

## Governance Class 13

10th March, 2024 at 9:00 AM

### FEATURE OF WEBERIAN BUREAUCRACY (09:03 AM):

- **Political neutrality:**
- The absence of political neutrality mostly results in the politicization of civil services.
- For example, the politicization of civil services in India has gained momentum during the **1970s** when the then PM had given a call for **committed bureaucracy**.
- Bureaucracy must be committed to the ideology of the ruling political party in power so that they could implement the policies and programs of the govt in a more efficient manner.
- Political neutrality of civil services can be ensured through non-partisanship whereas value neutrality can be achieved through impartiality.
- **Hierarchy (09:16 am):**
- It defines the physical structure of an organization.
- It explains the relationship between the superior and subordinate within the organization.
- The Superior has the power to give orders and the subordinates has the responsibility to implement those orders.
- Hierarchy is necessary to ensure discipline, and coordination, to resolve conflicts, and for the overall efficiency of an organization.
- No organization can survive without hierarchy.
- **Secrecy (09:24 am):**
- **Max Weber** believed that bureaucracy can function efficiently only when they are completely isolated from the political, social, and cultural systems.
- Those factors should not influence the impartial functioning of the bureaucracy.
- He strongly favored the highly secretive nature of the functioning of bureaucracy so that they are completely insulated and isolated from society.
- Excessive secrecy can ultimately result in more scope for corruption and misuse of power.
- Good governance demands that there should be complete transparency in the functioning of bureaucracy.
- **Discipline (09:39 am):**
- **Max Weber** emphasized more on discipline to ensure the overall efficiency of an organization.
- Discipline is necessary to prevent anti-organizational behavior, to eliminate the scope for conflicts within the organization, and to ensure the overall efficiency of an organization.
- Discipline can be ensured through a code of conduct and through rules and regulations.
- For example, **All India Civil Services Conduct Rules and Regulations 1957, 1959, and 1964** ensure strict discipline within the functioning of civil services.
- But excessive discipline can be counter-productive.
- It takes away the freedom, independence, and initiative of people working at lower levels in an organization.
- They are only strictly forced to implement the orders given by their superiors.
- Their contribution towards organizational activity can come down drastically, it can make the organization inefficient.

- **What should be done?**

- Conduct rules and regulations should focus more on preventing negative behavior but at the same time, more freedom and independence should be given to personnel at the lowest level.
- Since they know the conditions better, they must have the freedom to take decisions on the basis of ground-level situations.
- Superior should interfere only in case of anti-organizational behavior like corruption, misuse of power, and nepotism in their functioning.
- Rules and regulations should also be simplified to give more freedom to the personnel working at the lower level.

- **Written communication (10:02 am):**

- **Max Weber** emphasized on written communication for the following reasons:
- It is necessary to ensure continuity to an administrative process.
- It fixes accountability on the part of people working within the organization.
- It reduces the scope for the corruption and the misuse of power.
- It protects honest officials in performing their functions.

### **CIVIL SERVICES REFORMS (10:15 AM):**

- **Why do we need reforms?**

- **2nd ARC** in its report on '**Personnel administration and ethics in governance**' has identified the strengths and weaknesses in the functioning of civil services.
- Major strengths of our civil services include:
  - Their ability to perform regulatory functions like maintenance of law and order and generation of revenue;
  - To ensure continuity to administrative process during types of political instability;
  - To ensure the success of the democratic process by conducting elections regularly in a free and fair manner and most importantly to protect the unity and integrity of the nation.
- At the same time, it has also identified major weaknesses including:
  - Politicization of civil services;
  - Absence of accountability mechanism;
  - High level of secrecy in its functioning;
  - Failure to bring about socio-economic transformation;
  - Inability to ensure participation of citizens in governance and high levels of corruption.
- Since the **1990s** onwards the govt has implemented various structural reforms including:
  - Liberalization, Privatization and Globalisation, a rights-based approach to governance, citizen-centric governance initiatives;
  - Decentralized governance in the form of implementation of the **73rd** and **74th amendments**;
  - E-Governance, and other reforms.
- But most of these reforms have not been as successful as they should have been because of the problems in the functioning of our civil services.
- As pointed out by various govt reports our civil servants lack the necessary **attitude** (values) and **aptitude** (skills and knowledge) to ensure the success of these reforms.

- **Reforms in recruitment (10:35 am):**
- **Baswan committee** appointed by UPSC has suggested the following in the recruitment process:
- UPSC should direct the ministries and departments as well as the state govts to provide accurate information about the vacancies so that the recruitment process can be more scientific.
- The committee has suggested a progressive reduction in the age limit from the present **32 years to 26 years** and also a reduction in the number of attempts from **6 to 3** for the general category with relaxation for other categories.
- The committee also suggested conducting separate examinations for IAS, IPS, and other central services.
- In the age of globalization, governance needs specialization, and generalist civil servants are found to be insufficient in terms of skills and knowledge.
- The committee also recommended the removal of optional and replacing it with two more compulsory papers in general studies to ensure a level playing field.
- They include **law** and **public administration**.
- It also recommended changes in the personality test and suggested the personality test conducted by the army for civil services also.
- **Reforms regarding politicization of civil services (11:30 am):**
- Our constitutional forefathers have envisaged balanced polity in the functioning of our political and administrative systems.
- The political executive is responsible for policy formulation and bureaucracy for its implementation.
- Political executives take into consideration values while formulating policies whereas bureaucracy must ensure economy and efficiency in their implementation.
- Since political executives do not possess the necessary skills and knowledge to formulate policies, bureaucracy must provide unbiased, meritorious, rational, and impartial suggestions to political executives.
- Once the policy decisions are taken by the political executives, bureaucracy is expected to them strictly according to rules and regulations.
- But in reality, the country has only witnessed unbalanced polity in terms of politicization of civil services.
- Political executive uses instruments like promotions, transfers, postings, suspensions, and removals to influence the functioning of civil services.

- **What should be done?**
- **2nd ARC** has suggested the following:
- It has identified the fact that the politicization of civil services is taking place because of **ex-post accountability** in the functioning of civil services.
- It means politicians evaluate the accountability of civil servants in terms of the ability of civil servants to implement the orders given by them.
- But there are no provisions in civil services conduct rules and regulations that provide powers to civil servant to reject any illegal or unconstitutional orders given by their superiors.
- If the orders are not implemented, ministers can take action against civil servants for **insubordination**.
- In order to de-politicize civil services, the **2nd ARC** suggested to replace **ex-post accountability** with **ex-ante accountability** ie civil servants must be given the freedom to reject any unconstitutional orders of their superiors for providing a written explanation for their rejection.
- When they are rejecting those orders, they should not be punished for insubordination.
- **2nd ARC** also recommended the constitution of the central services board to decide all their career-related aspects including transfer, promotion, suspension and so far.
- This board must consist of senior civil servants.
- They must decide all these aspects on the basis of objective performance evaluation done by social audit committees.
- This recommendation was implemented by the govt.

**TOPIC FOR THE NEXT CLASS:**Continuation of civil services reforms.