



Summary

Ethics



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PHYSICS | POLITICAL SCIENCE | PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION | SOCIOLOGY

CONTENTS

1. ETHICS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1. Conflict of Interests And Public Servants	5
1.2. Ethics of Whistleblowing	5
1.3. Public Infrastructure and Public Service Delivery	6
1.4. Frauds in Civil Services Examination	6
1.5. Corruption	6
1.6. Social Media and Civil Servants	7
1.7. Indic Idea of Good Governance	7

2. ETHICS AND SOCIETY

2.1. Right to Die with Dignity	9
2.2. Instant Justice	9
2.3. Ethical Dimensions of Body Shaming	10
2.5. Happiness	10
2.6. Good Life: The Art of Balancing Work and Leisure	11

3. ETHICS AND BUSINESS

3.1. Philanthropy: A Moral Imperative for Social Good	13
3.2. Surveillance Capitalism	13
3.3. Ethics of Business Downsizing	14
3.4. Responsible Capitalism	14

4. ETHICS AND MEDIA

4.1. Media Ethics and Self-Regulation	15
4.2. Social Influence and Persuasion	15
4.3. Persuasion and Disinformation	15
4.4. Obscenity on Digital Platforms	16

5. ETHICS AND TECHNOLOGY

5.1. Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI)	17
5.1.1. AI and Creativity	17
5.2. Ethics of Online Gaming	18

6. KEY PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

6.1. Mahatma Gandhi and Compassion	19
6.2. Ratan Naval Tata	19
7.1. Ethics of War	20
7.2. Aspects of Peace	20
7.3. Ethical Considerations in Contemporary Foreign Aid	21
7.4. Ethics and Climate Change	21
7.5. Ethics of Capital Punishment	22



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1. ETHICS IN GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

1.1. Conflict of Interests And Public Servants

Introduction

Recently, a US-based firm accused the Chairperson of SEBI of violating SEBI's Code of Conduct, leading to a potential conflict of interest.

Key Stakeholders				
Public Servants	Government	Citizen	Businesses	Regulatory Bodies

Ethical Issues Involved in Conflict of Interests

- ◆ **Undermining of Public trust:** Loss of public trust can result in **loss of legitimacy of government decisions and institutions.**
- ◆ **Corruption and abuse of power:** May lead to corrupt practices, such as bribery.
- ◆ **Violates Neutrality and impartiality:** Biased and skewed decision-making by public functionaries.
- ◆ **Other:** May impact businesses' brand image and reputation negatively, etc.

Ways to ensure effective resolution of Conflict of Interests

- ◆ Establish effective disclosure process
- ◆ **Periodic review** of 'at-risk' areas
- ◆ **Cooling off period** for public servants
- ◆ Independent **oversight bodies.** E.g., Several States in the US have Ethics Commission.

1.2. Ethics of Whistleblowing

Introduction

Recently, Julian Assange was freed by the US Court in WikiLeaks (a whistleblower platform) espionage case. From Edward Snowden to Satyendra Dubey, many whistleblowers have acted on their conscience, but have their acts always been ethical?

Key Stakeholders					
Whistle Blower	Citizens/Society	Government/Regulatory Bodies	Organizations	Media Interests	Advocacy Groups/NGOs Interests

Ethical dilemmas involved in Whistleblowing

- ◆ **Protection of whistleblowers vs. National security:** Balance between safeguarding **whistleblowers** and while considering threats to national security.
- ◆ **Public right to information vs. Government need for confidentiality:** Balance between citizens' right to know about government's actions and the government's duty to uphold confidentiality.
- ◆ **Duty of loyalty vs. Moral obligation:** Conflict between an employee's duty and their moral obligation.
- ◆ **Protection vs. Accountability:** Protecting whistleblowers and ensuring accountability for false or malicious reporting.

Way Forward

- ◆ Strengthen the **Whistleblowers Protection Act, 2014.**
- ◆ Develop **comprehensive legislation** covering both public and private sectors.
- ◆ Need to ensure access to information to public at the same time maintain secrecy about national security.

