

Position and Rank Classification System: Significance and Features

Introduction and Meaning

A proper and systematic classification of personnel in government is very essential for the management of civil services in the modern state. Systematic classification of jobs and standardisation of staff are two of the most essential features of the personnel system. In simple words, classification is the process of division of things or persons on the basis of common characteristics. In personnel administration classification means grouping of various positions on the basis of their duties and responsibilities.

DEFINITIONS

According to Herman Finer, “Upon proper classification depends the efficiency of the recruitment, the possibility of creating a rational promotional system, and the equitable treatment of people working in different departments.”

According to Dimock and Dimock, “Classification may be defined as systematic sorting and ranking in the hierarchical sequence according to comparative difficulty and responsibility.”

Before moving further, we should understand the meaning of some more related terms, such as, class, service, grade, etc. According to William with respect to difficulty of duties and responsibilities and requisite qualifications to require identical education, experience, knowledge, and ability and justify identical treatment in matters of pay, selection, transfer, and promotion.

Types of Classification

There are two different systems of classification in the world. One which was developed in Britain and the other in United States. The basic distinction between the British and the US systems really lies in the “Position” versus “Rank” concept in the civil services. Almost all over the world, the government posts have been classified by these two well known systems which are known as position classification and rank classification. The USA, Japan, Taiwan, Philippines, Canada are some of the countries which have adopted the system of position classification while etc. UK, France, India, Malaysia, Pakistan, Germany etc. have adopted the system of rank classification.

Classification in India

India has adopted the system of rank classification under this system the officers and employees themselves are classified. The system of rank classification admits of a few broad classes only; and to cross the class barrier one must be promoted. Under this system the development of an employee does not affect either his pay or position. Any posting of an IAS or IPS officer will not have an effect on his salary and seniority. He will continue to draw his salary according to his scale and seniority. Line wise, an Assistant may be posted as U.D.C (Upper Division Clerk) or L.D.C (Lower Division Clerk), his pay and position will continue to be that of Assistant. Similarly, even if he works as section officer his pay and position will remain unaffected.

Classification in Pre – Independence Period

The Indian civil service classification is based on the British model. Initially, during the East India Company Rule the civil services in India were classified into two categories:

- (a) **Covenanted Services:** These were the superior services reserved for the British appointed from the U.K. They were known as Covenanted since the company had entered into a covenant or agreement with them regarding the conditions of service etc.
- (b) **Uncovenanted Services:** These were subordinate services. The appointments were from amongst loyal Indians. Unlike the covenanted services there was non agreement between the employees and the company.

Slowly, the spread of western education in India, aided principally to the efforts of Lord Macaulay, awakened in Indians lively expectations of being employed in the higher offices reserved for the covenanted civil service. In 1886, The Government of India appointed a public service Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Charles Aitchison. The Aitchison Commission submitted its report in n1887 and recommended a three- tier system of classification of services.

- (1) Imperial Civil Service of India.
- (2) Provincial Civil Service
- (3) Subordinate Services

“The Imperial Civil Service”, on the suggestion of the Secretary of State came to be denominated as the “Indian Civil Service”.

Following the Government of India Act 1919, changes were made in the service structure. The civil services (Classification, Control and Appeal) Rules made in 1930 indicated that the public services in India were categorised into:-

1. The All India Services
2. The Central Services Class 1
3. The Central Services Class 2
4. The Provincial Services
5. The Specialist Services
6. The Subordinate Services

Classification Since Independence

Civil Services, after independence have been categorised into three types:-

1. All India Services (Common to both Centre and States)
2. Central Services (For Administering Central Subjects)
3. State Services (For Administration of Subjects Under State Jurisdiction)

Presently, the services in India are classified into the following categories:-

- a) All India Services:-** like The Indian Administrative Services (IAS), The Indian Police Services (IPS), The Indian Forest Services (IFS)
- b) Central Services:-** The Central Services are organised into four groups- A, B, C and D (corresponding to former class 1, 2, 3 and 4 Services)
- c) Central Secretariat Services:-** Central Secretariat Services (CSS) provide logistic Services to central secretariat and a continuity in its operation as people in this service are permanently appointed to the central secretariat
- d) State Civil Services:-** These are services exclusively under the Jurisdiction of the State Government and primarily administer the State Subjects like Punjab Civil Services (PCS) in Punjab, Police Services, Education Services, Medical Services, Judicial Services etc.

Significance/Advantages of Classification

- 1) Facilitates proper division of work
- 2) Minimises the influence of individual Pressure
- 3) Facilitates recruitment and training
- 4) Promotes employee motivation
- 5) Common terminology and uniform work standards
- 6) Effective tool of management
- 7) Facilitates budgetary sanctions
- 8) Helps in maintaining Personnel records
- 9) Personnel administration is systematic and simple
- 10) Provision of equal pay for equal work
- 11) It eliminates corruption
- 12) Feeling of cooperation among employees
- 13) Provision of adequate compensation

Features of Position Classification

1. Possesses all India character
2. Service on deputation
3. Occupies the top positions in the states
4. Bases on national integration
5. To attract best talent
6. Constitutional recognition
7. Facilitate communication system
8. Historical necessity
9. Sustain competitive spirit of youth
10. Service provisions governed by states

Critical Evaluation

1. All India outlook is a myth rather than reality
2. Subject to influence
3. Against constitutional norms
4. Excessive burden on the State Governments
5. All India Services no longer represent the talent
6. All India Services have failed to shed their narrow outlook
7. Lower the morale of State Services
8. Opposition from parties adopting leftist or regional stance
9. Practical difficulties
10. Problems created by officers belonging to this cadre

Future of All India Services

1. The Indian Administrative Services (IAS)

2. The Central Services

3. The State Civil Services

Conclusion

In spite of a number of recommendations towards the change in the existing system of Position Classification, The Government of India has not shown any interest in its adoption. It is high time that the system of classification reviewed. A separate ministry of personnel was set up. It is expected that the ministry may come out with a scheme of classification on “job evaluation” and equal pay for equal work which should at the same time assist and support the developmental bias of the entire administrative set up in India.