



BAJIRAO IAS ACADEMY



**24th OCTOBER
2025**

ETHICS&INTEGRITY

UPSC CIVIL SERVICES MAINS 2025

**GENERAL STUDIES PAPER-4
ANALYSIS**

1(a). In the present digital age, social media has revolutionised our way of communication and interaction. However, it has raised several ethical issues and challenges. Describe the key ethical dilemmas in this regard.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction: Social media has transformed global communication, empowering voices and democratizing information.

Body: However, it poses ethical dilemmas such as privacy violations, misinformation, hate speech, digital addiction, mental health concerns, and lack of accountability.

Conclusion: Addressing these challenges through digital literacy, ethical regulation, and responsible use is vital for a healthy digital society.

Ethical Issues and Challenges of Social Media

Introduction

In the digital era, social media platforms such as X (Twitter), Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok have transformed human interaction, enabling real-time communication, civic engagement, and information sharing. However, this technological revolution has also brought forth several ethical dilemmas concerning privacy, truth, accountability, and social harmony.

Body

1. Privacy and Data Misuse

- Social media platforms collect vast amounts of user data, often without explicit consent.
- *Example:* The **Cambridge Analytica scandal (2018)** exposed how Facebook data was misused for political manipulation.

2. Misinformation and Fake News

- The rapid spread of unverified content undermines truth and public trust.
- *Example:* COVID-19 vaccine misinformation campaigns led to vaccine hesitancy worldwide.

3. Hate Speech and Online Trolling

- Platforms often become breeding grounds for hate speech, cyberbullying, and gendered abuse.
- *Example:* Targeted trolling of journalists and women on X (Twitter).

4. Echo Chambers and Polarisation

- Algorithms reinforce existing beliefs, reducing exposure to diverse opinions.
- *Example:* Political polarisation during elections amplified by social media algorithms.

5. Mental Health and Well-being

- Unrealistic portrayals of life foster anxiety, depression, and low self-esteem.
- *Example:* Studies linking excessive Instagram use to body image issues among teenagers.

6. Accountability and Ethical Governance

- Lack of transparency in content moderation raises questions of fairness and bias.
- *Example:* Allegations of algorithmic bias in content takedowns and censorship.

Conclusion

While social media has democratized communication, its ethical dilemmas threaten privacy, truth, and social cohesion. A balanced approach—through digital literacy, ethical design, and robust regulation—is essential to harness its potential responsibly.

1(b). "Constitutional morality is not a natural sentiment but a product of civil education and adherence of the rule of law." Examine the significance of constitutional morality for public servant highlighting the role in promoting good governance and ensuring accountability in public administration.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction: Constitutional morality, as emphasized by Dr. B.R. Ambedkar, signifies adherence to constitutional values over personal or political interests.

Body: For public servants, it ensures rule of law, integrity, impartiality, protection of citizens' rights, and transparent decision-making—core to good governance and accountability.

Conclusion: Upholding constitutional morality strengthens democracy and ethical public administration.

Constitutional Morality and Its Significance in Public Administration

Introduction

Dr. B.R. Ambedkar described *constitutional morality* as a sentiment that must be cultivated through education and respect for the rule of law. It means adherence to the principles and spirit of the Constitution—justice, liberty, equality, and fraternity—beyond mere legal compliance. For public servants, constitutional morality acts as an ethical compass ensuring integrity, fairness, and accountability in governance.

Body

1. Meaning and Essence

- Constitutional morality implies acting within the framework of constitutional values rather than personal or political biases.
- *Example:* Upholding secularism and equality while framing policies, irrespective of political pressure.

2. Significance for Public Servants

a) Upholding Rule of Law

- Ensures decisions are based on law and not on whims or favoritism.
- *Example:* Honest enforcement of anti-corruption laws without discrimination.

b) Promoting Good Governance

- Encourages transparency, responsiveness, and ethical decision-making.
- *Example:* Implementation of **RTI Act (2005)** reflects the value of transparency and accountability.

c) Protecting Citizens' Rights

- Public servants must safeguard constitutional rights of all citizens, especially the marginalized.
- *Example:* IAS officer Durga Shakti Nagpal's stand against illegal sand mining reflected commitment to justice.

d) Ensuring Accountability

- Encourages self-restraint and responsibility in the exercise of power.
- *Example:* The Supreme Court in **Navtej Singh Johar (2018)** emphasized constitutional morality over societal morality, ensuring protection of individual rights.

Conclusion

Constitutional morality is the ethical foundation of democratic governance. For public servants, it ensures that power is exercised within constitutional limits, promoting transparency, equality, and justice—cornerstones of *good governance* and *accountable administration*.

