

1. Do you think accountability leads to ethical governance? Critically comment.

Approach:

The directive in this question is critically comment, students are expected to express their views about how accountability leads to ethical governance also it is important to substantiate points with appropriate examples.

Introduction:

Ethics is grounded in the notion of responsibility and accountability. In democracy, every holder of public office is accountable ultimately to the people. Ethics provides the basis for the creation of such laws and rules. Our legal system emanates from a shared vision of what is good and just which forms the basis of ethical governance in India. Ethical governance denotes administrative measures, procedures and policies that fulfill criteria required for the ethically good or acceptable handling of public affairs, such as in public administration, public health care, education, and social security.

Body:

Answerability is elucidated as the obligation of the government, its agencies and public officials to provide information about their decisions and actions and to justify them to the public and those institutions of accountability tasked with providing oversight.

- It can be contended that accountability is the fundamental requirement for preventing the abuse of power and for ensuring that power is directed towards the achievement of efficiency, effectiveness, responsiveness and transparency. Open, transparent and accountable government is an imperative prerequisite for community-oriented public service delivery because without it covert unethical behaviour will result. In theoretical studies, it has been represented that accountability is the process whereby public sector organisations, and the individuals within them, are responsible for their decisions and actions and submit themselves to appropriate external scrutiny.
- The accountability to the citizens is a fundamental principle of democratic governance. It is not limited to accountability to seniors in hierarchy only as part of chain of command but also the stakeholders including citizens and civil society.
- Accountability as an answerability component to justify the action and an enforcement component that is to take action in cases where an act of omission or commission is established.
- The Right to Information Act, 2005 has introduced a huge element of transparency in the decision-making in the government as well as access to information thus introducing ethics in the governance process as well.

- Various measures to ensure accountability bring in ethical governance with display of values like Equality, Dignity, Honesty, Fairness and Compassion.
- Mechanisms like social audit in MGNREGA, Gram sabha involve people in decision making process. This ensures accountability as well as equality principle as decision making is not left in the hands of few people.
- DPSP's are fundamental in the governance of the country. They ensure vulnerable and marginalized are not left out. Law makers with responsibility to ensure socio-economic democracy come out with legislations and affirmative action leading to inclusive society. Ex: Rights of persons with disability Act 2016, Maternity Benefit Act, NSAP.
- Legislative means like RTI, PCA make administrative system transparent and minimize corruption in the system.
- System of checks and balance makes sure there is no concentration of power and each organ accountable for their actions. Thus, governance is carried in the interests of people. Ex: Judiciary through Review power(A-32) strikes down laws which are inconsistent with constitutional values

However accountability does not always lead to Ethical governance in case of demonetization it tried to ensure accountability in terms of making unaccounted money useless and helping India to become cashless economy but the process was questionable in terms of its ethicality because of the problems people faced all over the country. Also it is important to mention that accountability is only an aspect of the overall governance mechanism recently enacted citizenship amendment act has tried to brought in accountability in terms of granting citizenship to the persecuted minorities of the neighbouring countries barring few this act is seen as unethical in terms of its discriminating nature against certain religious groups.

Conclusion:

No doubt, measures to ensure accountability would bring in ethical governance. However, ethical governance remains a utopian idea due to frailty human nature, Also ethics are often highly personal. Nor can Ethical Management be instilled in an organization or corporation overnight. Ethical Governance requires habit, and it requires proper regulations. Education and communication must be further enhanced, Ethical issues must find and gain support in the work place and also in the society, and finally there must be proper motivation and recognitions given for those wishing to follow Morals.

2. Is it possible to inculcate values in public servants through training? Discuss.

Approach

The candidate needs to elaborate upon values required for public servants initially and then discuss whether these values can be inculcated in public servants through training.

Introduction

Values, be it ethical or moral, form the core of the governance and without them or with even one of them being compromised, the very essence of the public service fails and what prevails is the corruption, anarchy and discretion, which is not acceptable and not good for the democratic society.

Body

Values necessary for public servants can be seen from the points below –

- Integrity: The quality of being honest and having strong moral principles. A person of integrity shows steadfast adherence to a strict moral or ethical code.
- Perseverance: Perseverance corresponds to persistence in doing something despite difficulty or delay in achieving success.
- Commitment: The state or quality of being dedicated to a cause, activity, etc.
- Courage of conviction: The state or quality of mind or spirit that enables one to face danger or fear with self-possession, confidence and resolution.

