

1. The essence of ethics of an action lies in its consequences. Critically comment.**Approach:**

As the directive is critically comment, it is expected from candidate to put forth both sides views while answering the question. The basics of this question lies in the Utilitarian and Deontological school of thought. Students need to explain what is essence of ethics and then analyse whether one should think about the consequences of an action or the means of an action.

Introduction:

At the heart of ethics is a concern about something or someone other than ourselves, our own desires and self-interest. Ethics is concerned with other people's interests, with the interests of society, with the 'ultimate good'. However, essence of ethics is correlated with its means and consequences. It clearly means Ethics changes as per the means or consequences of the action.

Body:

Essence of ethics in consequences:

The consequences are defined by various theories, one is utilitarianism, another theory is Deontological school of thought.

- Utilitarian School of thought – According to this approach result is more important than the action. Benefits should be maximized. So even if you take an unethical step but if the net result is positive, the action will be seen as good.
- For example, killing your neighbour who you were finding dangerous is an unethical action. But if that person turned out to be a foreign spy, living under disguise, the net result will be good. According to utilitarian theory your action will be justified.
- The consequences are the effects caused by an action and the quality of these consequences depend on how much good they contain. Motives are the causes and the consequences are the effect.
- There are varied factors in human behaviour that determine whether it is good or bad. There are three such determinants of ethics, namely the object, the end, and the circumstances.
- A very simple example of ethics can be cited from Ramayana, where Lord Ram (the good force) in the end kills Ravana (the bad force). As per normality it can be considered that Killing of other person is a sin, however when it comes to fight between the good and bad, it is justified on the ground of welfare all.

However, sometimes not the consequences but the means are important as per deontological school of thought.

Essence of ethics in means:

- Deontological school of thought – According to this ideology, means are more important than the result. This is generally the philosophy of most of the organized religions.

- For example, according to Mahatma Gandhi, wrong means can never lead to a right end. Bhagwad-Geeta justify that your duty is important rather than the consequences.

Conclusion:

Here, we have observed that essence of ethics is based on both i.e. sometimes it is dependent upon means and sometimes it is dependent upon consequences. Hence, it becomes situational to define whether essence of ethics lies in its means or in its consequence.



2. What do you understand by professional code of conduct? Is it always good to act as per one's professional code even if it contradicts the conscience of a person? Examine.

Approach:

It expects students to write about professional code of conduct in the first part and write about situations in which conscience contradicts with one's professional code with appropriate example.

Introduction:

A code of conduct represents the set of enforceable rules that should be followed by a person in an organisation. Codes, along with other measures, have helped some companies dig themselves out of scandals, and have helped many companies build a healthier work climate and reputation.

Body:

Professional code of conduct:

- Ethical principles underpin all professional codes of conduct. Ethical principles may differ depending on the profession; for example, professional ethics that relate to medical practitioners will differ from those that relate to lawyers or real estate agents.
- However, there are some universal ethical principles that apply across all professions, including honesty, trustworthiness, loyalty, respect for others, adherence to the law, doing good and avoiding harm to others and accountability.
- Professional codes of conduct draw on these professional ethical principles as the basis for prescribing required standards of behaviour for members of a profession. They also seek to set out the expectations that the profession and society have of its members.
- The intention of codes of conduct is to provide guidelines for the minimum standard of appropriate behaviour in a professional context. Codes of conduct sit alongside the general law of the land and the personal values of members of the profession.

Contradiction between professional code of conduct and conscience:

- Soldiers on the border have to follow orders from their command even if it doesn't suit their conscience. As it is necessary to avoid larger issues of breakdown in organisation's functionality.
- Conscience is the part of your mind that tells you whether what you are doing is morally right or wrong. It is based on personal set of values which may differ person to person. However, code of conduct is devised for the larger institutional objectives for optimal functioning.
- It is often necessary to follow professional code of conduct to avoid questions about legality of action. To fulfil needs and demands of the profession.
- However, sometimes following professional code might create crisis of conscience. Crisis of conscience is time when someone is worrying because

they think that they have done something unfair or morally wrong. It may demoralise the individual and lowers her spirit.

- E.g. if economically distressed patient need admission in private hospital but she doesn't have required money to deposit before admission in emergency situation, following code of conduct may result into refusal to the patient while following conscience by management or doctor might save life of patient, which is larger objective of health services organisation.

