

UPPCS

18 January, 2025

Q.1 “Discuss the role of ethical values in bridging the gap between individual morality and societal expectations. (8 Marks)

Ans- Introduction

Ethical values serve as a bridge, aligning **individual morality** with **societal expectations** by providing a shared framework of principles like **justice, empathy, and responsibility**.

As Rousseau in his **Social Contract Theory** emphasizes how individuals willingly align their morality with societal requirements to ensure harmony.

Key Role of Ethical Values

- **Justice** ensures **fairness**, harmonizing personal beliefs with societal norms.
- (For ex- affirmative actions like reservation for marginalised sections simultaneously balancing it with meritocracy.)
- **Integrity** promotes **accountability**, enabling individuals to act transparently for collective welfare.
- (For ex- A civil servant refusing bribes and ensuring proper fund allocation for public welfare projects demonstrates **integrity** and **accountability**.)
- **Empathy** fosters **understanding, reducing conflicts** between personal desires and community needs.
- (For ex- A company reducing production hours to address workers' mental health issues reflects **empathy**, balancing business goals with employees' well-being.)
- **Integrity** ensures consistency between personal beliefs and societal norms.
- (For ex- A journalist reporting facts without bias reflects **integrity**, aligning personal values of honesty with societal expectations of truth. A student organizing a donation drive for flood victims shows **empathy**, addressing the community's immediate needs.)
- **Empathy** helps individuals understand societal challenges and act responsibly.
- **Justice** balances personal desires with fairness for all.
- **Accountability** promotes responsible behaviour aligned with societal goals.
- **Tolerance** fosters coexistence in diverse societies.
- **Compassion** bridges self-interest with collective welfare. (For ex- doctors serving under-served areas)
- **Respect** strengthens social cohesion by valuing others' rights.
- **Equality** aligns individual actions with the collective pursuit of fairness.

Conclusion:

By fostering **cooperation** and **mutual respect**, ethical values bridge the gap, ensuring individual actions contribute to societal well-being

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Q.2 Question 2: “Explain the concept of ‘ethical relativism’ in the context of human values. How can this concept create challenges in ensuring universal ethical standards?” (200 words)

Ans- Introduction

Ethical relativism is the belief that **moral values** are **relative** to different cultures, societies, or individuals, and not absolute. It suggests that what is **right** or **wrong** depends on the **cultural context** or **personal beliefs**. For ex- **Polygamy** may be accepted in some cultures but considered unethical in others.

Ethical Relativism and Human Values

- Ethical relativism implies that **human values** such as **justice, honesty, and fairness** are not universally applicable.
- These values may differ based on the **historical, religious, and social** context of a society.
- For ex- **Freedom of expression** might be seen as a fundamental right in Western societies but can be restricted in some authoritarian regimes.

Challenges in Universal Ethical Standards

- **Cultural diversity** complicates the establishment of **universal ethical standards**. What is ethical in one society might be considered unethical in another. For ex- **Child marriage** is accepted in some cultures but condemned internationally as a violation of **human rights**.
- **Global cooperation** becomes difficult when countries defend practices like **discrimination** or **capital punishment** based on their cultural values.

Conclusion

- While ethical relativism values cultural diversity, it creates significant challenges in establishing consistent and **universal moral standards**, particularly in the realms of **human rights** and **global governance**.

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Q.3 Discuss the role of ethics in managing the balance between private interests and public responsibility in civil services. How can ethical dilemmas be resolved in such situations? (200 words)

Ans- Introduction

The balance between **private interests** and **public responsibility** in civil services is crucial for maintaining **integrity** and **public trust**. **Ethical standards** guide civil servants in prioritizing **societal welfare** over **personal gains**.

Role of Ethics in Managing the Balance

- In civil services, **ethics** plays a crucial role in ensuring that **public duty** is prioritized over **personal interests**. Civil servants are entrusted with decision-making responsibilities that impact the **public good**, and ethical standards guide them to act in the best interest of society.
- For example, a **public servant** must avoid conflicts of interest by ensuring their **private business** does not interfere with their professional duties, ensuring transparency and accountability in their actions.