Here, we can observe that some values in public servants can be inculcated through training, while some are innate to a person. However, we can't deny the role played by the specialised training to develop these values –

- Ethics training is a useful tool for strengthening ethics and preventing corruption in public administration if applied together with other tools as part of a comprehensive anti-corruption and pro-integrity policy.
- For instance, as we know about The Lal Bahadur Shastri National Academy of Administration, which is a research and training institute on public policy and public administration in India has a specialised training curriculum which strives to train the all India service officers.
- Values of public services such as helping the marginalised and vulnerable section of people while abiding to the law is one such example.

Further, values training alone cannot produce sustainable results, especially in countries with high levels of corruption. Ethics training produces observable results only in the long-term. For example, Political support and "leadership from above",

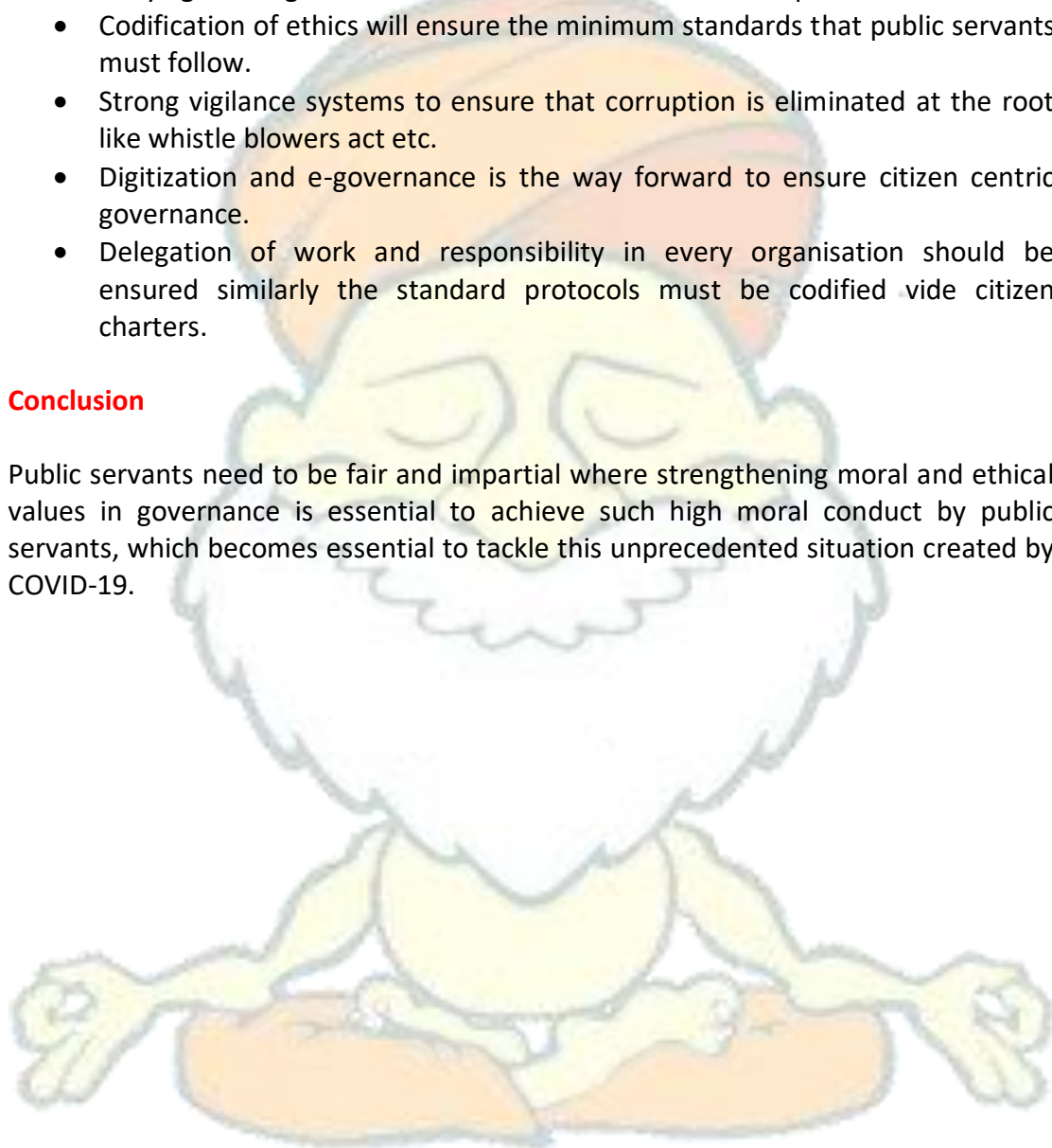
Political support for ethics training should be demonstrated not only through declarations but also through the practical actions of the leadership.