Conclusion:

Conscience is beyond law; it focuses on following spirit of law rather than sticking to letters of law. Even in the civil services, experience over a period of time suggests there is need of code of ethics along with the code of conduct to realise mission to serve people.



3. Is it possible to differentiate between ethics in private and public life? Critically examine.

Approach:

It expects student to write about - in first part, how ethical standard are found to be different while in second part, mention how ethical standards that should be similar in both private and public life.

Introduction:

Each private and personal relationship has its own irreplaceable value. Each of it has its own unique history, character, and set of implicit and explicit understandings about what is to be expected of the parties to it. Individuals should be ethical in both private and public relationships. In doing so, they should also try to achieve a right balance between private and public ethics.

Body:

Ethical standards are found to be different for private and public life:

- Choosing private interests: When it comes to private interests, individuals tend to act with personal motive and are ignorant of its effects on the public as a whole.
- Openness and transparency: Private lives are influenced by closed choices, secretive decisions and emphasize privacy whereas public lives delve on openness and transparency and hence render more accountability to one another.
- In private life, ambitions and goals, constraints and difficulties, of an individual sometimes result in a compromise of values.
- Freedom of choice enables the individual to make quick choices suited for them, sometimes even foregoing ethical values, just to achieve the end result in a faster pace.
- Public relationships are more instrumental such as organizational colleagues, politicians, strangers, and others outside of one's relatively narrow circle of intimacy. It is the action of getting along with people we constantly come in touch with whereas private life is almost completely based on what the individual thinks is right.
- Example: Keshub Chandra Sen opposed child marriage but married his own underage daughter to Maharaja of Cooch Bihar. Consequently, his followers abandoned him and founded Sadharan Brahmo Samaj (1878). Thus, if there is inconsistency in the public life and private life of a person, it leads to disastrous outcomes.

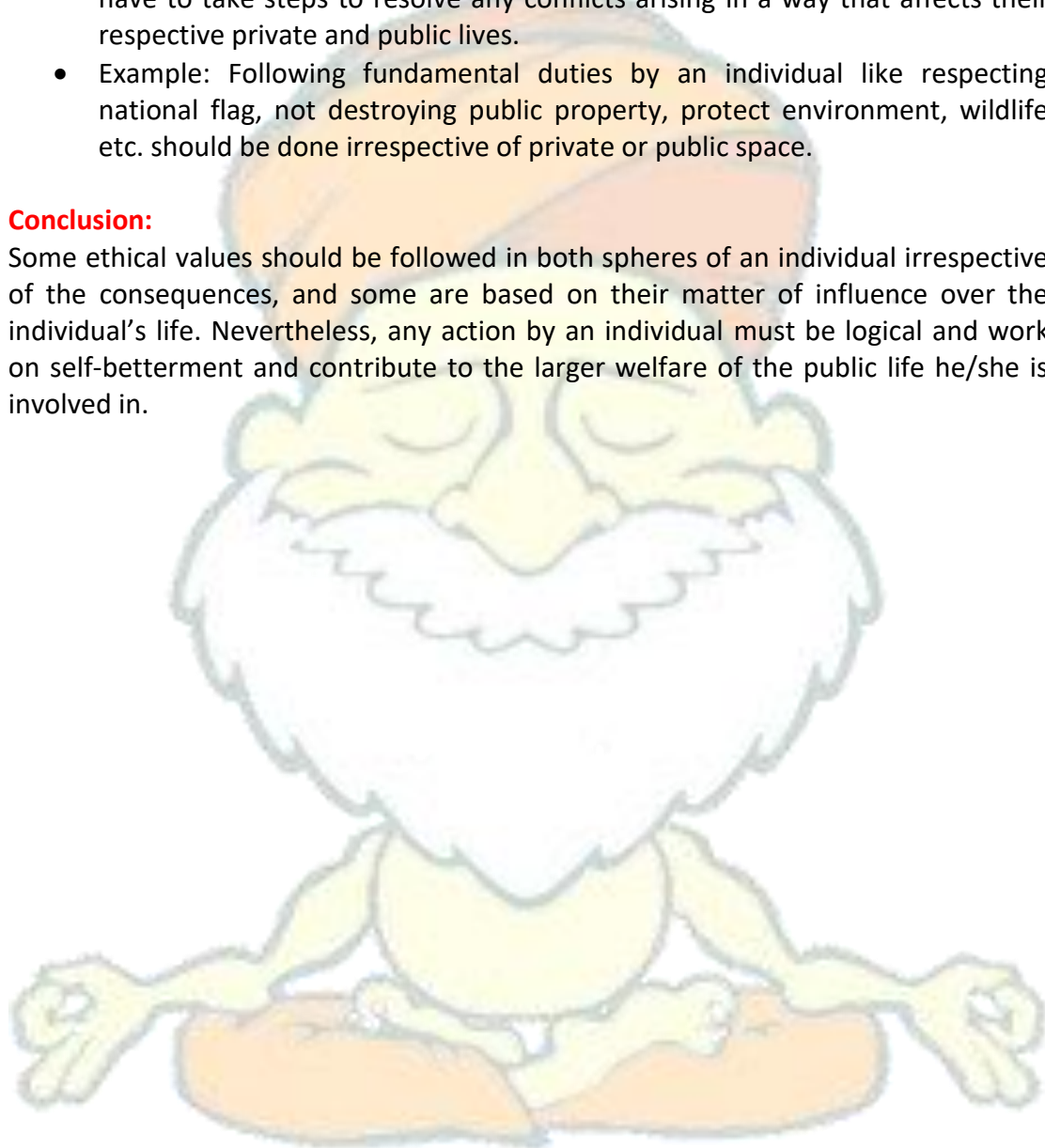
However, some ethical standards that should be similar in both public and private life:

