



Secure Synopsis compilation for January-2026

General Studies-4

Table of contents

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family society and educational institutions in inculcating values. ----- 3

Q. Freedom of conscience is tested not in agreement, but in tolerance of difference. Explain this ethical proposition. Discuss its relevance in plural societies like India. (10 M)----- 3

Q. “Public confidence in institutions is an ethical capital that can be easily eroded”. Explain this statement. Analyse how responses to economic offences affect societal trust. (10 M)----- 4

Q. Identify the key determinants of ethical behaviour in individuals. Explain how these determinants interact in real-life situations. (10 M) ----- 6

Q. Distinguish between ethical intention and ethical outcome. Examine their relevance in evaluating moral responsibility. (10 M)----- 7

Q. What is meant by ethical pluralism? Analyse its impact on decision-making in a diverse society. (10 M)-- 8

Q. The boundary between private morality and public ethics is neither rigid nor impermeable. Explain the ethical basis of this assertion. Discuss its implications for public office holders. (10 M) ----- 9

Q. Moral courage, rather than moral knowledge, defines transformative leadership. Evaluate this statement. Explain how this insight is relevant for civil servants facing ethical dilemmas. (10 M) ----- 11

Q. Examine the relevance of altruism as demonstrated by great leaders in shaping ethical public service. Analyse its limits in modern bureaucratic systems. (10 M) ----- 12

Q. “Reformers transform society not by confrontation alone, but by reshaping social conscience”. Explain the ethical basis of this assertion. Discuss its implications for value-based governance. (10 M) ----- 13

Q. “The family is the first moral classroom, but not always the most reliable one.” In this context, bring out the role of family in value formation. Identify the limitations of relying solely on familial socialisation for ethical development. (10 M)----- 15

Q. “Education transmits skills efficiently, but values only selectively”. Discuss the role of educational institutions in value inculcation. Analyse the institutional factors that weaken ethical learning. (10 M) ----- 16

Attitude: content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion. -----17

Q. “Prejudice reinforced by misinformation corrodes ethical judgement in everyday public conduct”. Explain this statement in the context of social stereotyping. Discuss its ethical consequences for vulnerable groups. (10 M) ----- 17

Q. Attitude is not merely a mental state but a determinant of ethical conduct. Explain the structure of attitude. Examine how attitude influences behaviour in public life. (10 M) -----	19
Q. Differentiate between moral attitudes and political attitudes. Evaluate their relevance for public servants. (10 M) -----	20
Q. The ethical challenges of modern societies arise more from moral confusion than moral absence. Examine the relevance of moral philosophy in addressing present-day ethical crises. (10 M) -----	21
<i>Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service, integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker-sections.</i> -----	24
Q. Distinguish between impartiality and non-partisanship in public administration. Examine why both are indispensable for ethical governance. (10 M). -----	24
Q. Explain why tolerance is a core ethical requirement for civil servants in a plural society. Examine its relevance in managing social conflicts. (10 M) -----	26
<i>Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance. -27</i>	
Q. Explain the core components of emotional intelligence. Analyse their relevance in decision-making under administrative pressure. (10 M) -----	27
Q. “Emotional intelligence is not an innate trait but an administratively cultivable competence” Analyse this statement. Illustrate its relevance in public service delivery. (10 M) -----	29
<i>Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world. -----</i>	<i>30</i>
Q. What does the following quotation means to you in the present context? -----	30
“He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.” -----	30
– Socrates -----	30
Q. What does the following quotation mean to you in the present context? (10 M) -----	32
“The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is.” ---	32
– Winston Churchill. -----	32
Q. What does the following quotation mean to you in the present context? (10 M) -----	33
“True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice” -----	33
-Martin Luther King Jr. -----	33
<i>Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems; ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions; laws, rules, regulations and conscience as sources of ethical guidance; accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding; corporate governance. -----</i>	<i>34</i>
Q. Ethical governance demands more than procedural compliance. Examine the distinction between legality and morality. Analyse why ethical restraint is essential in public administration. (10 M) -----	34
Q. Ethical responsibility in public life cannot be reduced to mere adherence to rules. Examine this statement in the context of moral accountability. Asses its relevance for ethical governance. (10 M) -----	36
<i>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. -----</i>	<i>37</i>
Q. Symbols of privilege can quietly erode moral legitimacy in public institutions. Explain the ethical reasoning behind this view. Assess its relevance for integrity institutions in a democracy. (10 M) -----	37

- Q. Corruption becomes most corrosive when discretion is converted into entitlement. Examine the ethical meaning of the statement. Discuss its relevance in public service decision-making. (10 M) -----39
- Q. Fear of punishment alone cannot ensure ethical conduct in public administration. Evaluate the statement and suggest ethical enablers beyond deterrence. (10 M)-----40
- Q. Integrity in public life is tested not in rules but in resistance to unethical incentives. Analyse the ethical challenges faced by public servants. Discuss ways to strengthen ethical resilience. (10 M)-----41

Case Studies on above issues.-----43

- Q. Business history, like any other, is replete with stories of remarkable successes and significant setbacks. 43
- Q. As the Chief Secretary of a progressive Indian state committed to equality and women's empowerment, you introduced the "Digitally Padho" scheme to address the digital divide among students.-----45

Ethics and Human Interface: Essence, determinants and consequences of Ethics in-human actions; dimensions of ethics; ethics - in private and public relationships. Human Values - lessons from the lives and teachings of great leaders, reformers and administrators; role of family society and educational institutions in inculcating values.

Q. Freedom of conscience is tested not in agreement, but in tolerance of difference. Explain this ethical proposition. Discuss its relevance in plural societies like India. (10 M)

Introduction

Freedom of conscience reflects the deepest layer of ethical freedom, where belief is shaped by inner moral reasoning rather than external pressure. In a plural democracy, this freedom is validated not by agreement, but by restraint and tolerance.

Body

Ethical meaning of freedom of conscience

1. **Moral autonomy of the individual:** Freedom of conscience embodies the ethical principle that individuals are moral agents capable of choosing beliefs without coercion.
Eg: Article 25 of the Constitution guarantees freedom of conscience, recognising belief as an inner moral domain, affirmed by the Supreme Court in **Bijoe Emmanuel vs State of Kerala (1986)**.
2. **Tolerance as a moral virtue:** Ethical conscience is tested when one respects beliefs that conflict with one's own moral framework.
Eg: In Bijoe Emmanuel (1986), the Court protected students who declined to sing the national anthem due to religious belief, upholding tolerance over enforced conformity.
3. **Distinction between disagreement and suppression:** Ethical freedom allows disagreement without denying another's right to believe.
Eg: Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India (2017) linked freedom of belief with **human dignity**, reinforcing respect for differing moral choices.
4. **Rejection of coercion as unethical:** Any attempt to impose belief undermines ethical conscience by replacing reason with fear or inducement.
Eg: The Supreme Court in Rev. Stainislaus vs State of Madhya Pradesh (1977) held that freedom of religion does not include the right to coerce another's conscience.

5. **Inner morality over outward conformity:** Ethical conscience values sincerity of belief rather than public conformity to dominant norms.
Eg: Gandhian ethics emphasised “**freedom of the soul**”, where moral conviction could not be dictated by social pressure.

Relevance in plural societies like India

1. **Ethical foundation of Indian secularism:** Indian secularism is based on equal respect for all faiths rather than religious uniformity.
Eg: In **S.R. Bommai vs Union of India (1994)**, the Supreme Court held **secularism** as part of the **basic structure**, grounded in tolerance.
2. **Prevention of moral majoritarianism:** Tolerance of conscience safeguards minorities from ethical domination by majority belief systems.
Eg: The **National Commission to Review the Working of the Constitution (2002)** emphasised protection of minority conscience as essential to Indian democracy.
3. **Maintenance of social harmony:** Respecting differing beliefs reduces ethical conflict and prevents escalation into social unrest.
Eg: The Supreme Court in **Tehseen Poonawalla vs Union of India (2018)** warned against mob enforcement of moral beliefs, stressing restraint.
4. **Ethical legitimacy of state authority:** The state gains moral authority when it protects belief rather than policing conscience.
Eg: **Article 14 and Article 25 read together** require the state to act neutrally in matters of faith, reinforcing ethical governance.
5. **Cultivation of ethical citizenship:** Tolerance trains citizens to exercise empathy, restraint and moral responsibility.
Eg: The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission (Ethics in Governance, 2007)** highlighted tolerance and empathy as core public values.

Conclusion

Freedom of conscience survives not through moral victory but through moral restraint. In a diverse society like India, tolerance of difference remains the highest ethical test of democratic maturity and social harmony.

Q. “Public confidence in institutions is an ethical capital that can be easily eroded”. Explain this statement. Analyse how responses to economic offences affect societal trust. (10 M)

Introduction

Public institutions survive not merely on legal authority but on **ethical legitimacy rooted in public trust**. This trust functions as ethical capital—slowly accumulated through integrity, yet rapidly depleted when institutions mishandle wrongdoing, especially economic offences involving public resources.

Body

Ethical meaning of public confidence as institutional capital

1. **Moral legitimacy of authority:** Public confidence reflects the belief that institutions act with **integrity, fairness, and impartiality**, which gives moral force to their decisions beyond coercive

power.

Eg: Supreme Court in Manohar Lal Sharma v. Principal Secretary (2014) held that erosion of institutional credibility weakens democratic governance.

2. **Foundation of voluntary compliance:** Ethical trust encourages citizens to comply voluntarily with laws and regulations, reducing reliance on coercion.

Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission (4th Report on Ethics in Governance) identified public trust as essential for effective administration.

3. **Collective moral expectation:** Citizens expect institutions to protect public interest over private power, especially in cases involving large public funds.

Eg: Article 38 of the Constitution mandates the State to promote a social order based on justice, reinforcing ethical expectations.

4. **Fragility of ethical capital:** Unlike physical capital, ethical capital is intangible and easily eroded by perceived inconsistency or bias.

Eg: ARC Report notes that tolerance of unethical conduct damages institutional credibility more than inefficiency.

5. **Inter-generational trust deficit:** Loss of confidence today shapes long-term cynicism among citizens, weakening democratic culture.

Eg: World Bank Governance Indicators emphasise trust as a long-term determinant of institutional effectiveness.

Impact of responses to economic offences on societal trust

1. **Perception of equality before law:** Responses to economic offences shape belief in fairness, especially when powerful individuals are involved.

Eg: Article 14 of the Constitution guarantees equality before law; selective enforcement erodes societal trust.

2. **Deterrence as ethical signalling:** Firm yet fair action against economic crimes signals intolerance for misuse of public resources.

Eg: Supreme Court in Y.S. Jagan Mohan Reddy v. CBI (2013) observed that economic offences have deep-rooted societal impact.

3. **Transparency in investigation and adjudication:** Procedural openness reassures citizens that justice is not arbitrary or influenced.

Eg: Vineet Narain v. Union of India (1998) stressed transparency and institutional accountability in economic crime investigations.

4. **Balancing liberty with public interest:** Ethical handling of bail and custody decisions affects perceptions of justice delivery.

Eg: Justice V.R. Krishna Iyer's bail jurisprudence emphasised reasoned discretion to preserve public faith in justice.

5. **Protection of financial system credibility:** How institutions respond determines confidence in banks, regulators, and governance.

Eg: RBI Financial Stability Reports consistently highlight trust as central to financial system stability.

Conclusion

Public confidence is an ethical reservoir that sustains institutional authority and democratic legitimacy. Fair, transparent, and principled responses to economic offences are therefore essential not only for justice, but for preserving the moral foundations of governance.

Q. Identify the key determinants of ethical behaviour in individuals. Explain how these determinants interact in real-life situations. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical behaviour does not arise in isolation; it is shaped by the continuous interaction between personal values and the social-institutional environment. In contemporary governance and professional life, understanding these determinants is essential for ethical decision-making under pressure.

Body

Key determinants of ethical behaviour

1. **Moral values and conscience:** Internalised values such as honesty, integrity and compassion act as the first filter for ethical judgement, guiding individuals even in the absence of external oversight.
Eg: Civil servants refusing to manipulate beneficiary lists under political pressure during welfare delivery audits, guided by personal conscience despite risks to career prospects.
2. **Socialisation and upbringing:** Family, education and peer groups shape ethical sensitivity and behavioural norms over time.
Eg: Ethics education under the CBSE competency-based curriculum (2023 onwards) emphasising integrity and empathy, reinforcing value-based conduct from early schooling.
3. **Institutional rules and legal framework:** Clear laws, codes of conduct and accountability mechanisms deter unethical behaviour and reinforce ethical choices.
Eg: All India Services Conduct Rules and enforcement through disciplinary proceedings, supported by **Article 311**, shaping ethical restraint in public service.
4. **Leadership and organisational culture:** Ethical leadership sets behavioural benchmarks, normalising integrity and discouraging misconduct.
Eg: Whistle-blower protection mechanisms strengthened after the 2nd ARC recommendations, encouraging ethical reporting within organisations.
5. **Incentives and consequences:** Reward structures and fear of sanctions influence ethical choices, especially in high-stake environments.
Eg: Use of performance-linked incentives with integrity metrics in public sector undertakings to align ethical conduct with career advancement.

