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Qno:8 What are salient features of professional and political bureaucracy?

ANSWER

① INTRODUCTION

Bureaucracy is an essential mechanism in any system for the effective functioning of any state system. Pakistan inherited the Indian Civil Service which was highly elitist and loyal to the imperial crown, not people. The state after partition, too, was governed more by file pushers than elected representatives. They served as permanent executives in Ayub's era but Zulfikar Ali Bhutto abolished CSP and introduced a unified grade structure. Bureaucracy became highly politicized. Zia further promoted bureaucracy based on ideological loyalty. Today, it is marked by lack of specialization, low public trust and corruption.

② Salient Features of Professional and Apolitical Bureaucracy

① Decentralized Organizational Structure

One of the primary interactions between the state and citizen is through bureaucrats.

The organization structure is decentralized, and not overcentralized in a professional

services system. Rules are flexible, relevant, and even-handedly enforced without any delay in response to public.

"Concentration of power leads to the abuse of power."

Extensive

② Internal Accountability

In a professional and apolitical bureaucracy, Annual Confidential Reports (ACRs) have measurable FPIs to strengthen

Credibility. In such a transparent framework, extensive internal accountability mechanisms are cascading from one to

another, neither limited nor targeted.
The oversight structures such as PAC, AGP
and ombudsman strengthen bureaucratic
discipline.

③ No Undue Political Interference

A political bureaucracy is one wherein
officials execute laws based on procedures
not political influence. This impersonal
governance ensures equal application of
laws in the letter and spirit.

Bureaucratic loyalty should be for
institutional principles, not patrons.

"Pakistan's bureaucracy is a

fine deviation from Weberian ideals". — The Pakistan
Development
Review.

④ Impartiality and Meritocracy

The independence, integrity, and
intellectual honesty sustain the rule of
law and the constitution. Only
such a bureaucratic model could

sustain the rational-legal authority of a modern constitutional state.

"Bureaucracy is the steel frame of the state, not a rubber stamp for any ruling party." — SC of Pakistan

(E) Integrated KPIs in ACR/PER

A true professional civil service embeds quantifiable key performance indicators (KPIs) in its Annual Confidential Reports or Performance Evaluation Reports to be career progression with improved public service delivery. Such a professional bureaucracy reduces response times, fosters continuous improvement, or insulating politically motivated postings.

(F) Lateral Entry of Technocrats

The recently proposed National Executive Service (NES) aims to improve professionalization

of the civil services by introducing lateral entry into BPS -20 and above.

By inviting technocrats from private sectors, academia, and public policy fields into senior fields, it will break the monopoly of generalist PAS cadre.

(6) Security of Tenure

In a professional and apolitical bureaucracy, a fixed tenure is offered to the officers to shield them against arbitrary transfers and discretionary postings. Clear tenure guidelines should be communicated and followed in true letter and spirit to value policy continuity over political expediency.

(H) Internal Accountability Mechanisms

Both internal and external checks on bureaucratic behavior ensure professionalization and political neutrality in the civil services.

The Waqefi Mchtasib addresses grievances

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caused by bureaucratic delays or hurdles or in federal agencies. The Auditor General of Pakistan (AGP) audits government departments and it is then scrutinized by PAC (Public Accounts Committee) of the National Assembly.

(I) Rule-Based Authority

In a highly professional and apolitical bureaucracy, there is a clear separation between politics and administration. Since civil servants are seen as the political executives, they uphold the constitutional law in its true letter and spirit.

(J) Professional Competence and Training

Professional bureaucracy must be trained, not just selected. The Civil Services Academy is tasked with this, but outdated curricula and lack of

mid-career training affect performance.

(K) Decentralization of Bureaucratic Control

Local government structures do not suffer in a decentralized bureaucracy. Rather, a professional bureaucracy empowers local self-governments, fostering efficiency and local problem-solving. There is no fear of power dilution as a decentralized organizational structure allows quicker and localized responses.

"Decentralization aligns governance with grassroots needs" — Lynn Smith

(3) Critical Analysis

Max Weber, however, warned that bureaucratic specialization and impersonality alienate individuals from their work and community. This 'Iron Cage' has turned them into emotionless machines detached from the citizen needs.

The rule compliance has turned into

Excessive rigidity where procedures
are treated as ends, not means.
Thus, civil service reforms must be
introduced to reduce red tapism

Conclusion

Thus, it could be concluded in the end
that bureaucracy should be
professional and politically neutral
for effective administration of
state affairs. An accountable, competent,
neutral, and meritocratic officialdom
in the civil services ensures
adaptability, integrity and
effectiveness in the delivery of
public services. Thus, red-tapism
and bureaucratic delays should
not be the norm.