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Q6(a)

"In Indian culture and value system, an equal opportunity has been provided irrespective of gender identity. The number of women in public service has been steadily increasing over the years." Examine the gender-specific challenges faced by female public servants and suggest suitable measures to increase their efficiency in discharging their duties and maintaining high standards of probity

UPSC Civil Services Mains 2024 · GS IV · 10 marks · Probity in Governance

Probity in Governance: Concept of public service; Philosophical basis of governance and probity; Information sharing and transparency in government, Right to Information, Codes of Ethics, Codes of Conduct, Citizen's Charters, Work culture, Quality of service delivery, Utilization of public funds, challenges of corruption.

Core demand of the question

- (a) Equal opportunity irrespective of gender; women rising in public service; name gender-specific challenges; measures for efficiency and probity
- (b) Mission Karmayogi's high standard of conduct; how it empowers productive efficiency and grassroots delivery

Revision summary

Indian ethos and the Constitution promise equal opportunity; women's numbers in public service have risen, but command postings still lag.

Gender-specific challenges include safety, POSH failure, care burden, infrastructure, ACR bias and isolation that aids capture.

Measures mix predictable postings, working POSH, creche, bias audit and support for the officer who refuses a tout.

Mission Karmayogi is a competency and conduct programme on iGOT, meant to shift from rule-parrot to role skill.

It empowers grassroots delivery only if content, language and measures reach the last-mile worker and change the thana, not only the dashboard.

Introduction

The stem claims an **Indian ethos of equal opportunity** and a **rising count of women** in the public service. Both are **partly true** and **incomplete**. Part (a) asks for the **gender-specific knots** that still sit in a **transfer order** and a **night camp**, and for measures that raise **efficiency and probity** together. Part (b) asks whether **Mission Karmayogi** can turn **conduct and skill** into **delivery at the last mile**, not only a **portal of courses**.

Body

(a) Women in public service: challenges and measures

Equal opportunity in ethos is the Gita's soul without caste-sex arrogance, the Constitution's Articles 14, 15, 16, and **panchayat reservations** that changed who sits on a chair. **Numbers** of women in **civil services, police, health and teaching** have risen, yet **field command, night duty, and secretary-level chairs** remain **male weather**. Ethics here is **not a compliment**. It is **justice in the posting**.

Gender-specific challenges. **Safety** on tour and in a riot. **POSH** that exists on paper and **dies in a committee** captured by the accused. **Dual burden** of care that a transfer policy treats as a **private failure**. **Infrastructure:** toilets, housing, creche, a locked rest-room in a thana. **Stereotypes:** "soft posting", "not for naxal area", **ACR bias**. **Online abuse** of a woman officer who speaks. **Probity pressure:** a woman who refuses a bribe may be **called difficult**; one who is isolated may be **easier to trap**. **Tokenism** that puts a face on a poster and **empties her of independent charge**.

Measures for efficiency and probity. **Predictable transfer and couple-posting** rules that are **published**, not a favour. **Safe mobility** and **women in the accompanying police** for night operations. **Working POSH, external members, time-bound**. **Creche and parental leave** that **men also take**, or care remains a **mother tax**. **Mentoring** without **gatekeeping**. **Transparent ACR** with **gender-bias audit**. **Infrastructure budgets** as **integrity infrastructure:** a woman who must **ask a male clerk for a key** is already in a **dignity deficit**. **Probity:** rotation, **no cash interface**, **CCTV in public-dealing rooms**, **support when she refuses a tout** - isolation is how capture happens. Efficiency without safety is a **slogan**. Probity without numbers of women in **real chairs** is a **men's code**.

(b) Mission Karmayogi: conduct, efficiency, grassroots

Mission Karmayogi (NPCSCB) aims at a **competency-led, role-based civil service: iGOT** courses, **Capacity Building Commission**, **Karmayogi Bharat**, a shift from **rule-parrot** to **skill plus behaviour**. The stem's "**high standard of conduct**" is the **ethical core: seva, courtesy, no darbar, data that is true**. **Self-development** is the Gita's **yoga of work** in a modern LMS - dangerous if it becomes **certificate farming**.

Empowerment for productive efficiency at the grassroots happens only if the platform meets the **patwari and the ANM**, not only the **academy lecture**. **Role competencies** for a **gram sevak:** how to run a **social audit**, how to **speak to a widow**, how to **use PFMS without a tout**. **Behavioural training** on **unconscious bias, POSH, constitutional morality**. **Just-in-time** modules before a **flood** or a **poll**. **Peer learning (the 70-20-10 idea: most learning on the job)**. **Measurement** that is **citizen outcome** (a working handpump) not **hours watched**.

- **Ethics of the scheme:** it **empowers** when it **reduces information asymmetry** and **builds courage to say no**. It **fails** when a **forced click-through** sits beside an **unchanged thana culture**, or when **English-only** content **excludes** the grassroots worker. **Kautilya** wanted **trained watchmen**. **Karmayogi** is that ambition in a **login**. The login is not yet the **village**.

Flow diagram

Equal opportunity claim -> Safety care bias POSH
Safety care bias POSH -> Posting creche audit no-cash
Mission Karmayogi -> Role competency
Role competency -> Grassroots delivery

Conclusion

Women's rising numbers still meet safety, care, bias and capture; efficiency and probity need postings, POSH, infrastructure and solidarity when a bribe is refused. Mission Karmayogi can raise conduct and last-mile skill if it trains the actual grassroots worker for real tasks, not only for a completion certificate.

Facts & figures

Articles 14, 15, 16

Equality before law, non-discrimination, and equality of opportunity in public employment - the constitutional floor for women in service.

POSH Act, 2013

The statute against sexual harassment at work; **Internal Committees** that are captured by the accused make the law a form without substance.

Panchayat reservations

Constitutional reservations for women in local bodies that changed who holds a public chair, still uneven in real power.

NPCSCB / Mission Karmayogi

The National Programme for Civil Services Capacity Building: iGOT platform, **Capacity Building Commission**, competency-driven learning.

70-20-10 learning

A capacity-building idea that most skill is learned on the job, some from peers, and a smaller share from formal courses.

iGOT Karmayogi

The online training marketplace meant to offer role-based modules to officials across services and districts.

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