Interaction of determinants in real-life situations

1. **Values versus institutional pressure:** Personal ethics often confront organisational or political pressures, testing moral courage.
Eg: Officers invoking Article 14 and due process to resist arbitrary administrative orders, balancing conscience with constitutional duty.
2. **Social norms reinforcing unethical conduct:** When peer behaviour normalises misconduct, individual values may erode unless institutions intervene.
Eg: Crackdowns on exam paper leaks (2022–24) where collective unethical norms were countered through strict legal enforcement.
3. **Leadership amplifying ethical values:** Ethical leaders translate abstract values into daily practice, aligning personal morality with institutional goals.
Eg: District collectors publicly declaring assets and decisions, fostering transparency and ethical emulation among subordinates.

4. **Legal sanctions strengthening moral resolve:** Strong accountability mechanisms empower individuals to act ethically without fear.
Eg: Judicial backing of disciplinary action in corruption cases by the Supreme Court reinforcing ethical compliance in public administration.

Conclusion

Ethical behaviour emerges from the dynamic interplay of values, institutions and social context rather than any single factor. Strengthening this ecosystem through ethical education, credible institutions and principled leadership is key to sustaining integrity in public life.

Q. Distinguish between ethical intention and ethical outcome. Examine their relevance in evaluating moral responsibility. (10 M)

Introduction

Moral responsibility in ethics is assessed not merely by what an individual intends to do, but also by what actually results from that action. A sound ethical judgement therefore requires distinguishing between **ethical intention** and **ethical outcome**, and examining their combined relevance.

Body

Ethical intention vs ethical outcome

1. **Ethical intention as value-driven motivation:** Ethical intention refers to the **moral purpose, sincerity and value orientation** guiding an action, shaped by conscience, duty and ethical reasoning.
Eg: During the **COVID-19 crisis**, administrators prioritising oxygen allocation acted with the **intention of saving maximum lives**, reflecting beneficence and public duty.
2. **Ethical outcome as real-world consequence:** Ethical outcome focuses on the **actual impact of an action on individuals and society**, including benefits, harms and distributional effects, irrespective of intent.
Eg: Nationwide lockdown measures reduced infection spread but led to **severe hardship for migrant workers**, raising outcome-based ethical concerns.
3. **Possibility of divergence between the two:** Good intentions may lead to adverse outcomes due to complexity or uncertainty, while ethically positive outcomes may arise despite mixed motives.
Eg: Demonetisation was intended to curb illicit money, yet short-term outcomes included **economic disruption for informal workers**.
4. **Intent reflects moral character; outcome reflects moral responsibility:** Ethical intention reveals the **agent's moral character**, while ethical outcome determines the **extent of responsibility for consequences**.
Eg: A disaster-response official acting swiftly with good intent may still be held responsible if poor planning leads to avoidable casualties.
5. **Ethical frameworks emphasise different dimensions:** Deontological ethics prioritises **intent and duty**, whereas consequentialist ethics emphasises **outcomes and results**, making both dimensions ethically relevant.
Eg: A whistleblower leaking information may violate procedure (intent questioned) but achieve **greater public good** through exposure of wrongdoing.

Relevance in evaluating moral responsibility

1. **Foreseeability strengthens responsibility:** Moral responsibility increases when negative outcomes were **reasonably foreseeable**, even if intentions were ethical.

Eg: Infrastructure approvals ignoring known environmental risks make authorities responsible for later ecological damage.

2. **Public accountability prioritises outcomes:** In governance, ethical evaluation places greater weight on **outcomes affecting rights, welfare and trust**, not intent alone.

Eg: Welfare schemes are judged by **delivery and inclusion**, not merely by benevolent policy intent.

3. **Intent mitigates but does not erase responsibility:** Ethical intention may reduce moral blame but **cannot fully absolve responsibility** for serious harm caused.

Eg: A doctor acting in good faith may still face ethical scrutiny if negligence leads to patient harm.

4. **Outcome-based evaluation protects vulnerable groups:** Focusing on outcomes ensures ethics remains **people-centric**, preventing justification of harm through noble intentions.

Eg: Development projects are ethically assessed based on **displacement and rehabilitation outcomes**, not only growth objectives.

5. **Integrated assessment enables fair moral judgement:** Evaluating both intention and outcome allows **balanced ethical judgement**, avoiding moral absolutism or blind utilitarianism.

Eg: Policy decisions during crises are judged by **intent to protect lives and actual human impact**, together.

Conclusion

Ethical intention provides moral direction, while ethical outcome confers moral accountability. A robust ethical framework integrates both to ensure responsibility is fair, humane and oriented towards justice in complex real-world actions.

Q. What is meant by ethical pluralism? Analyse its impact on decision-making in a diverse society. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical decision-making in plural societies does not emerge from a single moral code but from the interaction of multiple value systems. Ethical pluralism explains how societies manage moral diversity while striving for fairness, legitimacy, and social cohesion.

Body

Meaning of ethical pluralism

1. **Coexistence of multiple moral values:** Ethical pluralism accepts that different moral principles such as liberty, equality, tradition, and justice can coexist without one claiming absolute dominance.

Eg: **Indian constitutional design** allows diverse moral beliefs under **freedom of conscience** while still binding them within constitutional limits of justice and dignity.

2. **Rejection of moral absolutism:** It does not assume that one ethical theory or value system can resolve all moral questions across contexts.

Eg: **Public ethics training for civil servants** stresses balancing competing values rather than mechanically applying one rule in all situations.

3. **Context-sensitive moral reasoning:** Ethical judgments are shaped by social, cultural, and situational realities rather than fixed universal commands.

Eg: **Administrative discretion in welfare delivery** often adapts rules to local vulnerabilities instead of rigid uniformity.

4. **Recognition of moral disagreement as legitimate:** Ethical pluralism treats disagreement as a normal feature of moral life, not as ethical failure.

Eg: Democratic debates on social reform laws reflect morally divergent yet constitutionally valid viewpoints.

5. **Emphasis on practical reconciliation:** Focus is placed on balancing values pragmatically rather than resolving all moral conflicts theoretically.

Eg: Policy compromises that protect minority rights while advancing broader social goals reflect plural ethical reasoning.

Impact of ethical pluralism on decision-making in a diverse society

1. **More inclusive and representative decisions:** Decision-making incorporates multiple perspectives, enhancing legitimacy and public trust.

Eg: Consultative law-making processes involving diverse stakeholders aim to reflect varied moral concerns.

2. **Increased complexity and slower decisions:** Balancing competing values often prolongs deliberation and delays outcomes.

Eg: Social policy reforms frequently undergo extended debate due to ethical disagreements across groups.

3. **Greater reliance on constitutional and institutional mediation:** Institutions act as neutral frameworks to balance conflicting moral claims.

Eg: Judicial reasoning based on constitutional morality mediates between tradition, equality, and individual rights.

4. **Risk of ethical uncertainty for administrators:** Officials may face dilemmas when values such as compassion, legality, and neutrality collide.

Eg: Street-level bureaucrats often struggle to balance rule compliance with empathy in welfare implementation.

5. **Encouragement of ethical humility and dialogue:** Ethical pluralism discourages moral arrogance and promotes dialogue-based resolution.

Eg: Ethics committees and grievance forums facilitate negotiated solutions rather than unilateral moral imposition.

Conclusion

Ethical pluralism makes decision-making demanding but democratically richer. Strengthening ethical reasoning skills and institutional balancing mechanisms will be essential to govern diversity without sacrificing constitutional coherence.

Q. The boundary between private morality and public ethics is neither rigid nor impermeable. Explain the ethical basis of this assertion. Discuss its implications for public office holders. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethics in public life is rooted not merely in formal compliance but in the moral character of those entrusted with authority. Democratic legitimacy depends on the perceived alignment between personal values and public conduct.

Body

Ethical basis of the porous boundary between private morality and public ethics

1. **Continuity of moral character:** Ethical conduct is shaped by stable virtues such as honesty and integrity, which operate across personal and public spheres.
Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2007) emphasised that integrity is an indivisible trait influencing both private behaviour and official decision-making.
2. **Virtue ethics framework:** Classical virtue ethics holds that public roles reflect personal moral dispositions, rejecting strict compartmentalisation of ethics.
Eg: Ethics in Governance report (2nd ARC) linked character-based ethics with ethical public service delivery.
3. **Public trust doctrine:** Public authority is exercised as a moral trusteeship, making private conduct relevant when it affects institutional credibility.
Eg: Vineet Narain vs Union of India (1997) highlighted probity as essential for sustaining public confidence in governance.
4. **Constitutional morality:** The Constitution expects internalisation of values like equality, dignity, and integrity beyond formal legality.
Eg: Subramanian Swamy vs Director, CBI (2014) stressed ethical standards flowing from constitutional morality, not merely statutory rules.
5. **Conflict of interest ethics:** Private interests and relationships can ethically contaminate public decisions even without illegality.
Eg: Second ARC recommendations recognised perceived conflicts of interest as ethically harmful even when legally permissible.

Implications for public office holders

1. **Higher ethical threshold:** Public office holders are expected to follow standards stricter than ordinary private morality due to power asymmetry.
Eg: Code of Conduct for Ministers requires avoidance of actions that may compromise public trust.
2. **Transparency and disclosure obligations:** Ethical governance demands proactive disclosure of private interests impacting official roles.
Eg: Central Vigilance Commission guidelines mandate disclosure of assets and interests to prevent ethical compromise.
3. **Recusal from decision-making:** Officials must step aside where private relationships impair impartiality.
Eg: Best practice of recusal followed in regulatory and quasi-judicial bodies to preserve procedural fairness.
4. **Reputational accountability:** Even private conduct can attract ethical scrutiny if it undermines institutional legitimacy.
Eg: Second ARC (2007) noted that erosion of public trust often begins with personal ethical lapses.
5. **Role-model responsibility:** Public officials function as moral exemplars, shaping ethical norms within institutions and society.
Eg: Civil Services Conduct Rules emphasise maintaining integrity and devotion to duty at all times.

Conclusion

Ethical governance rests on coherence between personal morality and public responsibility. For public office

holders, integrity in private life is a foundational condition for credible, accountable, and constitutionally grounded public service.

Q. Moral courage, rather than moral knowledge, defines transformative leadership. Evaluate this statement. Explain how this insight is relevant for civil servants facing ethical dilemmas. (10 M)

Introduction

Transformative leadership is tested not in knowing what is right, but in having the courage to act on it despite risks. Across governance systems, ethical awareness without moral courage often yields compliance, not change.

Moral courage versus moral knowledge in transformative leadership

1. **Ethical action despite personal cost:** Moral courage converts ethical awareness into action even when it threatens position, career or safety.
Eg: Ashok Khemka, IAS, acted against **illegal land mutations** despite repeated transfers, showing that courage—not rulebook familiarity—creates ethical disruption.
2. **Resistance to unethical authority:** Transformative leaders refuse to legitimise wrongdoing even when it comes from powerful institutions.
Eg: In the **Vineet Narain case (1997)**, officials' insistence on pursuing corruption cases despite political pressure exposed systemic rot and triggered institutional reform.
3. **From moral knowing to moral doing:** Ethical knowledge can coexist with silence, but courage compels principled action.
Eg: E. Sreedharan consistently rejected political interference in **Delhi Metro**, prioritising safety and transparency over expediency.
4. **Creating moral legitimacy and trust:** Moral courage builds credibility, inspiring collective ethical behaviour within institutions.
Eg: Election Commission of India's enforcement of **Model Code of Conduct** against ruling parties enhanced institutional trust through visible ethical resolve.
5. **Catalyst for systemic change:** Courage enables leaders to break status quo biases embedded in governance structures.
Eg: T. N. Seshan's **electoral reforms** transformed electoral governance by enforcing discipline despite strong political opposition.

Relevance for civil servants facing ethical dilemmas

1. **Upholding constitutional morality:** Civil servants often face pressure to violate constitutional values, requiring courage to refuse.
Eg: Officers invoking **Article 14 and Article 21** to resist discriminatory or arbitrary orders demonstrate constitutional morality in action.
2. **Speaking truth to power:** Ethical dilemmas demand dissent within hierarchy, not passive rule compliance.
Eg: The very enactment of the **Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014** reflects recognition that exposing corruption requires moral courage beyond awareness of conduct rules.
3. **Maintaining integrity under political pressure:** Courage enables neutrality when political convenience conflicts with public interest.

Eg: District collectors enforcing eviction or law-and-order decisions despite political backlash show ethical firmness in governance.

4. **Preventing moral injury in public service:** Acting against conscience erodes integrity; courage preserves moral self-respect.

Eg: Officers refusing to manipulate **beneficiary lists in welfare schemes** protect both institutional integrity and personal ethical coherence.

5. **Leading ethical culture by example:** Courageous conduct signals acceptable norms, influencing organisational ethics.

Eg: Senior officers enforcing **zero-tolerance for corruption in procurement** create ripple effects across administrative hierarchies.

Conclusion

Moral knowledge informs judgment, but moral courage sustains ethical governance. For civil servants, courage rooted in constitutional values is indispensable to transform ethical awareness into public trust and institutional integrity.

Q. Examine the relevance of altruism as demonstrated by great leaders in shaping ethical public service. Analyse its limits in modern bureaucratic systems. (10 M)

Introduction

Altruism, understood as selfless concern for the welfare of others, has historically acted as the moral anchor of ethical public service. From freedom-era leadership to contemporary administration, altruistic conduct has helped align state power with public interest rather than personal or sectional gain.

