforms, better governance practices, technological integration and capacity building.

Bureaucratic Inefficiency hampers the working of the administration and causes delay in policy implementation. In order to ensure that there are less bureaucratic delays and more efficient work, the reforms should focus on implementing e-governance initiatives which simplify bureaucratic processes and reduce delays. E-Governance modernizes the administrative processes, streamlines decision-making and enhances service delivery which increases government efficiency. For example:- UMANG (Unified Mobile Application for New-age governance) - this initiative aims to simplify the process for citizens such that they have access to services like Aadhar, PAN and more, which makes the government services available through a single app. Similarly MOBILE SEVA - this is also planned to provide government services through mobile devices. It makes accessibility more convenient especially in remote areas such that everyone can avail the government services. E-Governance helps to cover the loopholes present in bureaucracy.

Corruption has always been one of the major hurdles in the Indian administration which causes delays in providing service delivery to citizens and undermines trust in government. In order to ensure that the corruption reaches the minimum level, there is a need to strengthen Anti-Corruption Bodies like the Central Vigilance Commission (CVC) and Lokpal which needs to be authorized and supported with substantial resources in order to combat corruption. There is also a need to enhance the use of digital platforms through e-governance initiatives since it reduces human intervention and lessens the chances of corrupt practices. Even educating citizens about their rights and the mechanisms through public awareness campaigns plays a pivotal role in reporting corruption in order to ensure transparency.

Lack of transparency and accountability in governance takes place when corruption and inefficient practices are allowed to thrive. In order to overcome this situation, there is a need to strengthen and promote Right to Information (RTI) laws which would make sure that the actions of the government are under public scrutiny. By making the government data available in public domains, it would make the administrative process more transparent and would also minimize corruption. The Comptroller and Auditor General (CAG) would play a significant role in reducing wasteful expenditure but this would be possible only when the role of CAG is strengthened and given that much autonomy and power to take stern action against useless expenditure.

Excessive political interference in public administration results in bureaucracy functioning inefficiently and partially. It is essential to establish a clear and enforceable code of conduct for political leaders which would limit their association within the administrative affairs of the civil service. For example:- politicians should not have any power to issue directions to civil servants on an everyday basis. Even courts can play a significant role in maintaining a check on political interference. Whenever there is a situation of political meddling ensuring judicial oversight over administrative actions, will help in keeping public administration neutral. There should be encouragement for participation of citizens in local governance structures like Panchayats and Municipalities, which would be helpful in generating awareness about the evils of political interference in administration and also make them realize the significance of an unbiased, efficient administration.

In order to address economic and social inequality in public administration, a multi-pronged approach is essential that would confirm inclusive growth, equitable access to services and empowerment of marginalized communities. There is a need to focus on social welfare schemes such as food security programs, direct benefit transfers which would provide assistance to marginalized sections and should be designed in such a manner that it is more transparent and would reach the beneficiaries without any inefficiencies. An inclusive framework should be designed which would be focusing on the specific needs of socio-economic groups and affirmative action policies should be initiated. Steps should also be taken for diverse representation of marginalized communities in public administration such that it fosters inclusive workplace culture within the public administration to ensure equality and fairness.

Modernizing and improving the infrastructure is an important prerequisite for providing effective delivery of services in the administration. There is a need to execute digital platforms for record keeping, delivery of service and communication. Establishing and enhancing online platforms for digital services like e-filing, redressal of grievances will play a profound role in reducing corruption, increasing accessibility and streamlining operations. Apart from modernizing the administrative system, there should be adequate skill and leadership development where there are training programs for public servants on the latest technologies and legal reforms, developing strong leadership skills among the senior administrators to ensure effective policy implementation. Collaborating with private sectors is a significant way to

modernize public administration infrastructure by curating best innovative practices and technologies to provide efficient service delivery.

There is a need to remove the digital divide in public administration which can be done through a comprehensive and inclusive approach. A proper infrastructure is required where there is proper mobile network coverage especially in rural areas and there is improved access and affordability of internet and its devices to all its citizens. There should be digital literacy campaigns and training programs to educate citizens on how to use digital tools effectively along with it training programs for government officials is also essential on using digital tools for effective service delivery. The digital services should be developed in multiple Indian languages to serve the needs of a diverse linguistic population. With digitization, there has been an increase in breach of data security so there is a need to ensure data privacy in order to build trust amongst citizens in digital services.

In order to ensure efficient service delivery and better governance there should be smooth coordination between the centre, state and local level. There should be proper allocation of responsibilities between the three levels to avoid any conflicts between them. The focus should be on decentralizing decision-making, strengthening and empowering local bodies while side by side maintaining coordination with the higher levels of government. In order to ensure that the Centre, State and local governments design and execute programs in close collaboration there is a need to implement joint planning mechanisms. This would ensure that the policies are reflecting local needs. When the three levels work in close cooperation with each other it becomes much more convenient to implement policies as well.

Thus, a complete synthesis of reforms at the administrative, structural and systemic levels are required. The focus should be on decentralization, transparency, use of proper technology, strengthening of the rule of law and accountability, addressing regional inequalities all of which will play a profound role in creating an effective and inclusive public administration in India.

## CONCLUSION

In order to sum up, it can be stated that the Indian administration needs to value the country's rich cultural heritage, the concept of public value and ethical conduct. Indian culture is embedded in values of justice and harmony which has a profound impact on administrative practices. In India, the public value is in close coordination with societal well-being, equity and sustainability whereas ethical conduct is vital to foster trust and accountability. An incorporation of all these elements would ensure that the Indian administration will remain responsible, transparent and would correspond to the aspirations and needs of diverse citizenry.

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