

Ethical Issues and Challenges

Ethical Issues & Challenges in Public Administration

- **Corruption & Misuse of Discretionary Power:** The misuse of official authority for personal gain (bribery, siphoning of funds) and arbitrary use of discretionary powers for favouritism or nepotism erode public trust and waste resources.
- **Conflict of Interest:** Situations where a public servant's personal interests (family, financial) clash with their official duties, compromising impartiality and objectivity.
- **Political Pressure:** The challenge of upholding constitutional values and the rule of law against pressure from political executives for unlawful or partisan actions (e.g., biased transfers of honest officers, manipulating tender processes).
- **Lack of Accountability and Transparency:** Issues arising from a lack of clear responsibility, red tape, and an opaque decision-making process, undermining the principles of good governance (e.g., poor implementation of RTI).
- **Balancing Objectivity with Compassion:** Dilemmas in administering rules strictly versus showing empathy and compassion towards vulnerable sections of society, requiring a balanced, citizen-centric approach.
- **Moral Injury and Burnout:** Repeated exposure to injustice, systemic failures, or forced compromises can strain a civil servant's conscience and lead to emotional exhaustion and cynicism.

Ethical Issues & Challenges in Corporate Governance

- **Balancing Profit with Moral Obligation:** The fundamental challenge of prioritizing profit maximization versus social responsibility, employee well-being, and environmental sustainability.
- **Insider Trading & Financial Misreporting:** Unethical practices like using confidential information for personal stock market gains or manipulating financial statements to appear stable and attract investors.
- **Bribery and Corruption:** Engaging in corrupt practices to influence decisions, secure contracts, or bypass regulations, which creates unfair competition and damages market integrity.

- **Environmental Negligence:** Prioritizing short-term gains from industrial activity or development projects without regard for long-term ecological damage and sustainability (e.g., pollution, deforestation).
- **Workplace Ethics:** Issues such as discrimination (gender, caste, age), harassment, and unhealthy work cultures (e.g., excessive working hours debate) that violate principles of equality and dignity.

Ethical Issues & Challenges in Contemporary Issues

- **Technology and AI:**
 - **Data Privacy & Security:** Collection and misuse of vast amounts of personal data by platforms and governments without informed consent (e.g., Cambridge Analytica scandal).
 - **Algorithmic Bias:** AI systems can perpetuate and even amplify existing societal biases present in their training data, leading to discriminatory outcomes in administration or legal systems.
 - **Misinformation and Hate Speech:** The rapid spread of fake news, propaganda, and online harassment, challenging the balance between freedom of expression and public safety/social order.
 - **Accountability:** Determining responsibility when AI-driven decisions cause harm.
- **Environmental Ethics**
 - **Development vs. Conservation:** The dilemma between infrastructure projects (e.g., dams, roads for national security) and the preservation of ecologically sensitive zones and tribal livelihoods.
 - **Climate Change Responsibility:** Balancing short-term economic development with long-term climate resilience and intergenerational equity (e.g., Mission LiFE).

- **International Relations**

- **Sovereignty vs. Humanitarian Intervention:** Balancing a nation's right to self-govern with the international community's duty to intervene during human rights crises or genocides.
- **Global Inequality & Aid:** Ethical questions about wealthy nations imposing conditions on aid that benefit themselves at the expense of poorer nations, and ensuring transparency in fund utilization.

www.mainspractice.com

Space for Class Discussion

www.mainspractice.com