Ways to inculcate values in public servants: The Second Administrative reforms commission has suggested the following methods –

- Values such as selflessness, honesty, integrity and objectivity if inculcated at early age through education will lead to Ethical leadership in the future.
- Codification of ethics will ensure the minimum standards that public servants must follow.
- Strong vigilance systems to ensure that corruption is eliminated at the root like whistle blowers act etc.
- Digitization and e-governance is the way forward to ensure citizen centric governance.
- Delegation of work and responsibility in every organisation should be ensured similarly the standard protocols must be codified vide citizen charters.

Conclusion

Public servants need to be fair and impartial where strengthening moral and ethical values in governance is essential to achieve such high moral conduct by public servants, which becomes essential to tackle this unprecedented situation created by COVID-19.



3. Should global powers intervene into the internal matters of countries on humanitarian grounds? Substantiate your views.

Approach

Candidates are expected to first to write about humanitarian intervention. Then try to explain with viewpoint towards situations where global powers intervene into internal matters of any countries on humanitarian grounds.

Introduction

Humanitarian intervention has been defined as a state's use of military and non-military intervention such as humanitarian aid and sanctions against another state, with publicly stating its goal is to end human rights violations in that state. But unfortunately in most of the cases there is some hidden motive rather than securing human right violations.

Body

Global powers Intervention on humanitarian grounds:

- The justification for humanitarian intervention by big powers rests first and foremost with the argument that there is a moral duty to protect civilians from human rights abuses. That moral duty is derived from natural law, be it determined through religion or political philosophy to attract votes.
- The right to life is an important concept of natural law, and it provides the foundation of the justification for humanitarian intervention, because the right to life is a universally accepted norm.
- There is an obligation to intervene when the abuses of human rights by a state or sub-state actor become genocidal in nature because mass murder is an unconscionable violation of one of human civilization's oldest and most deeply held norms, the sanctity of life.
- The international community thus has an obligation and a right to intervene in the event of genocide and other type of violence, because the large-scale extermination of life offends universally accepted rights.
- Humanitarian intervention using armed force, in some cases, may be the only way to prevent mass killing, and it can have a positive outcome.
- The intervention has played a decisive role in fostering a more robust international system, with its multiple deployments helping to redefine ideals of universal rights and duties.
- The success of an intervention should primarily be determined by whether it has saved lives; however, this cannot be separated from whether it enables long term stability to prevent future conflict and loss of life.

Unfortunately many time it has negative impact:

- The use of armed force to protect human rights, however, carries with it the risks of civilian and military casualties and exacerbating the violence, and it

rarely provides a long-term solution to causes of conflict. Also it marginalise the notion of sovereignty.

- The freedom of states to independently shape their internal order and external relations. Sovereignty, which is both historically and currently at the heart of the international legal order and functions as the source for both the ban on the use of force and the prohibition of intervention.
- For example Australia led force in East Timor and India led force in the Sri Lanka both have different result. NATO's intervention in Kosovo in 1999 exemplifies many of disadvantages including the risks of causing civilian casualties, exacerbating ethnic tensions and increasing violence.
- Humanitarian intervention can also have the disadvantage of hindering the efforts of humanitarian aid workers and NGOs. For example in Yemen food crisis.
- Humanitarian intervention by global powers further politicises their work in the eyes of local people by associating it with foreign troops, and NGOs can become targets, which endangers their lives.
- Often interveners are too focused on securing a short-term end to the conflict rather than providing long-term reconstruction to prevent future violence.
- When nations send their military forces into other nations' territory, it is rarely if ever for "humanitarian" purposes. They are typically pursuing their narrow national interest grabbing territory, gaining geo-strategic advantage, or seizing control of precious natural resources.
- Leaders hope to win public support by describing such actions in terms of high moral purposes bringing peace, justice, democracy and civilization to the affected area. In the era of colonialism, European governments all cynically insisted that they acted to promote such higher commitments the "white man's burden," "la mission civilisatrice," and so on and so forth.

Conclusion

Be it solidarity and geostrategy, humanism and realpolitik, humanitarian intervention always involves two sides of the same coin that can either lead to salvation or abuse also often both. However, the international community should be working towards the establishment of a standing UN army for the purpose of humanitarian intervention to enforce the international law.

4. Religious conversions through charity is highly unethical. Do you agree? Substantiate your views.

Approach- Candidate is expected to define conversion and with the help of some examples answer can be approached. Way forward can be given by stating constitutional morality to guide our actions.