Body

Relevance of altruism in shaping ethical public service

1. **Public interest over self-interest:** Altruism guides civil servants to prioritise collective welfare, reinforcing the constitutional ethos of service under **Article 38**, which mandates promotion of social welfare and justice.

Eg: E. Sreedharan, as head of **Delhi Metro Rail Corporation**, upheld probity and citizen interest by resisting political interference and cost escalations, widely cited in **Second ARC (2007)** as a model of ethical leadership.

2. **Moral legitimacy and public trust:** Altruistic conduct enhances trust in institutions by demonstrating that authority is exercised for societal good, not private benefit, strengthening democratic legitimacy.

Eg: During the **COVID-19 pandemic (2020–21)**, district administrations in **Kerala** prioritised community kitchens and migrant welfare, reflecting altruistic public service highlighted in **WHO and MoHFW reports**.

3. **Empathy in policy implementation:** Altruism enables administrators to empathise with vulnerable sections, giving substantive meaning to **Article 14 and Article 21** beyond formal equality.

Eg: Aspirational Districts Programme (NITI Aayog, 2018) encouraged district collectors to adopt outcome-oriented, people-centric approaches, documented in **NITI Aayog best practice compendiums**.

4. **Ethical courage in decision-making:** Altruism strengthens moral courage to take difficult decisions that protect long-term public interest even at personal cost.
Eg: Sanjiv Chaturvedi, IFS, exposed corruption in public institutions despite career risks, an example often referenced in discussions on **whistle-blower ethics** and **Central Vigilance Commission** narratives.
5. **Role-modelling for organisational culture:** Altruistic leaders create ethical demonstration effects, shaping norms within bureaucracies more effectively than rules alone.
Eg: Lal Bahadur Shastri's emphasis on simplicity and integrity continues to be cited in **LBSNAA ethics modules** for probationary officers.

Limits of altruism in modern bureaucratic systems

1. **Structural and procedural constraints:** Rule-bound bureaucracies limit discretionary altruism, as excessive reliance on personal benevolence may conflict with legality and uniformity.
Eg: Strict adherence to **service rules and audit frameworks** under **CAG oversight** often restricts welfare-driven flexibility, noted in **Second ARC (2007)** on ethics in governance.
2. **Risk of subjectivity and arbitrariness:** Altruism without institutional safeguards can lead to unequal treatment, undermining fairness and transparency.
Eg: Selective compassion in welfare delivery has been critiqued by **Supreme Court judgments on Article 14**, stressing non-arbitrariness in state action.
3. **Systemic scale and complexity:** Large, technology-driven governance systems require standardisation; individual altruism alone cannot address structural inequities.
Eg: Direct Benefit Transfer (DBT) relies more on systemic design than individual goodwill, as documented by **World Bank and NITI Aayog evaluations**.
4. **Burnout and ethical fatigue:** Sustained altruistic expectations in high-pressure administrative environments can lead to stress and moral exhaustion.
Eg: Studies cited by **LBSNAA and DoPT training reviews** note increasing workload and stress among field officers, limiting sustained altruistic engagement.
5. **Potential conflict with neutrality:** Excessive moral involvement may blur the line between empathy and partisanship, challenging bureaucratic neutrality under **Article 311**.
Eg: Second ARC cautions that values must complement, not replace, institutional accountability and neutrality.

Conclusion

Altruism remains a vital ethical value that humanises public service, but in modern governance it must be embedded within strong institutions, clear rules and accountability mechanisms. The future of ethical administration lies in balancing altruistic motivation with systemic integrity and rule-based governance.

Q. “Reformers transform society not by confrontation alone, but by reshaping social conscience”. Explain the ethical basis of this assertion. Discuss its implications for value-based governance. (10 M)

Introduction

Lasting social reform succeeds when it awakens the moral consciousness of society rather than relying solely on confrontation or coercion. Ethical transformation becomes durable only when values are voluntarily internalised and socially legitimised.

Body

Ethical basis of the assertion

1. **Moral persuasion as an ethical means:** Reformers rely on conscience, reason and ethical appeal, respecting individual autonomy and dignity instead of enforcing compliance through fear.
Eg: Mahatma Gandhi's satyagraha (1917–1947) used truth and non-violence to morally delegitimise injustice, transforming resistance into a collective ethical duty.
2. **Internalisation of values for durable change:** Ethical reform sustains when values become social norms rather than remaining external legal commands.
Eg: B.R. Ambedkar's emphasis on constitutional morality sought to transform social attitudes on equality beyond the mere legal abolition of untouchability.
3. **Empathy-based legitimacy:** Ethical reform appeals to shared humanity, reducing social resistance and fostering voluntary acceptance.
Eg: Temple Entry movements of the 1930s framed access to places of worship as a moral question of dignity rather than a confrontational political demand.
4. **Alignment of means and ends:** Ethical consistency between reformers' conduct and objectives strengthens moral credibility.
Eg: Vinoba Bhave's Bhoodan movement (1951) relied on voluntary land donation, reinforcing ethical persuasion over coercive redistribution.
5. **Collective moral awakening:** Reform reshapes society when individuals see ethical change as a shared responsibility.
Eg: Social reform initiatives against alcohol abuse led by moral leaders promoted self-restraint as a social virtue rather than state-imposed prohibition.

Implications for value-based governance

1. **Ethics-driven policy formulation:** Governance becomes effective when policies shape behaviour through values, not just sanctions.
Eg: Swachh Bharat Mission promoted cleanliness as dignity and civic responsibility, encouraging voluntary behavioural change.
2. **Trust-based administration:** Value-oriented governance builds legitimacy and reduces adversarial state–citizen relations.
Eg: Judicial emphasis on constitutional morality in rights-based rulings has strengthened public trust in institutions.
3. **Participatory governance culture:** Ethical governance encourages citizens to become partners rather than passive recipients.
Eg: Community-led initiatives in sanitation and nutrition programmes show higher compliance due to shared moral ownership.
4. **Reduced enforcement costs:** Internalised values lower the need for constant surveillance and coercion.
Eg: Social acceptance of anti-discrimination norms has reduced overt enforcement dependence in public institutions.
5. **Resilient democratic institutions:** Value-based governance sustains democracy even during crises by anchoring actions in ethics.
Eg: Administrations guided by transparency and compassion during disasters have preserved public trust despite constraints.

Conclusion

Societal transformation anchored in conscience creates ethical citizens, not merely compliant subjects. For governance to be truly value-based, it must consistently nurture moral reasoning, empathy and voluntary ethical conduct alongside formal authority.

Q. “The family is the first moral classroom, but not always the most reliable one.” In this context, bring out the role of family in value formation. Identify the limitations of relying solely on familial socialisation for ethical development. (10 M)

Introduction

Moral sensibilities take shape earliest within the family through observation, affection and correction. Yet, ethical maturity in a plural democracy cannot rest entirely on familial influence alone.

Body

Role of family in value formation

- 1. First exposure to moral distinctions:** The family introduces the child to basic ideas of right and wrong through daily interactions and lived conduct.
Eg: Parents demonstrating **truthfulness in routine matters** such as admissions in school forms or everyday conversations instil honesty as a core value (Source: **NEP 2020**, Early Childhood Care and Education).
- 2. Development of empathy and care:** Emotional bonding within the family nurtures compassion, sympathy and concern for others.
Eg: **Caring for elderly or sick family members** helps children internalise empathy and dignity, aligning with **Article 39(f)** of the Constitution on humane development.
- 3. Internalisation of duties and responsibilities:** Families socialise individuals into roles, obligations and a sense of responsibility towards others.
Eg: **Sharing household responsibilities across genders** reinforces fairness and respect, consistent with **Article 51A(e)** on gender justice.
- 4. Character formation through discipline:** Parental guidance and corrective discipline shape self-control, accountability and respect for rules.
Eg: **Consistent consequences for misconduct at home** foster responsibility, a key ethical trait (Source: **Second ARC Report on Ethics in Governance, 2007**).
- 5. Transmission of cultural and moral traditions:** Families pass on ethical traditions such as tolerance, respect and coexistence.
Eg: **Celebration of diverse festivals within extended families** promotes pluralism, resonating with **constitutional morality under Articles 14 and 15**.

Limitations of relying solely on familial socialisation

- 1. Transmission of biased or regressive values:** Families may perpetuate prejudices rooted in caste, gender or community norms.
Eg: **Normalisation of gender stereotypes within households** undermines equality, highlighted by the **Justice Verma Committee Report, 2013**.
- 2. Moral inconsistency across households:** Ethical standards vary widely, leading to fragmented moral understanding in society.
Eg: **Tolerance of small acts of dishonesty at home** weakens public ethics despite legal prohibitions.
- 3. Justification of unethical conduct under pressure:** Familial survival logic may legitimise unethical means.

Eg: Rationalising bribery or rule-bending as necessity reflects instrumental ethics cautioned against by the **Second ARC, 2007**.

4. **Limited exposure to diversity and critical reasoning:** Families may not provide engagement with plural viewpoints essential for ethical judgement.

Eg: Social isolation within homogeneous communities restricts ethical reasoning in a democratic society.

5. **Inadequacy in addressing public and institutional ethics:** Families alone cannot prepare individuals for complex ethical dilemmas in public life.

Eg: Ethical challenges in digital behaviour or public service require formal civic and ethical education, as emphasised in **NEP 2020**.

Conclusion

The family lays the moral foundation, but ethical citizenship demands reinforcement through education, institutions and constitutional values. Integrating familial ethics with civic morality is essential for nurturing responsible and principled individuals.

Q. “Education transmits skills efficiently, but values only selectively”. Discuss the role of educational institutions in value inculcation. Analyse the institutional factors that weaken ethical learning. (10 M)

Introduction

Education shapes both competence and conscience. Yet, while skills respond to structured pedagogy and assessment, value formation depends on institutional culture, lived practices and moral consistency.

Body

Role of educational institutions in value inculcation

1. **Transmission of constitutional morality:** Educational institutions familiarise students with core civic values such as justice, equality and fraternity embedded in the constitutional framework.
Eg: Article 51A mandates promotion of **scientific temper, humanism and harmony**, which schools integrate through curricular and co-curricular activities.
2. **Development of ethical reasoning:** Classrooms enable dialogue, debate and reflection, helping students evaluate moral choices rationally.
Eg: CBSE’s competency-based assessment reforms incorporate situational and ethical reasoning within subject questions.
3. **Socialisation into democratic behaviour:** Institutional participation nurtures responsibility, accountability and respect for rules.
Eg: Student councils and school parliaments provide practical exposure to democratic decision-making.
4. **Promotion of dignity and inclusivity:** Schools act as social spaces where respect for diversity and human dignity is normalised.
Eg: Right to Education Act, 2009 under Article 21A mandates inclusive, non-discriminatory schooling.
5. **Orientation towards social responsibility:** Education can connect knowledge with service and ethical citizenship.

Eg: Experiential and community engagement components under NEP 2020 promote empathy and civic responsibility.

Institutional factors that weaken ethical learning

1. **Exam-centric pedagogical orientation:** Excessive focus on marks and rankings sidelines moral reasoning and character formation.
Eg: Board and entrance examination systems largely assess cognitive recall rather than ethical judgement.
2. **Commercialisation of education:** Market-driven priorities shift emphasis from values to placements and credentials.
Eg: Expansion of for-profit coaching and private institutions, frequently noted in policy discourse, distorts educational goals.
3. **Inadequate ethical preparation of teachers:** Teachers are trained in pedagogy but insufficiently equipped for moral mentoring.
Eg: NEP 2020 highlights the need for continuous professional development beyond subject competence.
4. **Hidden curriculum contradictions:** Institutional practices may contradict professed values, eroding moral credibility.
Eg: Tolerance of bullying, discrimination or unfair practices within schools weakens lessons on equality and dignity.
5. **Mismatch with societal behaviour:** Ethical teaching loses force when societal conduct sends opposing signals.
Eg: Normalisation of corruption and intolerance in public life undermines value education imparted in classrooms.

Conclusion

Educational institutions are crucial for value inculcation, but ethics cannot be reduced to curriculum delivery. Sustained moral learning requires ethical institutional culture, teacher role-modelling and reinforcement from society.

Attitude: content, structure, function; its influence and relation with thought and behaviour; moral and political attitudes; social influence and persuasion.

Q. “Prejudice reinforced by misinformation corrodes ethical judgement in everyday public conduct”. Explain this statement in the context of social stereotyping. Discuss its ethical consequences for vulnerable groups. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical judgement rests on values such as empathy, fairness, and respect for human dignity. When **prejudice is amplified by misinformation**, it distorts moral reasoning and normalises unethical behaviour in routine social interactions.

Body

Prejudice reinforced by misinformation corrodes ethical judgement in everyday public conduct

1. **Bias overriding ethical objectivity:** Prejudice causes individuals to judge others based on identity markers rather than moral equality, impairing fair judgement.
Eg: Treating people differently based on language, appearance, or place of origin rather than conduct.
2. **Misinformation strengthening fear-based ethics:** False narratives magnify perceived threats, replacing reasoned judgement with anxiety-driven reactions.
Eg: Rumours portraying certain groups as inherently dangerous or illegal.
3. **Erosion of empathy and compassion:** Stereotyping reduces the ability to emotionally relate to others as fellow human beings.
Eg: Indifference to suffering of those labelled as “outsiders”.
4. **Moral disengagement in daily conduct:** Individuals justify unethical acts as socially acceptable or preventive, bypassing conscience.
Eg: Harassment or intimidation rationalised as “public vigilance”.
5. **Normalisation of unethical social behaviour:** Repeated exposure to biased narratives makes discrimination appear routine rather than morally wrong.
Eg: Public suspicion and verbal abuse becoming socially tolerated.

