

The Paradox of Public Service: An Exploration of Ideology and Reality

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Abstract— *The Human Cost of Bureaucracy: An Empirical Study of Job Stress and Burnout in Government Service Workers. Because of the nation's history and beliefs, working in the public sector is regarded as an honorable occupation in India. However, Indian families frequently adopt a conservative outlook and see working for the government as a sign of social standing. Public service is when the government or public institutions provide citizens with necessary services like healthcare, education, transportation, and public safety. In India, it is a noble profession. Public employees frequently have their working circumstances and mental health neglected, which results in exhaustion and frustration. India's development efforts prioritize public service, with several projects and programs. There are many difficulties that public employees must overcome, such as a lack of funding, political meddling, and a lack of public trust in the industry. Many government workers in India continue to uphold their ideals and support the welfare of the country in spite of these difficulties. There are numerous policies that can be put into place to enhance working conditions and worker satisfaction. First, providing comparable compensation and benefits. Second, increasing accountability. Third, expanding possibilities for professional growth and knowledge advancement. Lastly establishing a collaborative workplace.*

Keywords— *Government servant, welfare, citizen, mental health, social status.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, working in the public sector is regarded as a noble career that is vital to the growth of the nation. Indian public service ideologies and conceptions are shaped by the nation's standards. Considering the advantages and the craze of government jobs, every Indian parent wants their child to be a government officer or at least a government employee, if not more than that. However, the majority of Indian families are of traditionalist mindset and believe in living life in an old-fashioned way. In India, working for the government is more than just a job—it's a question of social standing. A government worker is in considerably greater demand than someone in any other industry. Because a government employee exclusively works for the public, the common man may behave differently toward government officials. Everyone is aware that in order to do any government work, the common man must win over the government employee. The fact that a male bachelor's eligibility in India is based on his profession rather than his skills is another unpleasant aspect of Indian culture. You will receive a sizable dowry if you hold a respectable government position.^[1]

While many government positions, like as those in the IAS, IPS, and Intelligence Bureau, require responsibility and

stress, it is incorrect to imply that all government jobs are simple and stress-free. In a government job, you have to adjust with very discouraging and frustrating work environment. Leg-pulling and jealousy are common among workers.^[2] It has been reported that applicants for government jobs who pass the entrance tests do not receive joining letters. Children in many states wait until they can acquire a job with the government. The unemployment rate is connected to this. According to latest data from September 2022, the unemployment rate for people aged 20 to 24 was 41.9%, compared to 9.8% for people aged 25 to 29.^[3]

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The term "public service" describes the delivery of services to a nation's citizens by the government or public institutions. These services can include a wide range of tasks, such as provide important services like healthcare, education, transportation, and public safety. Given that it entails advancing the common good and serving the public interest, public service is frequently regarded as a gallant profession. Ensuring that citizens have access to the resources and services they require to lead happy and fruitful lives is the aim of public service. The importance of public service in Indian society cannot be overstated. The ideas of public service are enshrined in the Indian constitution as a key component of the system of government in that nation.

Public employees are viewed as change agents who may help to better people's lives, yet occasionally their mental health and their difficult working conditions are neglected, which leads to burnout. They may not have access to the same benefits and working conditions as their counterparts in the private sector. Public employees may experience irritation and resentment as a result, which can make it challenging for them to feel appreciated and supported in their work. In India, a number of variables, such as the effectiveness of public service delivery, the degree of public trust in government agencies, and the place of public employees in society, all have an impact on how people view the public sector. The necessity for public service reform and modernization to satisfy the evolving requirements of citizens and to take on the challenges of the twenty-first century is becoming increasingly evident.

Overall, a dedication to serving the public good, advancing social justice, and building a more inclusive and fair society shapes Indians' ideological convictions and conceptions of public service. The establishment of a strong and efficient

public service system in India is supported by these attitudes and views.