- In both public and private life, an individual should have a sense of moral obligation in the interest of overall welfare of everyone around, and not resort to extreme actions which destroy the harmonious fabric.

- Virtues of compassion, cordialness, basic civic sense etc. are important in any sphere of life, and help one's wholesome growth as both a private individual and a peer in general.
- In both private and public spheres of life one should have highest sense of integrity and not be influenced by any outside individual or organization which might affect their performance.
- Both have to have utmost honesty and sincerity in their actions and both have to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that affects their respective private and public lives.
- Example: Following fundamental duties by an individual like respecting national flag, not destroying public property, protect environment, wildlife etc. should be done irrespective of private or public space.

Conclusion:

Some ethical values should be followed in both spheres of an individual irrespective of the consequences, and some are based on their matter of influence over the individual's life. Nevertheless, any action by an individual must be logical and work on self-betterment and contribute to the larger welfare of the public life he/she is involved in.



4. How ethical do you find the behaviour of journalists nowadays? Hasn't journalism lost its high moral ground? Comment in the context of corporate control of media houses and the trend of intrusive media trials.

Approach:

It expects student to write about - In first part write few points about importance of media ethics - In second part write about how ethical journalism lost its ground nowadays due to corporate control and media trial - while in third part mention few points about how there are some journalist still work with high ethical standards.

Introduction:

The Journalism which provide accurate information from the source to the audience without any influence of political party, organisation is known as ethical Journalism. Ethical journalists must seek out and report on the truth, no matter how difficult or unpleasant it might be. They must ensure the information they provide is accurate, whether that means cross-checking eyewitness accounts, doing independent research, or verifying a source's credibility. At the same time, they must balance the objective reporting they strive for with the impact that reporting might have on the story's subjects or elsewhere.

Body:

Journalism in developing countries like India has immense importance as:

- It acts as a watchdog of public interest in a democracy. It plays an important role in a democracy and serves as an agency of the people to inform them of the events of national and international significance. It is the means by which people receive a free flow of information and ideas, which is essential to intelligent self-governance, that is, democracy.
- Freedom of the media is part of the freedom of speech guaranteed by the Constitution under Article 19 (1) (a).
- One of the basic tasks of the media is to provide truthful and objective information to the people for their social, political and international awareness to reach an informed opinion. This makes media an important stakeholder in a democracy to shoulder the responsibility of presenting unbiased honest news without any vested interest.
- Media is considered as "Fourth Pillar" in democratic countries along with Legislature, Executive, and Judiciary. Its importance in influencing readers can be gauged by the role it played during the freedom struggle, politically educating millions of Indians who joined the leaders in their fight against the British imperialism. The role of media in Indian democracy has undergone massive changes, from the days of press censorship during Emergency in 1975 to being influential in the 2014 Lok Sabha elections.

