



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** Discuss the benefits and limitations of objectivity in maintaining public trust and ensuring fair governance. (150 Words)

16 May, 2024 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### Approach

- Introduce the answer by defining objectivity.
- Delve into the benefits of objectivity in maintaining public trust and ensuring fair governance.
- Highlight the limitations of objectivity in maintaining public trust and ensuring fair governance.
- Conclude Suitably.

### Introduction

Objectivity refers to the **ability to judge fairly, without bias** or external influence. Objectivity in governance means adherence to rationality, legality and proven standards, procedures and norms in institutions by the public authorities. It implies that governance decisions should be taken based on merit and after rigorous analysis of evidence.

### Body

#### Benefits of Objectivity in Governance:

- **Promotes Fairness:**
  - Objectivity ensures decisions are made on merit, not personal biases or affiliations. This fosters a level playing field for citizens and businesses, upholding equal treatment under the law.
    - **For example:** the Public Distribution System (PDS) in India incorporates objective criteria like income levels to identify beneficiaries, which reduces the risk of favouritism and promotes equality in accessing subsidized food grains.
- **Enhances Transparency:**
  - When decisions are made based on objective data and transparent procedures, the rationale behind them becomes clear. This builds public confidence, as citizens can understand how resources are allocated and policies are formulated.
    - **For example:** The Right to Information (RTI) Act in India exemplifies this principle, empowering citizens to access government records and hold authorities accountable.
- **Minimizes Corruption:**
  - Objectivity reduces corruption and promotes accountability. Established procedures and clear guidelines provide a framework for decision-making, deterring officials from succumbing to external pressures or personal biases. This strengthens the integrity of governance and fosters public trust.
    - **For example:** the implementation of online land record management systems in several Indian states minimizes the opportunities for manipulating land ownership records.

## Limitations of Objectivity in Governance:

### ▪ Disregards Situational Factors:

- Strict adherence to objectivity might overlook nuances specific to a situation. Situational factors like social inequalities or historical injustices may necessitate a tailored approach.
  - **For example:** Students with learning disabilities might require specific accommodations or alternative assessments to accurately measure their knowledge and skills.

### ▪ Limits Creativity:

- In a rapidly changing world, overly rigid objectivity could hinder flexible adaptation. It also limits human creativity and discourages the incorporation of different perspectives.
  - **For example:** Addressing complex issues like climate change might require innovative solutions that defy pre-defined criteria.

### ▪ Limited Application:

- Certain decisions, particularly those concerning social welfare, may require a degree of empathy and sensitivity that pure objectivity might not capture.
  - **For example:** allocating resources for disaster relief might involve considering not just the number of people affected, but also the specific vulnerabilities of different groups (e.g., elderly, children) within the affected population..

## Conclusion

Objectivity remains a cornerstone of fair governance. However, recognizing its limitations allows for a more nuanced approach that incorporates context, empathy, and public participation. By striking this balance, governments can build stronger public trust and ensure equitable outcomes for all.

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