

WRAP Exams · wrapexams.com

Prelims PYQ, Mains model answers, and copy evaluation. Write to the desk for this paper, a doubt, or the AI waitlist.

ask@wrapexams.com · +91 85951 84903 · wrapexams.com

Q11

"Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are inter-dependent" Discuss their relationship in the context of India.

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2016 · GS II · 12 marks · Governance and Policy

Government policies and interventions for development in various sectors and issues arising out of their design and implementation.

Core demand of the question

- "Effectiveness of the government system at various levels and people's participation in the governance system are inter-dependent" Discuss their relationship in the context of India

Revision summary

Effectiveness of government and people's participation depend on each other in India's three-tier Union.

Elections, gram sabhas and ward committees give the mandate and the local plan.

RTI, social audit and service guarantees work only when offices answer; they also make offices answer.

Where funds and staff are not devolved, participation becomes ritual and delivery stays weak.

Protecting auditors and opening village data keeps both sides of the link alive.

Introduction

A government system works when offices deliver services, keep order, and remain answerable. People's participation is the way citizens vote, plan, watch, and share in those offices. In India the two feed each other: weak participation makes the Union, the State, and the local body deaf; a deaf office then drives people away from the process. The Constitution already joins them through adult franchise, local self-government, and rights to information and service.

Body

Why the two are inter-dependent

- Effectiveness means that a scheme reaches the last household, a court order is obeyed, and a panchayat school actually runs. That needs local knowledge which only residents hold.
- Participation means voting, gram sabhas, ward committees, self-help groups, social audit, and public interest litigation. Those tools work only if the office records are open and the staff respond.
- If people stay out, officials plan from the top, leakages rise, and trust falls. If the office is closed or corrupt, people treat participation as empty ritual and turnout or meeting quality drops.

- India is a Union of States with a third tier after the **73rd and 74th Amendments**. Effectiveness is therefore a chain: Union policy, State cadre and budget, and local delivery. A break at any rung wastes the other two.

How the relationship shows in Indian practice

- Regular elections to the Lok Sabha, State Assemblies, panchayats and municipalities give a mandate. Without that mandate, even a skilled bureaucracy lacks legitimacy.
- The **73rd and 74th Amendments** created gram sabhas and ward committees so that plans for water, roads and poverty schemes would be made with the people who use them. Where the sabha is regular and the devolution of the **3Fs** (functions, funds, functionaries) is real, schools, anganwadis and MGNREGA works improve.
- Where States keep the 29 panchayat subjects on paper and the secretary answers only to the Block, participation becomes a signature on a register and effectiveness stays low.
- The **Right to Information Act, 2005**, social audit under MGNREGA, and public hearings under the **Forest Rights Act** give citizens a file to hold. Those tools raised effectiveness where commissions and courts backed them; they failed where applicants were threatened.
- Sevottam, citizen charters, and public service guarantee Acts in several States try to make the counter time-bound. They work when users know the charter and can appeal. A charter that nobody reads does not raise participation.
- Self-help groups, cooperatives, and resident welfare associations fill gaps in health, credit and sanitation. They are non-state participation that still needs a responsive collector and municipality.

Stresses that break the link

- Clientelism and money power can raise turnout without raising the quality of participation. Effectiveness then means favours, not public goods.
- Digital portals such as MyGov and Direct Benefit Transfer can widen reach, but they exclude those without a phone, a bank, or literacy unless assisted kiosks exist.
- Over-centralised schemes with rigid guidelines leave little for a **gram sabha** to decide, so people stop coming.
- Crime against those who audit, and delays in information commissions, punish participation and protect a weak office.

What would keep both sides alive

- Devolve funds and staff to the third tier, publish village-wise data, and treat the **gram sabha** as a decision body, not a crowd for photographs.
- Protect whistle-blowers and social auditors, and time-bound RTI appeals.
- Mix representative democracy (the elected house) with participatory tools (audit, hearing, charter) so that every level of government is watched by the people it serves.

Flow diagram

People participation -> Effective government
Effective government -> People participation
People participation -> Vote gram sabha RTI audit
Effective government -> Devolution 3Fs charters
Vote gram sabha RTI audit -> Local delivery
Devolution 3Fs charters -> Local delivery

Conclusion

In India, government effectiveness and people's participation are not two separate files. Franchise, panchayats, information rights and social audit show that delivery improves when people can enter the process, and that people enter the process only when the office is open and fair. Strengthening the third tier, social audit and time-bound services is how the Union and the States can keep that two-way link.

Facts & figures

73rd and 74th Amendments (1992)

Gave constitutional status to panchayats and municipalities and listed local functions in the Eleventh and Twelfth Schedules.

Right to Information Act, 2005

Lets citizens inspect files of public authorities, which is a main tool of participatory watch.

MGNREGA social audit

Statutory social audit of works and muster rolls is a working example of people checking delivery.

Gram sabha

The village assembly under the 73rd Amendment is the basic participatory forum for local plans and beneficiary lists.

3Fs

Functions, funds and functionaries that States must devolve if the third tier is to be effective.

WRAP Exams · Write. Read. Analyse. Practice. · <https://wrapexams.com/upsc/mains-answers/gs-2/2016/effectiveness-of-the-government-system-at-various-levels-and-peoples-participation-in-the-governance-system-are-inter-dependent-discuss-their-relationship-in-the-context-of-india/> · ask@wrapexams.com · wrapexams.com