Ethical consequences for vulnerable groups

1. **Violation of human dignity:** Reducing individuals to stereotypes denies their intrinsic moral worth.
Eg: Treating persons as categories instead of autonomous moral agents.
2. **Psychological harm and insecurity:** Persistent suspicion creates fear, humiliation, and loss of self-respect.
Eg: Vulnerable groups living under constant anxiety in public spaces.
3. **Social exclusion and marginalisation:** Prejudice pushes groups to the periphery of social and economic life.
Eg: Reluctance of migrants or minorities to access public services or opportunities.
4. **Heightened risk of violence and exploitation:** Dehumanisation lowers ethical restraints against harm.
Eg: Identity-based attacks triggered by rumours or assumptions.
5. **Breakdown of fraternity and social trust:** Ethical bonds of mutual respect weaken, fragmenting social cohesion.
Eg: Growing mistrust between communities undermining collective harmony.

Conclusion

Prejudice reinforced by misinformation replaces moral reasoning with fear and suspicion. Strengthening ethical judgement requires cultivating empathy, critical thinking, and respect for human dignity so that everyday conduct reflects conscience rather than bias.

Q. Attitude is not merely a mental state but a determinant of ethical conduct. Explain the structure of attitude. Examine how attitude influences behaviour in public life. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical conduct in public life flows not merely from external rules but from the internal orientation of individuals. Attitude shapes how values are interpreted and translated into day-to-day administrative behaviour.

Body

Structure of attitude

1. **Cognitive Component (Beliefs and perceptions):** This component relates to knowledge, beliefs, and rational understanding that form the intellectual base of attitude.
Eg: Belief in constitutional morality guides civil servants to uphold **Article 14 and Article 21**, even when expediency or informal pressures suggest deviation from due process.
2. **Affective Component (Feelings and emotions):** This reflects emotional responses such as empathy, compassion, fear, or moral commitment that influence ethical sensitivity.
Eg: Empathy towards marginalized communities motivates district officials to ensure last-mile delivery of schemes like **nutrition and health missions**, rather than treating them as routine targets.
3. **Behavioural Component (Action orientation):** This denotes the readiness to act in a particular way based on beliefs and emotions, making attitude visible in conduct.
Eg: Firm intolerance towards corruption manifests in prompt disciplinary action and whistleblower support, consistent with the ethical expectations under the **Prevention of Corruption framework**.

Influence of attitude on behaviour in public life

1. **Integrity-based decision making:** Ethical attitudes ensure consistency between moral values and official actions, especially under pressure.
Eg: Officers refusing unlawful orders despite career risks reflect the integrity-centric vision highlighted by the **Second Administrative Reforms Commission on Ethics in Governance**.
2. **Empathy-driven public service delivery:** Positive attitudes improve responsiveness, inclusion, and humaneness in governance outcomes.
Eg: Citizen-centric attitude promoted under Mission Karmayogi encourages officials to view service delivery as a public trust rather than a procedural obligation.
3. **Transparency and accountability orientation:** Ethical attitudes strengthen openness and answerability in public institutions.
Eg: Proactive disclosures under the RTI Act by departments with transparency-oriented leadership reduce grievances and enhance institutional credibility.
4. **Impartiality in policy implementation:** A neutral and fair attitude prevents bias, favoritism, and discrimination in administration.
Eg: Impartial conduct during elections by civil servants, adhering to the **Model Code of Conduct**, reinforces public trust in democratic institutions.
5. **Moral courage in crisis situations:** Ethical attitudes enable officials to act decisively in extraordinary situations without ethical compromise.

Eg: Administrators prioritizing human safety over procedural delays during disaster response, even at personal risk, demonstrate value-based leadership in public life.

Conclusion

Attitude serves as the invisible foundation of ethical governance, shaping how power is exercised and responsibilities are discharged. Cultivating ethical attitudes through training, leadership example, and institutional culture is crucial for sustaining trust in public institutions.

Q. Differentiate between moral attitudes and political attitudes. Evaluate their relevance for public servants. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical governance depends not only on institutional rules but on the attitudes that guide public authority. **Moral attitudes** shape ethical integrity, while **political attitudes** influence engagement with power, policy, and democratic mandates.

Body

Moral attitudes vs Political attitudes

Basis	Moral attitudes	Political attitudes
1. Core orientation	Moral attitudes are grounded in internalised ethical values such as honesty, justice, and compassion , guiding personal notions of right and wrong. Eg: A civil servant refusing a bribe despite weak supervision , reflecting integrity beyond external enforcement.	Political attitudes relate to beliefs about power, authority, ideology, and governance preferences , shaping views on policy and leadership. Eg: Acceptance of welfare-oriented or growth-oriented policy direction as per the elected government’s mandate.
2. Source of formation	They develop through conscience, moral reasoning, family upbringing, and ethics education , relatively independent of political change. Eg: 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission (Ethics in Governance, 2007) stressed value-based training to strengthen moral foundations.	They emerge from political socialisation, democratic processes, institutional culture, and public discourse . Eg: Civil servants adapting to new policy priorities after elections while remaining constitutional.
3. Stability over time	Moral attitudes are relatively stable and enduring , ensuring consistency in ethical conduct across situations. Eg: Supreme Court in Vineet Narain vs Union of India (1997) underscored ethical independence of officials in sensitive investigations.	Political attitudes are context-sensitive and flexible , responding to shifts in democratic mandate and public priorities. Eg: Change in administrative emphasis with new flagship programmes after a change in government.
4. Relation with ethics and law	Moral attitudes act as an ethical compass beyond legal compliance , especially in grey areas where rules are silent.	Political attitudes operate within constitutional authority and legal legitimacy , emphasising democratic

Basis	Moral attitudes	Political attitudes
	Eg: Whistle-blowing to prevent public harm, aligned with constitutional morality under Article 14.	accountability. Eg: Articles 75 and 163 , which place the executive under legislative responsibility, guiding bureaucratic functioning.
5. Risk if unchecked	Weak moral attitudes can lead to ethical blindness, corruption, and moral disengagement. Eg: Procedural compliance masking unethical exclusion in welfare delivery.	Excessive political attitudes may result in partisanship and erosion of neutrality. Eg: Prohibition of political bias under CCS (Conduct) Rules, 1964.

Relevance for public servants

- Ethical decision-making under discretion:** Moral attitudes guide officials when rules allow discretion, while political attitudes help align actions with democratic intent.
Eg: District administration prioritising the most vulnerable beneficiaries within policy guidelines during welfare roll-out.
- Maintaining political neutrality:** Moral attitudes prevent unethical compliance, and political attitudes ensure responsiveness without partisanship.
Eg: Civil servants remaining neutral during elections, as required under **Conduct Rules, 1964.**
- Accountability with integrity:** Political attitudes reinforce accountability to elected representatives, while moral attitudes ensure accountability to the Constitution.
Eg: Implementation of policy directives while upholding Article 14 and Article 21 protections.
- Resistance to undue influence:** Moral attitudes enable resistance to unethical political pressure, while balanced political attitudes preserve institutional harmony.
Eg: Officials resisting selective enforcement of laws despite informal pressure.
- Public trust and legitimacy:** Together, they sustain public confidence by combining ethical integrity with democratic responsiveness.
Eg: Election Commission of India enforcing the Model Code of Conduct, requiring moral firmness and political sensitivity.

Conclusion

For public servants, ethical excellence lies in **anchoring political attitudes within strong moral foundations**. This balance ensures constitutional morality, democratic accountability, and sustained public trust in governance.

Q. The ethical challenges of modern societies arise more from moral confusion than moral absence. Examine the relevance of moral philosophy in addressing present-day ethical crises. (10 M)

Introduction

Public administrators frequently face ethical dilemmas involving conflicting values, duties and consequences that cannot be resolved through legal rules alone. Moral philosophy provides deeper normative reasoning to guide ethical decision-making in such complex situations.

Body

Moral philosophy helps resolve ethical dilemmas in public administration

- 1. Deontological ethics and duty orientation:** Deontological moral philosophy emphasises adherence to moral duties and principles irrespective of outcomes, guiding administrators to act with integrity even under pressure.
Eg: In the **Vineet Narain case (1997)**, the Supreme Court stressed **institutional integrity and probity in public offices**, reflecting duty-based ethics rooted in **Article 14** and non-arbitrariness.
- 2. Utilitarian ethics and public welfare maximisation:** Utilitarian reasoning helps administrators choose actions that maximise overall societal welfare when trade-offs are unavoidable.
Eg: During **COVID-19 vaccine prioritisation (2021)**, **healthcare workers and the elderly** were prioritised based on **risk reduction and lives saved**, reflecting utilitarian moral reasoning beyond routine rules.
- 3. Virtue ethics and character-based judgement:** Virtue ethics focuses on moral character, enabling officials to act ethically in grey areas where formal rules provide limited guidance.
Eg: The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission** emphasised **integrity, empathy and moral courage** as essential virtues for ethical conduct in public service.
- 4. Justice-based ethics and fairness:** Moral philosophy grounded in justice ensures fairness, dignity and reasonableness in administrative decisions involving discretion.
Eg: In **Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978)**, the Supreme Court linked **Article 21** with **fairness and reasonableness**, embedding ethical justice into administrative action.
- 5. Care ethics and compassion-driven administration:** Care ethics highlights empathy and responsiveness, helping administrators account for human consequences beyond rigid rule application.
Eg: **Compassionate appointment policies** recognise ethical responsibility towards families of deceased employees beyond strict merit-based considerations.

Role of moral philosophy beyond legal and institutional frameworks

- 1. Guidance where law is silent or inadequate:** Moral philosophy enables ethical action in situations not clearly addressed by existing laws or procedures.
Eg: Ethical whistle-blowing decisions based on **conscience and public interest** preceded formal legal protection and shaped later institutional safeguards.
- 2. Humanising rule-based governance:** Ethical reasoning tempers mechanical rule compliance with empathy, proportionality and contextual sensitivity.
Eg: During **disaster relief operations**, officials relax procedural formalities to ensure **timely humanitarian assistance**, reflecting ethical compassion beyond manuals.
- 3. Strengthening public trust and legitimacy:** Moral philosophy enhances legitimacy by aligning administrative action with societal moral expectations.
Eg: **Voluntary conflict-of-interest disclosures** by senior officials promote ethical transparency beyond minimum legal compliance.
- 4. Preventing ethical minimalism:** While law sets minimum standards, moral philosophy encourages higher ethical conduct and self-regulation.
Eg: **Integrity pledges and ethical codes** in public services foster moral accountability beyond conduct rules.
- 5. Enabling ethical leadership in complex governance:** Moral reasoning equips leaders to navigate competing values in policy decisions involving long-term and inter-generational impacts.

Eg: Ethical balancing in **environmental clearances** reflects moral responsibility towards sustainability alongside development goals.

Conclusion

Moral philosophy deepens governance by embedding conscience, justice and compassion beyond formal rules. In an era of complex public choices, ethical reasoning will remain central to legitimate and humane administration.

Q. Examine how moral philosophy helps resolve ethical dilemmas in public administration. Discuss its role beyond legal and institutional frameworks. (10 M)

Introduction

Rapid socio-economic change, digital disruption and institutional complexity have created ethical dilemmas where multiple moral values collide simultaneously. In such contexts, ethical failure is increasingly rooted in confusion over moral priorities rather than the total absence of ethical values.

Body

Ethical challenges arise more from moral confusion than moral absence

1. **Conflict between equally legitimate moral values:** Modern dilemmas involve clashes between core values such as liberty versus security or welfare versus fiscal prudence, causing indecision rather than moral vacuum.
Eg: Right to Privacy under Article 21 conflicting with **state surveillance for security**, as recognised in **Justice K.S. Puttaswamy vs Union of India**.
2. **Over-reliance on procedural compliance:** Ethical judgement is often reduced to rule-following, leading to neglect of moral intent and public interest.
Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2007) flagged excessive **proceduralism in welfare delivery**, causing exclusion despite ethical objectives.
3. **Moral relativism in plural societies:** Exposure to diverse value systems sometimes weakens moral clarity, creating ambiguity about ethical benchmarks.
Eg: Corporate greenwashing highlighted in the **UNEP Emissions Gap Report 2023**, where firms confuse legal compliance with ethical responsibility.
4. **Institutional pressure and performance targets:** Ethical judgement is distorted under political, bureaucratic or market pressures, leading to rationalisation of wrongdoing.
Eg: Data manipulation in public schemes, cited by **Second ARC (Ethics in Governance, 2007)** as moral distortion rather than value absence.
5. **Technological complexity exceeding moral preparedness:** Rapid innovation creates ethical grey zones where moral reasoning lags behind technical capability.
Eg: Algorithmic bias in AI-based decision systems, acknowledged in India's discussions on **Digital Personal Data Protection Act, 2023**, reflects confusion over fairness and accountability.

Relevance of moral philosophy in addressing present-day ethical crises

1. **Provides structured frameworks for ethical prioritisation:** Moral philosophy offers tools such as duty, consequences and virtue to resolve value conflicts systematically.