Due to corporate control of media and profit making attitude now days it observed that media acts less ethically & immorally on many instances:

- The issues of paid news, media trial, non-issues being presented as real news while the real issues are side lined, the news is being doctored and fact distortion for profits and political favour, fake news, yellow journalism are important concerns which are influencing public and impacting national security. For instance, fear mongering through media has led to mob lynching's, attacks on the migrant population.
- The absence of objective journalism leads to the false presentation of truth in a society which affects the perception and opinions of people. As observed in the case of Cambridge analytica case, the biased news coverage on social media platform affected the Presidential elections in the U.S.
- The chase for sensationalism and higher TRP rates as observed in the coverage of 26/11 terrorist attacks in India risked the internal security of the nation. The sensationalism-driven reporting compromised the identities of rape victims and survivors despite SC guidelines.
- Trial by media does not follow the due process of law and can reduce the public trust in institutions of governance like the judiciary.
- Paid news and fake news can manipulate public perception and can instigate hatred, violence, and disharmony among the various community within society.
- With the advent of social media, technological changes, the reach of media has grown profoundly. Its reach and role in impacting public opinion have made it even more important to ensure its objectivity, non-partisanship calls for the enforcement of journalistic ethics.

However, earlier major chunk of journalist works from urban area but with rise of social media and increased penetration of internet there are many independent journalists who are working from rural and semi-urban area. These journalist work without any corporate support and on non-profit basis independently, while sticking to ethical principles of journalism.

Conclusion:

In developing countries like India, the journalist has a great responsibility to fight backward ideas such as casteism and communalism and help the people in their struggle against poverty and other social evils. Hence, having journalistic ethics in place becomes very important. It is important that the media stick to the core principles like truth and accuracy, transparency, independence, fairness and impartiality, responsibility and fair play.

**5. Ethics and equity and the principles of justice do not change with the calendar.
Comment.**

Approach:

As Comment is the directive it is expected to express an opinion or reaction. Hence, a candidate needs to pick out the core points regarding ethics, equity and principles of justice and explain whether they are consistent with time. While answering this question it is expected that a candidate should interconnect between ethics-equity and the principles of justice and write accordingly.

Introduction:

In general terms, Ethics are the collection of basic principles which guides human actions and its behaviour. In the context of ethics, equity is the quality of being fair or impartial and social justice amounts to Each person is to have an equal right to the most extensive total system of equal basic liberties compatible with a similar system of liberty for all.

Body:

Ethics is the study of what is right or wrong in human conduct. This is a branch of Philosophy which studies moral principles. Hence, Ethics is also known as Moral Philosophy. Ethics is all about reasoning about how one should act in a given circumstance – i.e. how to do the right action. They do not change with calendar in the following ways:

- Ethics doesn't change with calendar due to its determinants. Determinants are the sources from which the ethical standard arises.
- There are multiple determinants of ethics like Religion, Law, Society, Individual, Knowledge, Time. As these determinants of ethics are eternal and mostly have a continuous existence in society, ethics
- Many of the practises of religion are continuously followed by the people all over the world. Which keeps Ethics alive in society. For instance, ideology of "Ahimsa Paramo Dharm" tends to support a more humane society. It is still followed in some religions.
- Equity in terms of Equity refers to bridging inequality in society through positive or negative means as a means of ensuring fairness.
- For instance, Social reforms suggested by saints, during the medieval period continued to inspire generations of social reformers during the times of independence and it is continued even today in terms of granting reservation for the backward sections of society.
- Principles of social justice emphasise on ensuring a fair and just relation between individual and society. Indian society is highly stratified in nature with high socio-economic inequalities like class/caste conflict, gender biases, etc.
- For instance, Principles of Justice social-economical-political as enshrined in the preamble of our constitution have their source of inspiration in French

revolution and its continuation can be observed when our government presented an IT amendment under which if person voluntarily disclose his black money, more than half of its income will be send into pradhan matri garib kalyan vikas yojna which will used for poor & rural development programmes.

However, due to changing and nature of society sometimes Ethics and equity and principles of social justice sometimes undergo modification:

- For instance, Earlier in India, Sati was considered as sacred, moral and ethical for widowed woman, however, over the period of time it underwent change due to its inhuman nature.
- Also, principles of social justice seems to be harmed when atrocities on marginalised and backward sections of society takes place. For instance, Hathras tragedy, Khairlanji incidence.
- Equity also seems to harmed when many of the people from vulnerable, marginalised and backward sections of society doesn't gets their natural rights. For instance, Rohingya migrants issue, Refugees in European countries.

Conclusion:

Hence, we can say that Ethics and equity and the principles of justice do not change with the calendar. However, their nature sometimes changes due to diversity in society and varied nature of societal changes. But it can be surely said that they do not change with calendar as their core values remain constant.