2(a). Carl von Clausewitz once said, "War is a diplomacy by other means." Critically analyse the above statement in the present context of contemporary geo-political conflict.



Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction: Clausewitz viewed war as an extension of politics when diplomacy fails, linking military action to state objectives.

Body: Contemporary conflicts—like Russia–Ukraine or Israel– Hamas—reflect political motives behind warfare, yet modern interdependence, nuclear deterrence, and humanitarian concerns limit war's utility.

Conclusion: In today's world, effective diplomacy and multilateralism outweigh war as tools of statecraft.

Clausewitz's View: War as an Extension of Diplomacy

Introduction

Prussian military theorist **Carl von Clausewitz** famously stated that “*War is a mere continuation of policy by other means.*” He viewed war not as an isolated act but as a political instrument used when diplomacy fails. In the 21st century, while war remains a tool of power politics, its nature and legitimacy have evolved amid global interdependence, international law, and humanitarian concerns.

Body

1. Relevance of Clausewitz's Idea

- States still employ force to achieve political objectives when peaceful negotiations fail.
- *Example: **Russia–Ukraine conflict (2022–present)*** reflects the use of war to pursue geopolitical aims like territorial influence and NATO deterrence.

2. War as a Continuation of Political Strategy

- Military action often seeks to alter political or strategic realities.
- *Example: **Israel– Hamas conflict (2023)*** aims at ensuring national security and political dominance in the region.
- *Example: **US invasion of Iraq (2003)*** to secure geopolitical influence and alleged weapons control.

3. Changing Nature of Warfare

- Modern wars also involve **economic sanctions, cyber warfare, and information warfare**, blurring the lines between peace and conflict.
- *Example: **US–China trade war** and **cyber attacks*** illustrate diplomacy taking non-military coercive forms.

4. Limitations of Clausewitz's Theory

- In a globalized, nuclear world, war often leads to humanitarian crises and diplomatic isolation.
- *Example:* Sanctions and global backlash against Russia demonstrate the diminishing utility of war as policy.

Conclusion

While Clausewitz's dictum retains partial validity—war still serves political ends—the contemporary global order emphasizes **diplomacy, dialogue, and multilateralism** over military coercion. In today's interconnected world, sustainable peace, not victory, defines successful statecraft.

2(b). Keeping the national security in mind, examine the ethical dilemmas related to controversies over environmental clearance of development projects in ecologically sensitive border areas in the country.

Model Framework (Improved)

Introduction: Development in ecologically sensitive border areas is vital for national security but raises ethical and environmental concerns.

Body: Key dilemmas include balancing defense needs with ecological preservation, procedural transparency, displacement of locals, and intergenerational equity. Examples: Char Dham project, hydropower projects in Arunachal.

Conclusion: Ethical governance demands sustainable, transparent, and balanced decision-making.

Ethical Dilemmas in Environmental Clearance of Border-Area Projects

Introduction

India's border regions—such as the Himalayas, Northeast, and Western frontiers—are ecologically fragile yet strategically vital. Infrastructure projects like roads, tunnels, and dams enhance national security but often pose environmental challenges. Balancing **development for defense preparedness** with **ecological sustainability** presents profound ethical dilemmas for policymakers and administrators.

Body

1. Conflict Between National Security and Environmental Ethics

- **Dilemma:** Prioritizing strategic needs may compromise environmental integrity.
- *Example:* The **Char Dham Highway Project** in Uttarakhand, vital for troop movement to the Indo-China border, faced criticism for causing deforestation and landslides.

2. Intergenerational Equity vs. Immediate National Interest

- **Ethical Concern:** Protecting current security needs versus safeguarding resources for future generations.
- *Example:* **Hydropower projects in Arunachal Pradesh** may disrupt fragile river ecosystems impacting long-term ecological balance.

3. Procedural Ethics and Transparency

- **Issue:** Environmental clearances are sometimes fast-tracked citing “strategic importance,” undermining due process.
- *Example:* Relaxation of EIA norms in border areas without adequate public consultation raises questions of procedural fairness.

4. Rights of Local and Indigenous Communities

- **Dilemma:** National projects may displace local populations and threaten their cultural identity.
- *Example:* Road expansion near **Ladakh** and **Arunachal** affects traditional grazing lands of tribal communities.

5. Sustainable Development as an Ethical Balance

- Integrating **green technologies** and **environmental safeguards** can reconcile defense needs with ecological ethics.

Conclusion

Ethical governance demands a balanced approach—one that **ensures national security** while upholding **environmental justice** and **intergenerational responsibility**. True patriotism lies not only in securing borders but also in protecting the natural heritage that sustains the nation.



Thank you

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