



Mains Practice Question

Q. Define and differentiate between the following terms:- (150 words)

(a) Sympathy

(b) Empathy

(c) Compassion

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Approach

- Define all the term in the introduction part.
- Differentiate between the given terms.

Introduction

- **Sympathy** is a feeling and expression of concern for someone, often accompanied by a wish for them to be happier or better off. In general, sympathy implies a deeper, more personal, level of concern than pity, a simple expression of sorrow.
- **Empathy** It involves, first, seeing someone else's situation from his/ her perspective, and, second, sharing that person's emotions, including, if any, his distress. Empathy, is the act of putting yourself in someone else's shoes. It occurs when you are truly trying to understand or experience someone else's emotions, as if they were your own.
- **Compassion** is a deeper level of empathy, demonstrating an actual desire to help the suffering person. It is a unique feeling of sympathy for the suffering of others that involves emotions and empathy towards others, a sense of understanding, and the drive to protect.

Body

Difference between the given terms -

- Empathy is often confused with sympathy, pity and compassion, which are merely recognition of another person's distress. Sympathy typically implies that the suffering person does not "deserve" what has happened to him or her and is powerless to do anything about it.
- Empathy is a skilled response, while sympathy is reactive responses, which is why developing the skill of empathy is a more realistic goal for public services.
- Empathy does include elements of sympathy and compassion, but it also carries pertinent connotations that both sympathy and compassion lack. Empathy seems to suggest a response to situations whose features are more subtle, imperceptible and complex which require cognitive skills to perceive, share, understand and put into action.

	Sympathy	Empathy	Compassion
Defining characteristics	Observing, Reacting, immediate, predominantly emotional	Acknowledgment of suffering, Understanding the person, Affective	Non-conditional, Virtuous, Altruistic, Instrumental, Action-

	awareness.	response.	oriented response
Response to suffering	Acknowledgment	Acknowledgment, understanding, and emotional resonance	Acknowledgment, understanding, and emotional resonance linked with action aimed at understanding the person and the amelioration of suffering
Type of response	A visceral reaction to a distressing situation	Objective and affective response to a distressing situation	A proactive and targeted response to a distressing situation

Conclusion

Civil Servants should be Empathetic, Compassionate, Efficient, Impartial and Incorruptible and these are the guiding principles that form the bedrock of the higher civil services.

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