1.3. Public Infrastructure and Public Service Delivery

Introduction

Incidences of **failure of public infrastructure** like **airport roof collapses** at Delhi, etc. have resulted in loss of lives and property. These incidences highlight the **compromised quality of public infrastructure** and **failure** of government in ensuring **quality public service delivery**.

Ethical issues involved in Public Service Delivery

- ❖ **Lack of Professional ethics:** Public servants often lack the **managerial skills**.
- ❖ **Lack of a 'public service' attitude:** Public servants prioritizing **personal gains**.
- ❖ **Corruption:** E.g. **Leakages** in PDS distribution.
- ❖ **Accountability and transparency:** **Lack of just and fair treatment** of malafide errors weakens **deterrence** towards corrupt practices.

Way Forward

- ❖ **New Public Management (NPM):** Involves the adoption of **efficient practices**.
- ❖ Inculcating **ethical values** in **public servants**.
- ❖ **Promoting E-governance:** E.g. Unified Mobile Application for New-age Governance (UMANG)
- ❖ **Monitoring project implementation:** Ensuring **regular audits** at multiple levels.

1.4. Frauds in Civil Services Examination

Introduction

Recently, some civil servants have been alleged of faking certificates to enter into prestigious civil services. Also, cases have surfaced where aspiring Civil Servants have used ChatGPT to cheat in the examination. Such issues point to the increasing instances of fraud and dishonesty in Civil Services Examination.

Key Stakeholders			
Recruiting Agencies (such as UPSC)	Public at large	Government	Aspiring Civil Servants

Ethical Issues Involved

- ❖ **Detrimental to Social Justice:** Questioning the validity and fairness of affirmative actions.
- ❖ **Administrative implications:** Entry of unethical candidates in civil services.
- ❖ **Violates Utilitarianism:** Cheating/abuse of power is detrimental to society at large.
- ❖ **Knowledge without Character:** Cheating & abuse of power is amongst the **seven social sins**.
- ❖ **Other:** Against Kant's Categorical Imperative & Deontology, etc.

Way forward

- ❖ **Values like honesty, integrity, truthfulness & self-dignity** should be inculcated among students.
- ❖ **Exam Reforms** such as **Stringent verification processes** after **selection of candidates**
- ❖ **Following International Best Practices** (Australian Public Service Act prescribes a set of Public Service Values)

1.5. Corruption

Introduction

Recently, Central Vigilance Commission released its 60th annual report. According to the report, as many as **74,203 corruption complaints** were received against all categories of officers/employees in 2023, of which 66,373 were disposed of and 7,830 were pending.

Key Stakeholders				
Public Servants	Citizens	Civil Society	Judiciary	Media

Ethical Implications of Corruption

- ❖ **Inequality:** Preferential treatment of those who can afford to pay bribes or offer favors.
- ❖ **Breach of Trust:** Corruption **erodes that public trust** in institutions.

- ❖ **Conflict of Interest:** Prioritizing their own benefits over their duty to the public.
- ❖ **Hamper Social Justice:** Funds meant for development projects, depriving citizens of essential services.
- ❖ **Undermining Integrity:** Foster a culture where dishonesty, bribery, etc. are accepted.
- ❖ **Moral Decay:** Attitude of **moral relativism** weakens the **ethical fabric** of society, as individuals rationalize corrupt actions.
- ❖ **Undermining Rule of Law:** Enforcement of laws becomes selective or arbitrary.

Way Forward (Second Administrative Reforms Commission on Combating Corruption)

- ❖ **Prevention of Corruption Act, 1988** should be amended to provide for a special offence of collusive bribery.
- ❖ **Prior sanction** should not be necessary for prosecuting a public servant who has been trapped red-handed.
- ❖ Public servants causing loss through corruption should be liable to **compensate**
- ❖ **Speeding up Trials** (fixing a time limit for various stages of trial)

1.6. Social Media and Civil Servants

Introduction

Many Civil Servants are turning into Instagram celebrities.