Ethical Dilemmas in Public Service

- Ethical dilemmas arise when **personal interests**, like financial gain or familial obligations, **conflict with public responsibility**. A civil servant might face a situation where approving a project could benefit a **family member's company**, but it may not align with public interest.
- Example: A **government official** might have to decide whether to approve a project that benefits a private company they have invested in, potentially creating a **conflict of interest**.

Resolving Ethical Dilemmas

- Ethical dilemmas can be resolved by adhering to **principles of transparency, accountability, and impartiality**. Civil servants must **disclose potential conflicts of interest** and recuse themselves from decisions where bias may be perceived.
- Mechanisms like **ethics committees, codes of conduct, and whistleblower protection** can help resolve these issues, ensuring that **public trust** is maintained and **public service** is not compromised.

Conclusion

Ethics ensures that **personal interests do not overshadow public responsibilities**, and adherence to ethical guidelines helps civil servants resolve dilemmas, maintaining the integrity of the public service.

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Q.4 Discuss the role of reformers like Swami Vivekananda and their ethical teachings in shaping social responsibility and integrity in public administration. (125 words)

Ans- Introduction

Swami Vivekananda's teachings emphasized **selflessness**, **social responsibility**, and **integrity**, which are crucial in shaping ethical values in public administration. His call for **service to humanity** and the importance of **empowering individuals** aligns with the core values of public service.

1. **Social Responsibility:** Vivekananda believed in the upliftment of society through **education**, **spiritual growth**, and **empowerment**. Public administrators who follow this principle focus on the welfare of marginalized sections, promoting **inclusive development**.
2. **Integrity:** Vivekananda's message of **truthfulness** and **honesty** guides public servants in maintaining **transparency** and ethical behaviour in governance. For instance, a civil servant refusing bribes upholds Vivekananda's value of **moral courage**.
3. **Leadership and Empowerment:** Vivekananda emphasized strong leadership and empowerment, advocating for leaders to inspire through action and serve communities.
4. **Holistic Development:** He encouraged a balance of **material progress and spiritual growth**, guiding public servants to promote both economic and social well-being.
5. **Cultural Sensitivity:** His teachings emphasize respect for **diversity** and **social harmony**, essential for managing diverse communities.
6. **Moral Responsibility:** Vivekananda stressed personal accountability and ethical decision-making, urging public administrators to prioritize public good over personal interests

Conclusion

Swami Vivekananda's teachings inspire civil servants to practice **selfless service** and uphold **integrity**, ensuring **ethical governance** and **social welfare**.

Q.5 Case Study

A senior public administrator, **Mr. Sharma**, is responsible for **overseeing a major infrastructure project**. During the procurement process, a **close friend** owns a construction company that is **eligible for the contract**. Mr. Sharma is aware that **awarding the contract to his friend** may lead to a **potential conflict of interest**, but the company **offers competitive pricing**. Mr. Sharma is torn between **personal loyalty** and his duty **to uphold public trust**.

Questions:

1. What ethical principles should Mr. Sharma prioritize in this situation?
2. How can Mr. Sharma ensure transparency and accountability in the procurement process?
3. What measures can be taken to prevent conflicts of interest in public administration?

Ans- Introduction

The case study revolves around Mr. Sharma, a senior public administrator, facing a **conflict of interest** due to his close relationship with a company bidding for a public infrastructure contract

Ethical Principles Mr. Sharma Should Prioritize

- **Public Trust & Integrity:** Uphold the best interests of the public and ensure transparency in all processes.
- **Impartiality:** Ensure that personal relationships do not influence the fairness of the procurement process, maintaining objectivity.

Ensuring Transparency and Accountability

- **Disclosure:** Mr. Sharma should disclose his relationship with the construction company to the relevant authorities and ethics bodies.
- **Recusal:** He should remove himself from decisions regarding the contract to avoid potential bias.
- **Documentation:** The procurement process should be clearly documented, ensuring objective evaluation of bids.
- **Public Access:** Make records of the decision-making process publicly available to demonstrate accountability.

Preventing Conflicts of Interest

- **Conflict-of-Interest Policies:** Advocate for the implementation of policies requiring officials to disclose personal or financial interests.
- **Independent Review Committees:** Establish independent committees to review procurement decisions without bias.
- **Ethics Training:** Provide regular ethical conduct training for public servants to prevent future conflicts of interest.