

Mock Exam Essay

Topic: Civil Servants: A Burden
on Developing Countries?

→ Outline:

1) Introduction

Thesis Statement: Civil servants have become a burden on developing countries due to corruption, delays and misuse of public resources.

2) Overstaffing Creates a Heavy Fiscal Burden

- a) Governments recruit excessively to reduce unemployment.
- b) Wage bills consume huge share of national budgets.
- c) Spending on salaries > spending on development.
- d) Example: Some countries spend 40-50% of revenue on bureaucracy.
Diverts funds from health, education,

and infrastructure.

3) Inefficiency and Red Tape Slow Down National Progress

- a) Delays in decision-making.
- b) Outdated procedures and rigid hierarchy.
- c) Low productivity due to lack of performance incentives.
- d) Results: delayed projects, discouraged investors, slowed governance.

4) Corruption Within the Civil Service:

- a) Bribery, favouritism, misuse of authority.
- b) "Speed money" culture
- c) Corruption drains billions from developing economies.
- d) Damages public trust and international reputation.
- e) Leads to misallocation of resources and failed projects

5) Politicization of the Bureaucracy

- a) Hiring based on loyalty, not

ment.

- b) Frequent political interference in postings and transfers.
- c) Civil servants serve political masters instead of public welfare.
- d) Undermines professionalism and integrity.

6) Weak Accountability Mechanisms

- a) Poor monitoring and evaluation
- b) Guaranteed job security regardless of performance
- c) No reward for efficiency, no penalty for negligence.
- d) Creates complacency, absenteeism, and a culture of indifference.

7) Resistance to Reform

- a) Civil servants oppose digitalization, transparency, performance audits.
- b) Protect outdated system because they benefit from them.
- c) Delays modernization and administrative reforms.
- d) Bureaucratic inertia stalls national progress.

8) Consequences for Developing Countries

- a) Slow economic growth
- b) Loss of investor confidence
- c) Failure of public service delivery
- d) Rising public frustration and distrust in institutions.
- e) Structural underdevelopment becomes permanent.

9) Conclusion

Civil servants have become a burden on developing countries because of their inefficiency, corruption, and resistance to change, slow down national progress. Without major reforms, they will continue to hold back developments.

Civil servants are theoretically meant to serve as the backbone of the state, ensuring effective governance and public service delivery. However, in many developing countries, the reality is far from this ideal. Instead of facilitating development, the civil service has often become a major obstacle to progress. The bureaucracy's size, inefficiency, corruption, and resistance to perform frequently weigh down national development rather than supporting it. Therefore, civil servants have indeed become a burden on developing countries.

One of the most visible burdens is the fiscal strain created by an oversized civil service. Developing countries often recruit excessively, not because the work requires it, but because political elites need to show job creation. As a result, wage

bills consume a large share of government revenue. In some countries, nearly half of national income goes into paying salaries and pensions. This leaves very little room for investment in infrastructure, education, public health, or social welfare. When the government spends more on maintaining a bloated bureaucracy than on improving the lives of citizens, the civil service becomes a clear financial burden.

Inefficiency further adds to this burden. Bureaucratic procedures in developing countries are notoriously slow, rigid, and outdated. Files move between multiple offices, requiring numerous signatures, causing weeks or months of delay. There is little use of technology, and civil servants often lack adequate training. Because job security is permanent and

Promotions are time-based rather than performance-based, productivity remains low. Slow decision-making discourages investors, delays development projects, and waste national resources. In such environment, civil servants hinder development more than they help it.

Corruption is another major factor that turns civil servants into a burden. In many developing nations, bribery, nepotism, and misuse of authority are common. Whether it is issuing a license, approving a project, or accessing basic public services, citizens often face corruption at multiple levels. This "speed money" culture drains billions of dollars from national economies, money that could have been used for development. Corrupt practices also damage international

reputation and deter foreign investment. When civil servants misuse their power for personal gain, they become a direct burden on the country's progress.

The politicization of the bureaucracy intensifies the problem. In many developing countries, civil service appointments, transfers, and promotions depend more on political loyalty than on merit. Officers often prioritize the interests of their political sponsors than the public good. This undermines professionalism and creates a culture of fear, favoritism, and inefficiency. A politicized civil service loses its neutrality and becomes an extension of political power rather than an independent administrative institution.

Weak accountability mechanisms add further to the burden. Civil servants rarely face consequences for poor performance, delays, or incompetence. Monitoring systems are weak, performance indicators are unclear, and disciplinary actions are rare. This lack of accountability creates complacency and encourages negligent behavior. Without incentives to improve or penalties for inefficiency, many civil servants settle into a routine of minimal effort.

Another overlooked burden is the bureaucracy's resistance to reform. Many civil servants benefit from outdated systems that lack transparency. They resist digitalization, automation, and performance audits because these reforms expose inefficiency and reduce opportunities for

corruption. This bureaucratization delays modernization and blocks reforms that could otherwise accelerate national development.

The consequences of these issues are severe. Developing countries suffer from slow economic growth, poor service delivery, and declining investor confidence. Projects take longer than necessary, cost overruns are common, and essential services like health and education become compromised. Public frustration rises as citizens lose trust in state institutions. Ultimately, the persistent inefficiency of civil servants traps nations in a cycle of underdevelopment.

In conclusion, civil servants have indeed become a burden on developing countries. They drain

financial resources, obstruct development, engage in corrupt practices, and resist reforms that could improve efficiency.

While a capable and professional civil service can be an asset, the current reality in many developing countries shows that the bureaucracy is more of a hindrance than a help.

Until strong reforms, accountability, and downsizing are implemented, civil servants will continue to act as a weight holding back national progress rather than a force pushing it forward.