The beliefs of democracy, social justice, and the welfare of the masses serve as the ideological foundation of public service in India. The Indian government is dedicated to ensuring that all individuals, regardless of their socioeconomic class or background, have equal access to public services. This dedication is mirrored in the nation's policies and initiatives, which give the needs of underserved and marginalized groups top priority. India views public service as an essential part of the nation's development efforts. Numerous projects and programs have been developed by the government with the goal of enhancing public service. Although many of these efforts have been successful, there is still much work to be done. There are 14 lakh active military members among the federal government's 47 lakh employees. Railways had 28% of the workforce, followed by the military with 30% of the total. ^[4] Since 2014, more than 22 crore people have applied for government jobs, and more than 7.22 lakh of them have been hired permanently by the central government.

The working environment varies depending on the position. However, the incidence of workers taking their own lives as a result of mental health problems has increased. A 37-year-old government worker in Tirunelveli committed suicide. He has been complaining about it for over a month, and torture inflicted by higher-ups is said to be the reason. ^[5] In Odisha, a government worker who worked for the police battalion committed suicide. Depression is cited as the cause of the suicide. ^[6] In Mangalore, a 36-year-old worker for the Mangalore Urban Development Authority is said to have hanged himself on Friday. He is thought to have killed himself out of frustration. ^[7] In a decision on a suicide case, the Supreme Court ruled that a senior employee cannot be held accountable for the death of a junior due to workplace stress. The issue relates to the suicide death of Kishor Parashar, a government employee from Maharashtra. ^[8]

III. RESULTS

The reality of working in the social sector might be very different from the romanticized perception of public service in India, which is a line of work dedicated to serving the public interest and advancing the common good. Public employees frequently deal with a variety of challenges that can make it difficult for them to carry out their duties and accomplish their objectives.

The lack of resources and assistance is one of the main problems affecting public employees in India. They may find it challenging to offer the assistance and services that citizens require since civic institutions are frequently understaffed and underfunded. Additionally, political meddling and pressure to put political objectives ahead of the public interest may be experienced by officials. The lack of public confidence in the sector is another issue. It might be challenging for employees to perform their duties efficiently because public institutions are frequently perceived as being dishonest and ineffective. Additionally, the work that they do may expose them to personal dangers and threats to their safety and well-being.

Despite these challenges, many governmental employees in India persist in keeping their ideals and doing their best to meet the needs of the populace. They frequently put themselves through hardships while also giving immensely to their people and the country as a whole. The reality of working in the sector can be rather difficult, despite the idealized perception of public service in India as a noble career dedicated to serving the public interest. However, public employees continue to be dedicated to their values and push for the development of a more just and equitable society. Public employees in India experience a complex and diverse relationship between their working environment and their motivation and job satisfaction. While unfavorable or subpar working conditions can result in a loss of motivation and job satisfaction, a supportive and equitable work environment can aid to foster motivation and job satisfaction.

IV. SUGGESTION

Enhance pay and benefits: One approach may be to offer public employees' salaries and benefits that are competitive and appropriate for their level of labor and responsibilities. Public employees may feel less frustrated and resentful as a result, and it may also increase the likelihood that they will feel respected and supported in their work.

Boost transparency and accountability: To relieve worries about political meddling and corruption, another solution may be to augment transparency and accountability in the public sector. This might entail actions like tightening ethics regulations and control systems and improving public access to information.

Enhance chances for training and professional development for public employees in order to enable them advancing their knowledge and abilities and better serve their communities. This would be the third policy. This could entail actions like making training programs accessible, providing rewards for career advancement, and encouraging a culture of lifelong learning.

Promote a respectful, collaborative, and inclusive work environment: A fourth policy may be to encourage a respectful, inclusive work environment in the public sector. This could entail taking actions like offering assistance and resources for mental health and wellbeing, fostering open dialogue and feedback, and advocating for diversity and inclusion.

Overall, these regulations may contribute to the improvement of the working conditions for Indian public employees and may encourage their motivation and job satisfaction.

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