Eg: Second ARC (2007) recommends **duty-based and public-interest-oriented reasoning** for civil servants.

2. **Strengthens ethical reasoning beyond legal compliance:** Moral philosophy emphasises intention, conscience and character, supplementing formal laws.

Eg: UNESCO Recommendation on Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (2021) stresses **human-centred ethics** beyond regulation.

3. **Reinforces constitutional morality:** Ethical philosophy supports constitutional values when social morality is exclusionary or regressive.

Eg: Navtej Singh Johar vs Union of India upheld **constitutional morality over social morality**.

4. **Promotes internalisation of ethical values:** Moral philosophy encourages self-regulation rather than fear-based compliance.

Eg: Civil Services Conduct Rules combined with **ethics training modules by LBSNAA** reflect emphasis on value internalisation.

5. **Guides ethical leadership in complex governance:** Philosophical ethics equips leaders to take morally justified decisions under uncertainty.

Eg: COVID-19 resource allocation ethics, guided by **ICMR ethical guidelines**, balanced equity, utility and human dignity.

Conclusion

In an age of complex moral trade-offs, ethical breakdown stems more from confused moral reasoning than value absence. Moral philosophy remains indispensable in restoring clarity, guiding ethical prioritisation and sustaining trust-based governance.

Aptitude and foundational values for Civil Service, integrity, impartiality and non-partisanship, objectivity, dedication to public service, empathy, tolerance and compassion towards the weaker-sections.

Q. Distinguish between impartiality and non-partisanship in public administration. Examine why both are indispensable for ethical governance. (10 M).

Introduction

Ethical public administration rests on trust that power will be exercised fairly and without political bias.

Impartiality and **non-partisanship** are core civil service values that ensure decisions are guided by **constitutional morality**, not personal, group, or party interests.

Distinguish between impartiality and non-partisanship

Basis	Impartiality	Non-partisanship
1. Core meaning	Impartiality: Treating all persons, groups and cases equally on merit , without favour or prejudice.	Non-partisanship: Remaining politically neutral , not aligned with any political party or ideology.
	Eg: Allocation of welfare benefits strictly as per eligibility norms under NFSA without caste, religion or regional bias, as	Eg: Civil servants implementing policies of successive governments with equal commitment, as upheld in T.S.R.

Basis	Impartiality	Non-partisanship
	emphasised by Second ARC (Ethics in Governance) .	Subramanian vs Union of India (2013) on neutrality of bureaucracy.
2. Focus of conduct	Focuses on fairness in decision-making and service delivery .	Focuses on political neutrality in advice and execution .
	Eg: Fair tender evaluation under GFR 2017 based on objective criteria, audited by CAG .	Eg: Election duty conducted under ECI Model Code of Conduct , irrespective of ruling party interests.
3. Nature of bias avoided	Avoids personal, social or administrative bias .	Avoids political and ideological bias .
	Eg: Police action based on evidence alone, reinforced by Prakash Singh case (2006) on functional autonomy.	Eg: Neutral policy briefs prepared by ministries for different political executives.
4. Constitutional anchoring	Rooted in Article 14 (Equality before law) and Article 16 (Equal opportunity) .	Rooted in constitutional conventions and Article 311 protections ensuring independence from political pressure.
	Eg: Fair recruitment through UPSC , ensuring merit-based selection.	Eg: Protection of officers from arbitrary transfers, reiterated by Civil Services Board mechanism.
5. Ethical dimension	Ensures justice, objectivity and fairness in administration.	Ensures credibility and continuity of the state beyond electoral cycles.
	Eg: Social audits under MGNREGA ensuring unbiased accountability.	Eg: Neutral conduct of diplomats irrespective of change in foreign policy leadership.

Why both are indispensable for ethical governance

- Safeguarding constitutional values:** Impartiality operationalises **equality and rule of law**, while non-partisanship protects the **constitutional balance between state and government**.
Eg: **Second ARC (2007)** stresses both as essential to uphold constitutional morality in daily administration.
- Ensuring public trust and legitimacy:** Citizens trust institutions only when decisions are fair and politically neutral.
Eg: Credibility of **ECI** in conducting free and fair elections derives from strict non-partisanship and impartial enforcement of the Model Code.
- Preventing misuse of state power:** Together they check arbitrariness and political capture of institutions.
Eg: **Supreme Court judgments on independent investigative agencies** stress insulation from political interference to preserve fairness.
- Professional and objective policymaking:** Impartial analysis and non-partisan advice improve policy quality and long-term national interest.
Eg: Neutral economic advice by **RBI** and **Finance Commission** despite political pressures.
- Administrative continuity and stability:** They ensure smooth governance across regime changes without policy paralysis or vendetta.

Eg: Peaceful transition and continued implementation of flagship schemes across governments, noted in **OECD best practices on civil service neutrality**.

Conclusion

Impartiality ensures **fair outcomes**, while non-partisanship ensures **neutral processes**. Together, they form the ethical spine of governance, enabling a professional civil service that serves the **Constitution first, citizens always, and governments loyally but neutrally**.

Q. Explain why tolerance is a core ethical requirement for civil servants in a plural society. Examine its relevance in managing social conflicts. (10 M)

Introduction

India's administrative system operates within an exceptionally diverse social fabric shaped by religion, language, caste, culture and ideology. For civil servants, tolerance is not merely a personal virtue but a constitutional and ethical necessity to ensure fair, peaceful and inclusive governance.

Body

Tolerance is a core ethical requirement for civil servants in a plural society

- Constitutional morality and equality:** Tolerance flows directly from **Articles 14, 15 and 25** of the Constitution, requiring civil servants to respect diversity and ensure equal treatment without prejudice.
Eg: District administrations permitting religious processions of different communities under uniform conditions, reflecting equality before law as upheld in **S.R. Bommai v. Union of India (1994)** on secularism.
- Impartial exercise of discretionary power:** Administrative discretion demands tolerance to avoid bias arising from personal beliefs, social conditioning or majoritarian pressure.
Eg: Neutral implementation of welfare schemes like PMAY and NFSA across caste and religious lines, monitored through **social audits**, as emphasised in **Second ARC (Ethics in Governance)**.
- Trust-building between state and citizens:** Tolerant conduct enhances legitimacy and public trust, especially among minorities and marginalised groups.
Eg: Community outreach by civil servants in minority-dominated areas during COVID-19 vaccination drives, countering stigma and misinformation, cited in **MoHFW field best practices**.
- Ethical restraint in use of authority:** Tolerance ensures that coercive state power is exercised with restraint and sensitivity rather than moral superiority.
Eg: Police adopting graded response and dialogue during peaceful protests, consistent with **Supreme Court guidelines on proportionality in use of force**.
- Promotion of fraternity and social harmony:** Civil servants act as custodians of **constitutional fraternity (Preamble)**, requiring tolerance toward divergent social practices.
Eg: Administrative accommodation of linguistic diversity in service delivery in the North-East, supported by **Inter-State Council recommendations**.

Relevance of tolerance in managing social conflicts

1. **De-escalation of communal and social tensions:** Tolerance enables administrators to act as neutral mediators rather than partisan actors.
Eg: District Magistrates invoking peace committees during communal flashpoints, a practice endorsed in **MHA Standard Operating Procedures on communal harmony**.
2. **Fair conflict resolution and dialogue:** Tolerance allows space for dialogue, listening and negotiated settlements instead of force-centric responses.
Eg: Use of local elders and civil society in resolving land or tribal conflicts, as seen in **Scheduled Areas governance under PESA Act, 1996**.
3. **Protection of minority rights during crises:** Ethical tolerance ensures minorities are not scapegoated during periods of social stress.
Eg: Administrative action against hate speech and misinformation during public health emergencies, guided by **Supreme Court observations on fraternity and dignity**.
4. **Managing ideological and political polarisation:** Tolerance helps civil servants remain non-partisan while handling politically sensitive situations.
Eg: Neutral enforcement of Model Code-like norms by district authorities during elections, under **Election Commission of India guidelines**.
5. **Preventing conflict spillover into violence:** Early tolerant engagement reduces the risk of grievances transforming into violent confrontation.
Eg: Preventive dialogue and confidence-building measures before festival seasons in sensitive districts, documented in **Bureau of Police Research and Development case studies**.

Conclusion

Tolerance equips civil servants to transform diversity from a source of conflict into a foundation for cooperative governance. In an increasingly polarised society, ethical tolerance remains indispensable for sustaining constitutional values and long-term social stability.

Emotional intelligence-concepts, and their utilities and application in administration and governance.

Q. Explain the core components of emotional intelligence. Analyse their relevance in decision-making under administrative pressure. (10 M)

Introduction

Public administration routinely operates under high pressure arising from crises, conflicting interests and moral dilemmas. In such contexts, **emotional intelligence (EI)** enables civil servants to combine ethical sensitivity with rational judgment, preventing stress-driven errors and enhancing governance quality.

Body

Core components of emotional intelligence

1. **Self-awareness:** Ability to recognise one's emotions, biases and stress triggers, enabling reflective and ethically grounded conduct.
Eg: 2nd Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), 2007 – Ethics in Governance emphasised self-awareness as foundational for value-based public service, especially in discretionary decision-making roles.

2. **Self-regulation:** Capacity to control impulses, manage anger and remain composed under pressure, preventing arbitrary or retaliatory actions.
Eg: Central Civil Services (Conduct) Rules, 1964 require integrity and restraint, reflecting the need for emotional regulation in disciplinary and quasi-judicial functions.
3. **Motivation:** Inner drive to pursue public interest goals with commitment despite constraints, setbacks or political pressure.
Eg: Aspirational Districts Programme (2018, NITI Aayog) highlighted motivated district leadership sustaining performance despite limited resources and high expectations.
4. **Empathy:** Ability to understand emotions and perspectives of citizens and stakeholders without compromising objectivity.
Eg: Supreme Court in Maneka Gandhi vs Union of India (1978) expanded substantive due process, indirectly reinforcing empathetic, humane administrative action.
5. **Social skills:** Competence in communication, conflict resolution and consensus-building essential for collaborative governance.
Eg: Mission-mode governance initiatives like Swachh Bharat Mission relied on emotionally intelligent leadership to mobilise communities and local governments.

Relevance of emotional intelligence in decision-making under administrative pressure

1. **Crisis decision-making:** EI helps administrators remain calm, assess risks rationally and avoid panic-driven decisions.
Eg: COVID-19 pandemic response (2020–22) showed that emotionally composed district administrations ensured humane enforcement and continuity of essential services.
2. **Ethical dilemma resolution:** EI balances rule-based action with moral sensitivity when values conflict.
Eg: 2nd ARC (2007) noted that emotionally intelligent officers better handle compassion-versus-rule dilemmas in welfare administration.
3. **Stakeholder conflict management:** EI enables negotiation and de-escalation in politically or socially charged situations.
Eg: Land acquisition negotiations under RFCTLARR Act, 2013 succeeded where administrators used empathetic dialogue to reduce resistance.
4. **Maintaining objectivity under stress:** EI prevents cognitive overload and bias during high-stakes decisions.
Eg: Election administration under the Election Commission of India requires emotionally regulated neutrality amid intense political pressure.
5. **Public trust preservation:** Emotionally intelligent conduct enhances legitimacy and citizen confidence during adverse situations.
Eg: Police reforms discourse post-Prakash Singh vs Union of India (2006) highlighted EI as essential for humane and trusted law enforcement.

Conclusion

Emotional intelligence strengthens ethical decision-making by aligning constitutional values with administrative behaviour under pressure. Institutionalising EI through training, leadership assessment and performance evaluation can make governance both resilient and humane.

Q. “Emotional intelligence is not an innate trait but an administratively cultivable competence” Analyse this statement. Illustrate its relevance in public service delivery. (10 M)

Introduction

Public administration today functions at the interface of state authority and human vulnerability, where decisions deeply affect dignity, trust and social cohesion. In this context, emotional intelligence (EI) is best understood not as a fixed personal trait but as a professional competence that can be consciously cultivated within administrative systems.

Body

Emotional intelligence as an administratively cultivable competence

- 1. Learnable behavioural skills:** Emotional intelligence consists of **self-awareness, self-regulation, motivation, empathy and social skills**, all of which improve through structured learning, reflection and practice rather than being biologically predetermined.
Eg: Mission Karmayogi places explicit emphasis on **behavioural and emotional competencies**, recognising EI as a trainable capability across the civil services.
- 2. Shaped by institutional culture:** Administrative norms, ethical codes and leadership behaviour continuously shape how officials perceive emotions and respond to people, demonstrating that EI evolves through professional socialisation.
Eg: District immersion and field postings during probation sensitise officers to ground realities, gradually building empathy and emotional maturity.
- 3. Strengthened through experiential exposure:** Repeated engagement with crises, vulnerable populations and conflict situations enhances emotional regulation and interpersonal judgement over time.
Eg: Disaster management roles of district magistrates foster calm decision-making and emotional resilience under pressure.
- 4. Reinforced by accountability mechanisms:** Performance appraisal, grievance redressal and public feedback systems create incentives for emotionally balanced and respectful conduct.
Eg: Time-bound grievance handling platforms push officials to engage patiently and sensitively with citizen concerns.
- 5. Aligned with ethical capacity building:** Emotional intelligence underpins ethical reasoning, enabling administrators to translate abstract values into humane action.
Eg: Ethics training inspired by Second ARC’s emphasis on values-based governance integrates emotional awareness with moral judgement.