Ethical issues arising out of social media use by Civil servants

- ❖ **Principle of Neutrality and Anonymity:** Civil service values discourage public recognition or personal glorification of officers.
- ❖ **Inconsistent with the parliamentary form of government:** Bureaucrats are not directly accountable to the public.
- ❖ **Violation of confidentiality:** Risk of information leakage, etc.
- ❖ **Blur the distinction between an individual's professional and private identity:** Actions online are easily visible to colleagues, employers, and the general public.
- ❖ **Undue self-promotion:** The posts are promoted by followers, creating a public narrative of their performance.

Way Forward (Suggestion by the Department of Electronics and Information Technology for social media)

- ❖ **Do not comment and respond unless authorized to do so**, especially in matters that are sub-judice.
- ❖ **Be Polite, Be Discrete and Be Respectful to all** and do not make personal comments.
- ❖ **Be compliant with relevant rules and regulations.**
- ❖ **Do not to reveal personal information** about other individuals as well as self.

Key Stakeholders					
Civil Servants	Government	Citizens/Public	Media	Colleagues/Peers	Regulatory Bodies

1.7. Indic Idea of Good Governance

Introduction

Recent emphasis on the idea of **P2G2 or Pro-People Good Governance** in India and the creation of a new Department of **Government Efficiency** in USA indicates the growing realization towards better and people-oriented governance. In this light, it is essential to revisit the **India's age old traditions** that had the idea of **Rajadharma**.

Indic Idea of Good Governance

- ❖ **Brihadarany Upanishad:** Stresses on the duty of the king to protect **Dharma**, the public good.
- ❖ **Mundaka Upanishad:** It includes the phrase "**Satyamev Jayate**" that translates to **Truth alone triumphs**.
- ❖ **Epic Ramayana:** Promoted idea of **Ram-Rajya or ideal governance**
- ❖ **Kautilya's Arthashastra:** Deals with **Yogakashema**, or the welfare of the citizens, and **Raj Dharma**.
- ❖ **Antyodaya:** Implies welfare of all through the **weakest** of the society to achieve **Sarvodaya** or 'development of all'.

Relevance of the Indic Ideas of Good Governance

- ◆ **Adapting to Globalisation:** Philosophies like **Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam** promotes global unity and inclusivity.
- ◆ **Preserving Democracy:** By ensuring cooperation between the government and civil society/citizens.
- ◆ **Welfare for All:** Concept of Antodaya aligns with the **modern concept of inclusive development**.
- ◆ **Conflict Resolution:** The Nyaya system of jurisprudence, which focuses on justice, fairness, and mediation.

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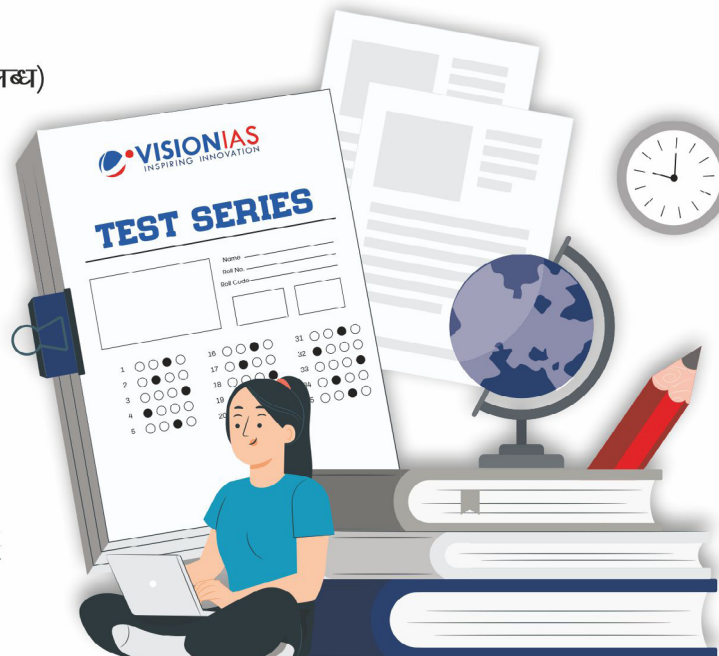
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2. ETHICS AND SOCIETY