Introduction

Conversion has always been a topic that arouses, if not inflames our human emotions. After all, the missionary is trying to persuade a person to change his religious belief which concerns the ultimate issues of life and death, the very meaning of our existence.

Body

Ethics of religious conversions

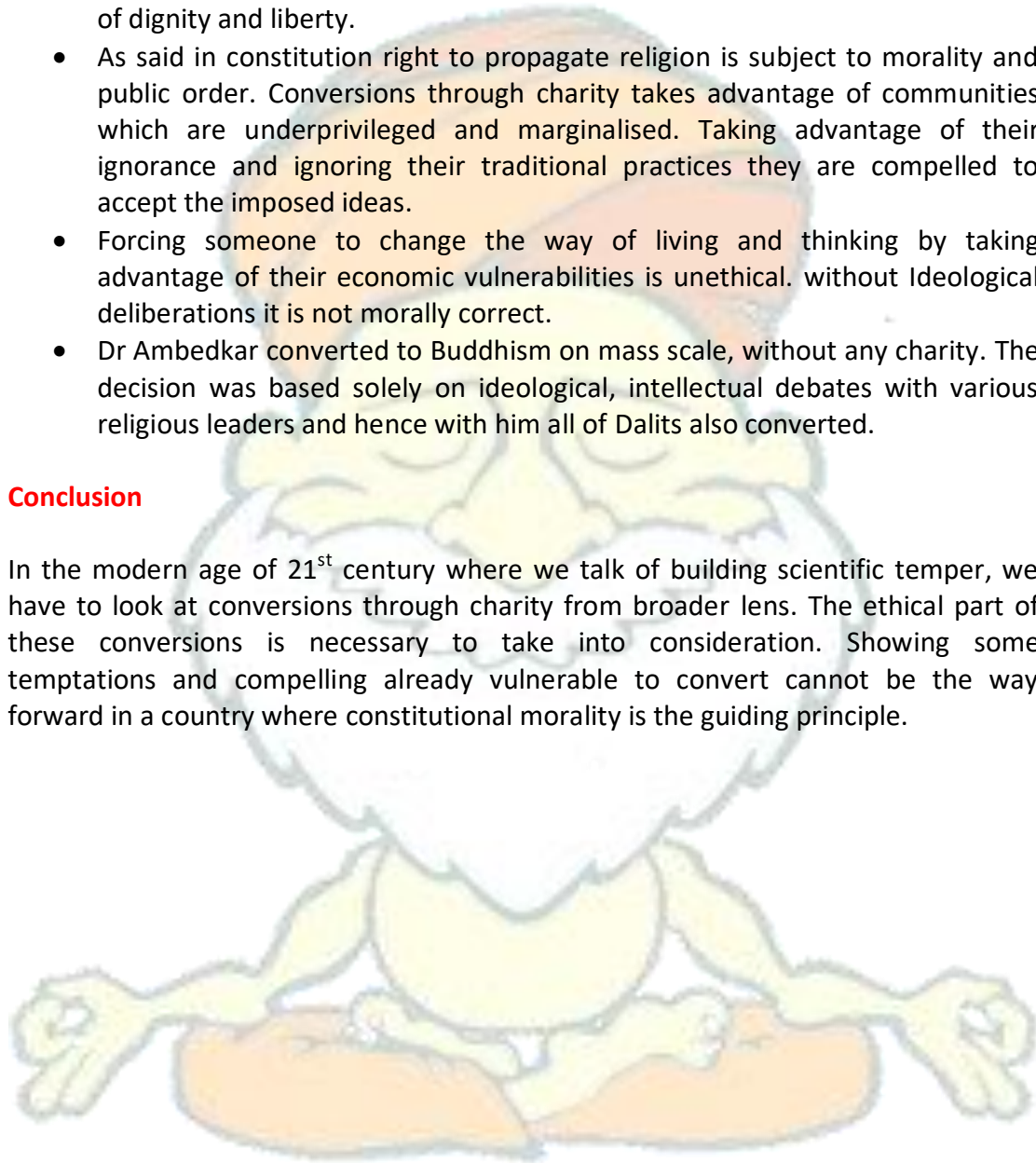
- What is conversion in this context?- we have to discriminate between conversion or change of beliefs that happens in free human interchange in open discussion as opposed to organized conversion efforts that employ financial, media or even armed persuasion.
- What conversion through charity implies?- the missionary is usually denigrating the person's current belief, which may represent a strong personal commitment or a long family or cultural tradition, calling it inferior, wrong, sinful or even perverse.
- Such statements are hardly polite or courteous and are often insulting and derogatory. The missionary with charity in hand is not coming with an open mind for sincere discussion and give and take dialogue, but already has mind made up and is seeking to impose opinion on others, often even before he knows what they actually believe or do.
- There should be open and friendly discussion and debate about religion just as there is about science. But when one religion creates an agenda of conversion and mobilizes massive resources to that end, targeting unsuspecting, poor or disorganized groups, it is no longer a free discussion. If conversion is happening with the lure of charity it is a kind of ideological assault.
- Organized conversion efforts are quite another matter than the common dialogue and interchange between members of different religious communities in daily life, or even than organized discussions in forums or academic settings. Organized conversion activity is like a trained army of ideological warriors. This missionary army often goes into communities where there is little organized resistance to it, or which may not even be aware of its power or its motives.
- The missionary business remains one of the largest in the world and has enormous funding on many levels. It is like several multinational corporations with the different groups involved. There are full-time staffs and