Relevance of emotional intelligence in public service delivery

- 1. Citizen-centric service delivery:** Emotional intelligence helps administrators understand citizens’ lived experiences, ensuring responsiveness and compassion in line with **constitutional values of dignity and justice**.
Eg: Officers adopting empathetic communication in welfare delivery improve beneficiary trust and uptake.

2. **Conflict resolution and social harmony:** Emotionally intelligent engagement prevents escalation of disputes and promotes negotiated solutions.
Eg: Community-oriented policing relies on empathy and active listening to reduce local tensions.
3. **Effective implementation in high-stress situations:** Self-regulation and emotional balance are crucial during emergencies, ensuring ethical conduct and administrative neutrality.
Eg: Pandemic-era governance showed that calm, empathetic messaging improved public compliance with restrictions.
4. **Inclusive governance for vulnerable groups:** Empathy enables administrators to design and deliver services sensitive to gender, disability and marginalisation.
Eg: Emotionally aware officials improve outcomes in **child protection and social welfare cases** by prioritising dignity and care.
5. **Trust-building between state and citizens:** Consistent emotionally intelligent behaviour strengthens legitimacy and public confidence in institutions.
Eg: Respectful grievance hearings and transparent communication enhance **long-term institutional trust**.

Conclusion

Recognising emotional intelligence as an administratively cultivable competence bridges ethical intent with effective action. Systematic nurturing of EI can transform public service delivery from rule-bound administration to genuinely humane governance.

Contributions of moral thinkers and philosophers from India and world.

Q. What does the following quotation mean to you in the present context?

“He who is not contented with what he has, would not be contented with what he would like to have.”

– Socrates

Introduction

Socrates’ words underline a core ethical insight: dissatisfaction is not cured by acquisition but by inner regulation of desire. In a time marked by excess ambition, comparison, and moral shortcuts, the quotation acquires sharp ethical relevance.

Body

Meaning of the quotation

1. **Contentment as an inner ethical state:** The quotation means that **satisfaction flows from inner self-mastery**, not from external possessions or achievements.
Eg: Indian philosophy of Santosha (Yoga Sutras of Patanjali) treats contentment as a moral virtue essential for mental stability and ethical clarity.
2. **Insatiable desire leads to perpetual dissatisfaction:** It implies that **unchecked wants multiply endlessly**, making fulfilment impossible even after goals are achieved.
Eg: Behavioural economics studies cited by World Happiness Report 2024 show adaptation effect, where happiness gains from income or status fade quickly.
3. **Absence of contentment erodes ethical judgement:** The quote highlights that **discontent weakens moral restraint**, increasing vulnerability to greed and unethical conduct.

Eg: Second ARC Report on Ethics in Governance (2007) identifies greed and material obsession as key causes of corruption.

4. **Distinction between need and greed:** It conveys the ethical distinction that **legitimate needs ensure dignity**, while excessive wants distort priorities and values.

Eg: Gandhian concept of “Need-based living” emphasised moral limits on consumption for ethical life.

5. **Happiness as a by-product, not a target:** The quotation teaches that **happiness emerges indirectly through balance**, not through relentless pursuit.

Eg: Bhagavad Gita (Chapter 2) stresses detachment from outcomes to attain inner peace and steadiness.

Relevance in the present context

1. **Ethics of public service and corruption:** In governance, lack of contentment often drives **abuse of office and rent-seeking behaviour**, weakening public trust.

Eg: Central Vigilance Commission reports consistently link corruption cases to disproportionate assets and lifestyle inflation.

2. **Youth anxiety and success culture:** The quote is relevant as **comparison-driven aspirations** fuel stress, burnout, and ethical compromise among youth.

Eg: National Mental Health Survey (MoHFW) records rising anxiety linked to performance pressure and unrealistic expectations.

3. **Corporate ethics and profit maximisation:** In business, absence of contentment encourages **short-term profit over ethical responsibility**.

Eg: SEBI’s emphasis on ESG norms reflects recognition that limitless profit-seeking harms long-term trust and sustainability.

4. **Environmental responsibility and sustainable living:** The quotation is relevant to ecological ethics, as **overconsumption accelerates environmental degradation**.

Eg: UNEP and NITI Aayog advocacy on SDG-12 promotes moderation and responsible consumption as ethical imperatives.

5. **Social harmony and reduced inequality:** Contentment curbs status competition and envy, thereby **strengthening fraternity**, a constitutional value.

Eg: Article 38 of the Constitution of India seeks reduction of inequalities, which is supported by ethical self-restraint in consumption.

Conclusion

Socrates’ insight reminds that ethical living begins with governing desire, not gratifying it. In an age of excess, cultivating contentment is essential for personal integrity, clean governance, and sustainable social progress.

Q. What does the following quotation mean to you in the present context? (10 M)

“The truth is incontrovertible. Malice may attack it, ignorance may deride it, but in the end, there it is.”

– Winston Churchill.

Introduction

Ethics in public life rests on the belief that truth has an intrinsic moral force. Even when distorted by power, prejudice, or misinformation, truth retains the capacity to correct systems and conscience over time.

Body

Meaning of the quotation

1. **Truth as an objective moral value:** Truth exists independently of human approval and cannot be altered by authority or numbers.
Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission (Ethics in Governance) identifies truthfulness as the core element of **integrity**, without which public service loses moral legitimacy.
2. **Limits of malice and vested interests:** Deliberate attacks on truth may succeed temporarily but cannot sustain moral validity.
Eg: CAG audits have repeatedly revealed concealed fiscal irregularities, showing that manipulated narratives collapse under factual scrutiny.
3. **Ignorance as a transient barrier:** Lack of awareness may delay acceptance of truth but does not negate it.
Eg: Article 21 jurisprudence evolved over decades, gradually expanding the understanding of dignity and rights despite early institutional ignorance.
4. **Time as an ally of truth:** Truth may be delayed, but ethical reasoning ensures its eventual recognition.
Eg: Judicial review under Articles 32 and 226 corrects wrongful state action after due process.
5. **Ethical superiority over power:** Truth derives strength from moral correctness rather than coercive force.
Eg: ARC recommendations stress that ethical authority outlasts positional authority in public institutions.

Relevance in the present context

1. **Integrity in public administration:** Civil servants face pressure to distort facts, making truthfulness a key ethical test.
Eg: Civil Services Conduct Rules emphasize honesty and devotion to duty as non-negotiable ethical obligations.
2. **Transparency and accountability:** Truth is the foundation of answerability in democratic governance.
Eg: RTI Act, 2005, supported by **standard reports of CAG**, has uncovered corruption despite institutional resistance.
3. **Whistleblowing and moral courage:** Speaking truth to power is essential to ethical governance today.

Eg: Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014 recognizes ethical courage in exposing wrongdoing in public interest.

4. **Constitutional morality over popular prejudice:** Ethical truth must prevail over social ignorance and majoritarian pressure.

Eg: Navtej Singh Johar v. Union of India (2018) upheld constitutional morality against entrenched societal bias.

5. **Trust in institutions:** Sustained truthfulness builds public trust, a critical ethical resource.

Eg: OECD and ARC ethics frameworks identify transparency and truthful communication as prerequisites for institutional trust.

Conclusion

The quotation reinforces that ethics is not about immediate acceptance but moral endurance. In governance, truth anchored in integrity and constitutional morality ultimately restores justice and public trust.

Q. What does the following quotation mean to you in the present context? (10 M)

“True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice”

-Martin Luther King Jr.

Introduction

Peace that rests only on the absence of visible conflict is fragile and deceptive. In the present context of social inequalities, institutional distrust and ethical governance challenges, **Martin Luther King Jr.**'s assertion highlights justice as the ethical foundation of enduring peace.

Body

Meaning of the quotation

1. **Justice as the ethical substance of peace:** The quotation conveys that peace acquires moral legitimacy only when fairness, rights and dignity are upheld, not when disorder is merely suppressed.
Eg: Article 14 of the Constitution of India guarantees equality before law, recognising that unequal treatment generates latent conflict even under apparent calm.
2. **Silence can coexist with injustice:** Absence of tension may reflect fear, coercion or marginalisation rather than genuine harmony.
Eg: Maneka Gandhi v. Union of India (1978) held that any procedure affecting liberty must be **just, fair and reasonable**, not merely orderly.
3. **Justice addresses root causes, not symptoms:** Ethical peace requires eliminating structural injustice rather than managing surface-level disturbances.
Eg: Articles 38 and 39 of the Directive Principles of State Policy mandate reduction of inequalities to secure social justice.
4. **Moral legitimacy over force:** Authority derives ethical strength from justice, not from coercive control.
Eg: The Supreme Court's consistent emphasis on rule of law as the basis of democratic governance.
5. **Dignity as a prerequisite for peace:** Peace exists when individuals experience respect and recognition of inherent dignity.
Eg: Expansion of Article 21 to include dignity as an essential component of the right to life.

Relevance in the present context

1. **Social justice and sustainable harmony:** Persistent inequality undermines long-term peace despite administrative order.
Eg: Reservation provisions under Articles 15 and 16 aim to correct historical injustice to ensure social stability.
2. **Justice delivery and public trust:** Delayed or selective justice erodes confidence in institutions and fuels unrest.
Eg: Hussainara Khatoon v. State of Bihar (1979) exposed undertrial injustice, linking justice delivery with human dignity.
3. **Ethical handling of dissent:** Democratic peace requires protecting dissent as a moral right, not suppressing it.
Eg: Judicial recognition of peaceful protest under Article 19 as integral to constitutional democracy.
4. **Pluralism and conflict resolution:** Justice-based inclusion is essential for peace in a diverse society.
Eg: National Integration Council recommendations emphasise fairness and dialogue over coercion in managing social conflicts.
5. **Internal security with ethical restraint:** Peace built solely on force without justice deepens alienation.
Eg: Administrative Reforms Commission recommendations on police reforms stress accountability, rights and ethical conduct.

Conclusion

The quotation remains deeply relevant, reminding that peace without justice is temporary and illusory. Only ethical governance rooted in fairness, dignity and accountability can secure true and lasting peace.

Public/Civil service values and Ethics in Public administration: Status and problems; ethical concerns and dilemmas in government and private institutions; laws, rules, regulations and conscience as sources of ethical guidance; accountability and ethical governance; strengthening of ethical and moral values in governance; ethical issues in international relations and funding; corporate governance.

Q. Ethical governance demands more than procedural compliance. Examine the distinction between legality and morality. Analyse why ethical restraint is essential in public administration. (10 M)

Introduction

Public administration exercises coercive authority over citizens, making mere compliance with rules insufficient for just governance. Ethical governance therefore requires moral restraint so that public power is exercised not only lawfully but also fairly and responsibly.

Body

Distinction between legality and morality

1. **Legality as minimum rule-based compliance:** Legality refers to conformity with written laws, rules, and procedures, ensuring predictability but not necessarily justice.
Eg: Second ARC, Ethics in Governance (2007) observes that legality alone cannot ensure ethical outcomes if rules are applied mechanically without fairness.
2. **Morality as value-based obligation:** Morality is guided by ethical values such as justice, equity, compassion, and public good, extending beyond codified law.
Eg: Article 38 of the Constitution mandates the State to promote social justice, reflecting moral duties beyond strict legal compliance.
3. **External enforcement versus internal conscience:** Legal behaviour is enforced externally through sanctions, while moral behaviour is guided by internal conscience.
Eg: Gandhian ethics of trusteeship emphasised moral self-restraint even in legally permissible actions.
4. **Uniform application versus contextual judgement:** Laws apply uniformly, whereas morality allows sensitivity to context, vulnerability, and consequences.
Eg: Maneka Gandhi vs Union of India (1978) held that procedure must be just, fair, and reasonable, introducing moral content into legality.
5. **Rule-following versus purpose orientation:** Legality focuses on following rules, while morality evaluates whether actions advance the purpose of governance.
Eg: Preamble of the Constitution reflects ethical goals like justice and dignity that transcend procedural legality.

Why ethical restraint is essential in public administration

1. **To prevent misuse of discretionary power:** Ethical restraint limits arbitrary or self-serving use of discretion even when actions are legally valid.
Eg: Ramana Dayaram Shetty vs International Airport Authority (1979) held that discretion must conform to fairness and non-arbitrariness.
2. **To protect public trust in institutions:** Ethical conduct sustains legitimacy, which legality alone cannot guarantee.
Eg: OECD Trust in Government Report (2023) identifies ethical behaviour of officials as a key determinant of public trust.
3. **To ensure accountability beyond technical compliance:** Ethical restraint compels officials to own moral responsibility for decisions.
Eg: Central Civil Services Conduct Rules, 1964 require integrity and devotion to duty, not mere procedural correctness.
4. **To address moral grey zones:** Many administrative situations are legally ambiguous and demand ethical judgement rather than rule-book responses.
Eg: Law Commission of India (255th Report) highlights ethical discretion in governance where laws are silent or inadequate.
5. **To uphold constitutional morality:** Ethical restraint aligns administration with constitutional values rather than narrow legality.
Eg: Supreme Court in Navtej Singh Johar (2018) affirmed that constitutional morality must guide state action beyond statutory legality.

Conclusion

Legality defines the floor of governance, but morality defines its direction. Ethical restraint ensures that public power remains humane, just, and aligned with constitutional values rather than reduced to mechanical rule-following.