organizations allocating money, creating media hype, plotting strategies and seeking new ways to promote conversion.

- Constitution of India under article 25 gives fundamental right to freely profess, practise and propagate religion, subject to public order, morality and health.
- Religious faith is part of the fundamental right to privacy and supreme court has upheld the inviolability of the right to privacy equating it with right to life of dignity and liberty.
- As said in constitution right to propagate religion is subject to morality and public order. Conversions through charity takes advantage of communities which are underprivileged and marginalised. Taking advantage of their ignorance and ignoring their traditional practices they are compelled to accept the imposed ideas.
- Forcing someone to change the way of living and thinking by taking advantage of their economic vulnerabilities is unethical. without Ideological deliberations it is not morally correct.
- Dr Ambedkar converted to Buddhism on mass scale, without any charity. The decision was based solely on ideological, intellectual debates with various religious leaders and hence with him all of Dalits also converted.

Conclusion

In the modern age of 21st century where we talk of building scientific temper, we have to look at conversions through charity from broader lens. The ethical part of these conversions is necessary to take into consideration. Showing some temptations and compelling already vulnerable to convert cannot be the way forward in a country where constitutional morality is the guiding principle.



5. What are the emerging issues in corporate governance during the COVID-19 pandemic? Discuss.**Approach:**

Discuss necessitates a debate where reasoning is backed up with evidence to make a case for and against an argument and finally arriving at a conclusion. So discuss emerging issues in corporate governance during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Introduction:

Since the onset of Covid-19, corporate boards have faced a string of difficult decisions. Take as an example the question of dividend payments: Ordinarily, the decision would be a relatively straightforward matter of applying a stated dividend policy, following past practice, or choosing an amount based on shareholder expectations and the company's earnings for the period. But this year, with Covid-19 decimating the economy and looming uncertainty about the depth and duration of the crisis, the decision became a complex matter of weighing and balancing multiple factors — at least for companies flush enough to consider it at all.

Body:**The emerging issues in corporate governance during the COVID-19 pandemic:**

- The new environment is characterized by an increasingly complex set of pressures and demands from various stakeholder groups, heightened. These factors are complicating board decision-making and challenging the shareholder-centric model of governance that has guided boards and business leaders for the past several decades.
- The pandemic has brought home the tight connection between business and society, and underscored the threat posed by risks stemming from large-scale societal problems that proponents of the shareholder model have traditionally regarded as outside the purview of business. The pandemic has shown that, theory aside, companies cannot so easily disconnect themselves from society-at-large.
- In the face of Covid-19, some companies struggled because their customers disappeared. Others saw their workforce reduced to a skeleton crew of essential employees. Still others grappled with supply chain disruptions, unsustainable debt, or insufficient capital to fund their operations.
- In the wake of Covid-19, boards will likely face increased pressure to incorporate stakeholder perspectives and voices, especially those of employees, into their oversight and decision processes. They will also be challenged to show that the company is performing well for all its stakeholders. External pressure aside, boards that have learned from Covid-19 will want to do this for their own purposes.
- The pandemic has laid bare glaring disparities in pay across society and within companies.

- It also has brought to the surface several problems with the shareholder model's traditional pay-for-performance paradigm, most notably its indifference to issues of equity (in the sense of fairness, including across gender and race) and to externalities such as impacts on third parties and the environment.

Conclusion

Whether Covid-19 is truly an inflection point for corporate governance is yet to be seen, but there is no doubt that the pandemic has challenged core premises of the agency-based model of governance in ways that have important implications for boards. In the flurry of Covid-inspired activity, it is important that boards not lose sight of their central functions as governing bodies of the companies they serve.