Q. Ethical responsibility in public life cannot be reduced to mere adherence to rules. Examine this statement in the context of moral accountability. Assess its relevance for ethical governance. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical dilemmas in public life often arise in grey zones where rules are silent or inadequate. In such contexts, moral accountability rooted in values becomes the true test of ethical responsibility.

Body

Ethical responsibility beyond mere adherence to rules

1. **Primacy of moral conscience over formal compliance:** Ethical responsibility requires individuals in public life to act according to conscience and moral reasoning, not merely procedural correctness.
Eg: The **Second administrative reforms commission, Ethics in governance report (2007)** emphasised that integrity flows from internal values rather than external controls alone.
2. **Incompleteness of rule-based frameworks:** No legal or administrative rulebook can anticipate every ethical dilemma arising from discretion, uncertainty, or competing public interests.
Eg: In **Vineet narain v Union of India (1997)**, the **Supreme court** stressed that ethical commitment, not only formal rules, sustains institutional credibility.
3. **Ethical intent versus mechanical obedience:** Actions may be rule-compliant yet ethically deficient if intent is self-serving or unjust.
Eg: The **Nolan committee principles of public life (UK)**, widely cited in Indian ethics discourse, place integrity and selflessness above procedural conformity.
4. **Constitutional morality as a higher ethical compass:** Public conduct must reflect constitutional values even when rules permit morally questionable actions.
Eg: The **Supreme court** has consistently invoked **constitutional morality** anchored in **Articles 14 and 21**, requiring fairness, dignity, and reasonableness.
5. **Personal accountability beyond institutional cover:** Ethical responsibility fixes personal moral accountability and prevents evasion behind hierarchy or procedure.
Eg: The **Second ARC** warned against “ethical abdication” where officials justify unethical acts as mere rule-following.

Relevance for ethical governance

1. **Sustaining public trust and legitimacy:** Ethical governance depends on trust, which collapses when public actors hide behind technical legality.
Eg: **Second ARC (2007)** identifies public trust as the foundational outcome of ethical conduct in governance.
2. **Responsible exercise of discretion:** Ethical responsibility ensures discretion is guided by public interest rather than personal, political, or institutional convenience.

Eg: National disaster management authority guidelines emphasise compassion and equity in relief decisions where rigid rules are inadequate.

3. **Prevention of moral minimalism:** Ethical governance discourages the mindset of doing only the bare legal minimum.

Eg: Article 51A of the Constitution highlights fundamental duties that encourage ethical conduct beyond enforceable obligations.

4. **Strengthening accountability culture:** Moral accountability fosters transparency and answerability even in legally permissible but ethically questionable decisions.

Eg: The Central vigilance commission's integrity framework stresses ethical decision-making as a preventive vigilance tool.

5. **Long-term institutional resilience:** Ethical governance rooted in values ensures institutions endure beyond individuals, rules, or regimes.

Eg: The Second ARC notes that value-based governance produces stable institutions resistant to corruption and arbitrariness.

Conclusion

Rules provide structure, but ethics provide direction. Ethical governance ultimately rests on morally accountable individuals who internalise values as guiding principles, not loopholes to exploit.

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.

Q. Symbols of privilege can quietly erode moral legitimacy in public institutions. Explain the ethical reasoning behind this view. Assess its relevance for integrity institutions in a democracy. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethics in public institutions is judged not only by formal conduct but also by visible behavioural signals that communicate values to citizens. In a democracy grounded in equality and accountability, even subtle displays of privilege can weaken moral authority.

Body

Ethical reasoning behind erosion of moral legitimacy

1. **Equality before law as an ethical baseline:** Public institutions derive moral legitimacy from adherence to **Article 14 of the Constitution**, which embodies equality and non-arbitrariness; symbols of privilege create a perception of moral distance from citizens.

Eg: Lavish official perks for public authorities are often criticised for contradicting constitutional

egalitarianism, as repeatedly emphasised by the **Supreme Court in Ramana Dayaram Shetty v. International Airport Authority (1979)** on fairness in state action.

2. **Conflict between role morality and personal comfort:** Ethics demands alignment between an institution's mandate and its conduct; pursuit of luxury creates moral dissonance between public duty and private convenience.

Eg: The **Second Administrative Reforms Commission (ARC), Ethics in Governance Report, 2007**, stressed that holders of public office must demonstrate **simplicity and restraint** to reinforce ethical credibility.

3. **Symbolic signalling and public trust:** Ethical legitimacy is partly symbolic; visible privilege signals entitlement rather than service, eroding trust even in absence of corruption.

Eg: Public backlash against **high-end procurement decisions by oversight bodies**, such as the **Lokpal vehicle tender controversy (2025, PTI)**, reflected concerns of ethical optics rather than legality.

4. **Moral hazard in accountability institutions:** Privilege normalises excess and weakens internal ethical discipline, creating a slippery slope towards justifying questionable decisions.

Eg: The **Vineet Narain v. Union of India (1997)** judgment emphasised that integrity institutions must maintain unimpeachable standards to command moral authority.

Relevance for integrity institutions in a democracy

1. **Credibility as functional capital:** Integrity institutions rely more on moral authority than coercive power; perceived privilege undermines their effectiveness in enforcing probity.

Eg: The **Lokpal and Lokayuktas Act, 2013** envisages moral leadership in anti-corruption enforcement, where credibility is central to compliance.

2. **Democratic accountability and public perception:** In a democracy, institutions are accountable not only to law but to public conscience; privilege weakens this ethical accountability.

Eg: Article 38 of the Constitution mandates promotion of social justice, requiring institutions to avoid conduct that deepens perceived elite insulation.

3. **Setting ethical benchmarks for governance:** Integrity institutions act as ethical role models; indulgence lowers ethical standards across governance structures.

Eg: The **Second ARC (2007)** recommended that oversight bodies adopt **codes of conduct and austerity norms** to set behavioural benchmarks.

4. **Sustaining institutional legitimacy in anti-corruption efforts:** Moral legitimacy enhances voluntary compliance and cooperation, which is critical for corruption control.

Eg: Global best practices cited by **Transparency International** highlight that ethical symbolism strengthens institutional trust in anti-graft regimes.

Conclusion

In democratic governance, integrity institutions must practice ethical minimalism in lifestyle and conduct. Moral authority, sustained through restraint and symbolism aligned with constitutional values, is indispensable for preserving public trust and institutional legitimacy.

Q. Corruption becomes most corrosive when discretion is converted into entitlement. Examine the ethical meaning of the statement. Discuss its relevance in public service decision-making. (10 M)

Introduction

Discretion is entrusted to public servants to apply rules with fairness, judgement, and sensitivity to context. It becomes ethically corrosive when this discretionary power is internalised as a personal entitlement rather than exercised as a public trust.

Body

Ethical meaning of converting discretion into entitlement

1. **Violation of public trust ethics:** Discretion is morally justified only when exercised on behalf of citizens; treating it as entitlement converts public authority into private property, undermining trusteeship in public office.
Eg: Public officials demanding informal benefits for routine approvals reflects a shift from service orientation to ownership of authority.
2. **Normalization of rent-seeking behaviour:** Entitlement mindset transforms discretion into a predictable source of private gain, eroding integrity and moral restraint.
Eg: Fixed-rate bribes for administrative clearances indicate discretion being treated as a monetisable right rather than a duty-bound judgement.
3. **Substitution of conscience with self-interest:** Ethical discretion requires impartial reasoning; entitlement replaces moral reasoning with personal benefit calculations.
Eg: Selective acceleration or delay of files based on personal gain shows erosion of ethical judgement.
4. **Erosion of fairness as a moral value:** Discretion-as-entitlement undermines procedural justice by privileging access over merit.
Eg: Preferential approvals for influential applicants violate the ethical principle of equal treatment.
5. **Moral degradation of role morality:** Public roles demand higher ethical standards; entitlement reduces office to a transactional role.
Eg: Routine expectation of 'speed money' reflects collapse of role-based moral obligations.

Relevance in public service decision-making

1. **Distortion of equality and justice:** Entitlement-driven discretion creates unequal outcomes, disadvantaging the powerless.
Eg: Small farmers or poor applicants facing delays without payments illustrates ethical injustice in service delivery.
2. **Institutionalisation of corruption:** When discretion is seen as entitlement, corruption shifts from aberration to accepted practice.
Eg: Entire offices functioning on informal rate cards indicate systemic ethical failure rather than isolated misconduct.
3. **Loss of public trust and legitimacy:** Citizens begin to perceive governance as extractive, not service-oriented.
Eg: Public cynicism towards land, police, or revenue offices reflects erosion of moral legitimacy.

4. **Moral injury within administration:** Ethical officers face pressure to conform, leading to demoralisation and ethical silence.
Eg: Honest officers being marginalised for refusing informal practices weakens institutional ethics.
5. **Undermining ethical decision-making frameworks:** Rules and safeguards fail when discretion is culturally perceived as entitlement.
Eg: Digitised systems being bypassed through human discretion show ethical failure beyond procedural reform.

Conclusion

Discretion sustains ethical governance only when exercised with integrity, accountability, and restraint. Re-establishing discretion as a public trust, not an entitlement, is essential to restore ethical decision-making and public confidence in administration.

Q. Fear of punishment alone cannot ensure ethical conduct in public administration. Evaluate the statement and suggest ethical enablers beyond deterrence. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical conduct in public administration cannot be reduced to mere compliance driven by fear. While punishment is necessary, over-reliance on deterrence ignores the moral, institutional and cultural foundations of integrity that sustain ethical governance over time.

Body

Limits of fear of punishment

1. **Compliance without moral internalisation:** Fear-based systems promote rule-following only under surveillance, failing to cultivate intrinsic values like integrity and probity.
Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission (2nd ARC, Ethics in Governance, 2007) noted that excessive reliance on vigilance creates “rule-bound but value-deficient” administration.
2. **Low certainty of punishment:** Deterrence works only when detection and conviction are swift and certain, which is often weak in public systems.
Eg: 2nd ARC (2007) highlighted delays in departmental inquiries and disciplinary proceedings as a major cause of ethical slippage.
3. **Risk of moral minimalism:** Officials may aim only to avoid punishment rather than pursue ethical excellence or public interest.
Eg: Nolan Committee Principles (UK, 1995) emphasise that ethics requires commitment to selflessness and integrity, not just legal compliance.
4. **Culture of fear discourages ethical voice:** Over-penal systems suppress whistleblowing and moral courage due to fear of reprisal.
Eg: Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014 has limited effectiveness due to weak protection mechanisms, as noted in **2nd ARC follow-ups**.
5. **Punishment is reactive, not preventive:** Deterrence acts after ethical failure, not before moral erosion sets in.
Eg: Central Vigilance Commission reports repeatedly stress the need for preventive vigilance alongside punitive action.

Ethical enablers beyond deterrence

1. **Value-based training and ethical capacity building:** Continuous sensitisation builds internal moral compass among officials.
Eg: Mission Karmayogi (2020) integrates ethics, integrity and public service values into civil service training (Source: **DoPT**).
2. **Ethical leadership and role modelling:** Behaviour of seniors shapes ethical climate more effectively than rules.
Eg: 2nd ARC (2007) emphasised leadership by example as the strongest ethical enabler in public organisations.
3. **Transparency and process simplification:** Reducing discretion and opacity lowers ethical temptation at the source.
Eg: e-Office and digitisation of service delivery under Digital India have reduced interface-based corruption (Source: **MeitY annual reports**).
4. **Positive incentives and recognition of integrity:** Rewarding ethical conduct reinforces moral behaviour.
Eg: Vigilance Clearance-linked performance appraisal recommended by **2nd ARC** to incentivise integrity.
5. **Strong institutional ethics architecture:** Codes, social audits and citizen oversight embed ethics systemically.
Eg: Citizen Charters and Sevottam Model promote accountability, transparency and ethical service delivery (Source: **DARPG**).

Conclusion

Fear of punishment may restrain misconduct, but only ethical internalisation sustains integrity. A governance system rooted in values, leadership and transparency transforms ethics from enforced compliance into voluntary commitment.

Q. Integrity in public life is tested not in rules but in resistance to unethical incentives. Analyse the ethical challenges faced by public servants. Discuss ways to strengthen ethical resilience. (10 M)

Introduction

Ethical conduct in public service is tested not during routine compliance but in moments where temptation, pressure, or inducement challenge moral judgment. Integrity, therefore, reflects the strength of character exercised beyond formal rule adherence.

Body

Integrity beyond formal rules

1. **Primacy of inner moral compass:** Rules provide external boundaries, but integrity is anchored in personal conscience when unethical incentives arise.
Eg: Second Administrative Reforms Commission, Ethics in Governance Report (2007) stressed that ethical public service depends on **internalised values**, not procedural compliance alone.
2. **Incompleteness of rule-based systems:** No legal framework can anticipate every ethical dilemma, making personal resistance to inducements decisive.

Eg: Vineet Narain vs Union of India (1997) underscored that ethical governance requires **moral commitment beyond statutory controls**.

3. **Ethical testing in discretionary spaces:** Integrity is most tested where discretion exists and formal violations are not explicit.

Eg: OECD Integrity Review of India (2023) highlighted that **high-discretion environments** amplify ethical vulnerability.

4. **Choice under informal pressure:** Unethical incentives often operate through persuasion rather than coercion, testing voluntary ethical restraint.

Eg: Central Vigilance Commission guidance notes recognise that **informal inducements** are harder to regulate than formal misconduct.

Ethical challenges faced by public servants

1. **Political and career-related pressure:** Transfers, postings, and performance assessments may be informally linked to unethical compliance.

Eg: Second ARC (2007) identified **tenure insecurity** as a major ethical stressor in public service.

2. **Normalisation of unethical practices:** Repeated minor compromises gradually erode ethical sensitivity and resistance.

Eg: CVC annual reports have flagged patterns of **routine procedural manipulation** becoming institutional habits.

3. **Conflict of interest situations:** Personal, familial, or post-retirement prospects may influence official decisions.

Eg: Law Commission of India, 254th Report (2015) warned about ethical risks from **post-retirement appointments**.

4. **Weak whistleblower confidence:** Fear of retaliation discourages ethical resistance and disclosure of wrongdoing.

Eg: Second ARC observed that inadequate protection mechanisms weaken **ethical courage** among officials.

Ways to strengthen ethical resilience

1. **Security of tenure and independence:** Stable tenure enables ethical decision-making free from arbitrary pressure.

Eg: T S R Subramanian vs Union of India (2013) directed **fixed tenure** to safeguard administrative integrity.

2. **Continuous ethics capacity building:** Regular ethics training sharpens moral reasoning and dilemma-handling skills.

Eg: Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration incorporates structured **ethics and values modules** in service training.

3. **Strong transparency and accountability systems:** Visibility reduces the appeal and feasibility of unethical incentives.

Eg: Right to Information Act, 2005, described in **CBSE vs Aditya Bandopadhyay (2011)** as promoting **ethical governance**.

4. **Effective whistleblower protection:** Safe reporting mechanisms encourage ethical resistance to wrongdoing.

Eg: Whistle Blowers Protection Act, 2014 aims to provide **institutional backing** for ethical disclosure.

Conclusion

Integrity in public life is sustained when moral courage is supported by institutional safeguards. Strengthening both individual conscience and systemic protection is essential for ethical governance in complex administrative environments.

Case Studies on above issues.

Q. Business history, like any other, is replete with stories of remarkable successes and significant setbacks.

While businesses drive innovation and improve lives, they occasionally falter, engaging in practices that undermine trust and progress. Such crises test the moral leadership of business leaders, offering lessons for future generations. One such crisis is currently unfolding for the Indian conglomerate HAC Group. A few months ago, the company was accused by a foreign credit rating agency of report manipulation. Additionally, the Indian market regulator was alleged to have a conflict of interest with HAC. The situation has escalated with a bribery case now filed in a U.S. court, alleging that Indian officials were bribed to secure foreign business agreements for HAC. Media and experts have criticized the firm, pointing to a lack of corporate governance, ethical standards, and unchecked greed, which they claim have tarnished India's reputation on international platforms. Rajat, the CEO of HAC Group, has been actively defending the company, labelling the allegations as baseless and politically motivated. However, investor confidence has dwindled, with stakeholders pulling back their investments. This has not only destabilized HAC Group but also contributed to a decline in the Indian stock market, further amplifying the crisis. (20 M)

- a) What are the factors contributing to the decline of ethical principles in corporate governance?
- b) Do you think that a lack of strict adherence to the code of ethics and code of conduct led to such a situation? Justify your answer.
- c) Analyze the role of moral leadership in addressing ethical allegations and restoring public confidence.
- d) What ethical principles should guide Rajat's response to these accusations?

Introduction:

Corporate governance is the framework of rules and practices ensuring transparency, fairness, and accountability in business operations. Ethical lapses, as seen in the HAC Group case, undermine trust and damage public confidence. Addressing these crises demands strict adherence to codes of conduct and moral leadership.

Body:

Stakeholders Involved in the Case:

1. **Investors:** Losing trust due to alleged unethical practices and financial instability.
2. **Employees:** Affected by the reputational damage and uncertainty about job security.
3. **Regulators:** Accused of conflicts of interest, they risk losing public credibility.
4. **Public and Media:** Act as watchdogs, amplifying accountability demands.
5. **Global Business Partners:** Concerned about reputational risks and ethical compliance.

a) Factors Contributing to the Decline of Ethical Principles in Corporate Governance:

1. **Greed and profit maximization:** Unchecked focus on profits often leads to ethical compromises.
2. **Weak regulatory enforcement:** Ineffective monitoring emboldens companies to violate norms.
3. **Conflict of interest:** Unethical relationships between regulators and corporations erode trust.

4. **Lack of transparency:** Insufficient disclosure fosters unethical decision-making.
5. **Short-termism:** Focus on immediate gains at the expense of long-term sustainability.

b) Yes, Lack of Strict Adherence to the Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct Led to Such a Situation:

1. **Neglect of accountability:** Ignoring ethical codes enables misrepresentation of facts.
E.g. Satyam scam exposed how falsified accounts flouted ethical standards.
2. **Inadequate whistleblower mechanisms:** Lack of robust reporting systems allows unethical practices to thrive.
E.g. The IL&FS crisis worsened due to delayed whistleblower actions.
3. **Absence of integrity in leadership:** Ethical lapses often stem from compromised leadership.
E.g. ICICI Bank's CEO faced allegations of conflict of interest, affecting governance.
4. **Failure to prevent corruption:** Ignoring anti-corruption codes fosters malpractices.
E.g. Cases of bribery in awarding contracts in PSUs highlight lapses in ethical adherence.
5. **Weak implementation of corporate governance norms:** Companies often treat ethical codes as symbolic.
E.g. Frequent violations of disclosure norms in smaller listed companies show poor enforcement.

c) Role of Moral Leadership in Addressing Ethical Allegations and Restoring Public Confidence:

1. **Demonstrating transparency:** Leaders must disclose facts and cooperate with investigations.
E.g. Infosys leadership's transparent handling of whistleblower complaints strengthened trust.
2. **Taking accountability:** Accepting responsibility for lapses restores credibility.
E.g. Ratan Tata openly addressed ethical challenges in the Tata-Corus deal, maintaining integrity.
3. **Reinforcing ethical culture:** Setting ethical examples influences organizational behavior.
E.g. Narayana Murthy's emphasis on ethical leadership at Infosys became a benchmark.
4. **Engaging with stakeholders:** Building trust through direct communication mitigates crises.
E.g. Zomato's CEO addressed stakeholder concerns during the acquisition of Blinkit.
5. **Implementing corrective actions:** Swift reforms demonstrate commitment to ethical practices.
E.g. Maruti Suzuki introduced stringent safety measures post-Manesar plant unrest.

d) Ethical Principles to Guide Rajat's Response:

1. **Accountability:** Accept responsibility for lapses and ensure corrective actions.
E.g. TCS apologized and resolved issues during allegations of H-1B visa misuse.
2. **Transparency:** Ensure open and truthful communication with stakeholders.
E.g. SEBI's reforms post-NSE scam aimed at increasing market transparency.
3. **Integrity:** Uphold honesty in dealings, even amidst adversity.
E.g. Azim Premji's philanthropic practices showcase unwavering ethical commitment.
4. **Justice:** Address concerns of all stakeholders fairly and impartially.
E.g. Airtel's dispute resolution with TRAI reflected fairness in compliance.
5. **Empathy:** Understand and address public concerns to rebuild trust.
E.g. Tata Steel's community programs mitigated opposition to land acquisitions.

Conclusion:

Crises in corporate governance demand ethical introspection and decisive action. As **Warren Buffett said**, **"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it."** Leaders like Rajat must prioritize accountability, transparency, and stakeholder engagement to rebuild trust and ensure sustainable growth.

Q. As the Chief Secretary of a progressive Indian state committed to equality and women's empowerment, you introduced the "Digitally Padho" scheme to address the digital divide among students.

The initiative aimed to provide ₹10,000 in direct financial assistance to Class 11 and 12 students, empowering them to purchase tablets or smartphones for digital learning. The implementation mechanism involved schools registering students on a government portal using Aadhaar and bank account details. The scheme was widely appreciated initially, with 16,00,000 beneficiaries benefiting from the financial aid. Six months after the scheme's rollout, media reports surfaced about discrepancies, with 2,000 students not receiving their entitled grant. Parents lodged complaints, and opposition leaders accused the government of corruption and mismanagement, alleging that funds had been siphoned off by officials. Upon further scrutiny, it was discovered that during data uploads, bank account details of some students were altered, leading to the diversion of funds into ineligible accounts. While public perception leaned toward corruption by government officials, preliminary departmental inquiries suggested a possibility of external hackers tampering with the database. The issue gained significant media attention, escalating into a political controversy. Allegations of systemic lapses and failure to ensure robust cybersecurity added to the public outcry. (20 M)

- a) How does the paternalistic approach in governance justify financial aid schemes?
- b) What ethical dilemmas arise from such interventions?
- c) How does the lack of probity in implementing government schemes affect governance credibility?
- d) Should the government halt the scheme temporarily to address the allegations of corruption, or continue it while rectifying the flaws? Discuss the ethical implications of both approaches.

Introduction:

"Ethics is the soul of good governance, ensuring transparency, fairness, and trust." Financial aid schemes reflect a paternalistic approach aimed at social equity, but their success depends on ethical implementation and robust governance mechanisms.

Body:

Stakeholders involved in the case:

1. **Students and Parents:** Direct beneficiaries of the scheme facing digital deprivation.
2. **Government officials:** Responsible for implementing the scheme and ensuring proper fund allocation.
3. **Opposition leaders:** Critiquing the government's credibility and raising corruption charges.
4. **Hackers/external entities:** Alleged involvement in tampering with sensitive data.
5. **Media and Civil Society:** Amplifying public concerns, ensuring accountability.

a) The Paternalistic Approach in Governance Justifies Financial Aid Schemes:

1. **Bridging inequality:** Direct aid empowers marginalized communities to access essential services like education.
E.g. Tamil Nadu's "Amma Laptop Scheme" improved digital literacy among students.
2. **Facilitating inclusive growth:** Ensures equitable opportunities for all sections of society.
E.g. Andhra Pradesh's "Jagananna Vidya Deevena" provided scholarships to financially vulnerable students.
3. **Promoting welfare state principles:** Upholds the state's responsibility to support its citizens in need.
E.g. Delhi's "Mukhyamantri Vigyan Pratibha Pariksha" supports talented underprivileged students.

4. **Encouraging Accountability and Rights:** Financial assistance schemes reinforce citizen trust in governance.
E.g. Gujarat's "Digital India Students Scheme" addressed the digital divide effectively.

b) Ethical Dilemmas Arising from Such Interventions

1. **Corruption Allegations:** Funds being siphoned undermines public trust.
2. **Privacy breaches:** Collecting sensitive data like Aadhaar can lead to misuse.
3. **Equity vs. Efficiency:** Balancing universal reach with accurate targeting is a challenge.
4. **Technological vulnerability:** Cyberattacks expose weaknesses in governance systems.

c) Lack of probity in implementing schemes affects governance credibility:

1. **Erodes public trust:** Mismanagement leads to skepticism about government intentions.
E.g. Fraud in the PM Awas Yojana created trust deficits.
2. **Weakens institutional integrity:** Mishandling exposes flaws in administrative systems.
E.g. Mismanagement in Bihar's Mid-Day Meal Program raised systemic concerns.
3. **Political exploitation:** Opponents leverage irregularities to discredit governments.
E.g. Corruption allegations in Rajasthan's Subsidy Schemes became a political flashpoint.
4. **Harms genuine beneficiaries:** Delays and denials impact those in dire need.
E.g. Mismanagement in Kerala's flood relief distribution left victims stranded.

d) The government should halt the scheme temporarily:

1. **Restores Accountability:** A temporary pause enables rectification and restores trust.
E.g. The halt of Delhi's Ration Delivery Scheme addressed operational loopholes.
2. **Enables transparent audits:** A suspension allows thorough checks and fixes systemic flaws.
E.g. Audit reforms after Punjab's Smart Card Scheme halted its misuse.
3. **Builds robust mechanisms:** Ensures future prevention of similar mishaps.
E.g. Tamil Nadu halted the Free Laptop Scheme to resolve distribution issues.
4. **Upholds ethical governance:** Demonstrates commitment to addressing corruption.
E.g. Odisha temporarily paused the KALIA Scheme to investigate misuse.

The government should continue while rectifying flaws:

1. **Ensures continuity of welfare:** Avoids disruptions in aid delivery to genuine beneficiaries.
E.g. Andhra Pradesh continued YSR Rythu Bharosa while resolving technical issues.
2. **Fosters public confidence:** Demonstrates resilience in governance mechanisms.
E.g. Maharashtra continued Jalyukt Shivar Yojana despite allegations, ensuring aid delivery.
3. **Incorporates real-time corrections:** Allows on-ground testing of improved systems.
E.g. Haryana's Digital Education Initiative improved after real-time issue resolution.
4. **Avoids political exploitation:** Prevents opposition from capitalizing on scheme suspension.
E.g. Karnataka kept Raita Vidya Nidhi active during database corrections.

Conclusion:

Ethical governance demands balancing welfare delivery with integrity and accountability."

Addressing the flaws in "Digitally Padho" requires both immediate reforms and sustained commitment to transparent governance, ensuring beneficiaries' trust and systemic resilience.

INSIGHTSIA