2.1. Right to Die with Dignity

Introduction

The principle of the **Right to Die with Dignity** has come under focus in two recent but contrasting events. In India, a 3-year-old girl from the Jain community, died through the practice of Santhara (fasting unto death). Meanwhile in **France**, lawmakers approved a Bill that allows adults suffering from unbearable and incurable illnesses to choose **assisted dying**.

Key Stakeholders			
Terminally ill Patient	Health Care providers (Doctors, etc.)	Legislator and Policy maker	Society at Large

Arguments in Favour of Right to Die with Dignity

- ◆ **Quality of Life:** Quality of life **transcends simple survival**, encompassing psychological well-being, cognitive function, etc.
- ◆ **Respect for Autonomy:** Autonomy represents the cornerstone of human moral agency.
- ◆ **Justice:** When curative medicine, continuing treatment may cause more harm than good.

Arguments Against Right to Die with Dignity

- ◆ **Sanctity of Life:** E.g., **Buddhism** preaches the sacredness of life.
- ◆ **Palliative Care:** Good care can manage suffering.
- ◆ **Non-maleficence (do no harm):** It is in consonance with the **Hippocratic Oath**.
- ◆ **Contradicts Kantian Philosophy:** As per Kant, **preserving life** is the **universal duty**.
- ◆ **Potential for Misuse:** In case of **minor** and **terminally ill patients**, autonomy principle could be abused.

Way Forward on Ensuring the Right to Die with Dignity

- ◆ Practice of Euthanasia should be **effectively regulated**.
- ◆ Before executing euthanasia, there should be a **thorough psychological evaluation**.
- ◆ **Care Ethics Approach:** Apply a care-based approach, especially for **minors and mentally vulnerable patients**.

2.2. Instant Justice

Introduction

Recently, in a judgement, Supreme Court (SC) held that demolition of buildings without adhering to the **principles of Natural Justice**, and **due process of law** corresponds to a state of lawlessness where **'might is right'**.

Key Stakeholders				
Victims	Law Enforcement	Society at Large	Perpetrators	Government

Reasons behind growing cases of Instant Justice

- ◆ **Diminishing Faith in Justice Delivery System:** An inordinate delay in justice has eroded fear and faith in law.
- ◆ **Lack of Emotional Intelligence:** In cases involving rape, murder, etc., emotions run high.
- ◆ **Misinformation:** It can mobilize crowds quickly, leading to **vigilante justice**.
- ◆ **Compromised ethical journalism:** The media's role in sensationalizing crime stories.
- ◆ **Public Perception:** E.g., Instances of encounters by Police are often regarded as **strong deterrent** for the future.

Ethical Issues involved in Instant Justice



Rule of Law vs. Rule by Law:

Instant justice **erodes idea of rule of law, replacing it with arbitrary or biased judgment.**



Due Process of Law vs. Swift Justice:

Instant justice skips legal safeguards, denying the accused their right to a **fair trial (Article 21)**.

It **compromises** with the principle of '**deemed to be innocent until proven guilty**'.



Retributive vs. Reformatory Justice:

Instant justice often embodies **worst aspects of retributive justice.**



Means vs. Ends debate:

Whether achieving a desirable or just result (like **Perceived deterrence** in cases of criminality) can justify using methods that might violate fundamental ethical principles or legal procedures.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Balancing retributive justice with restorative justice**
- ◆ Focusing on judicial reforms that enhance **transparency, efficiency, and accountability** within the legal system, thereby restoring public confidence.
- ◆ The mandate of the Police should ensure that constitutionally protected right of the accused to prove their innocence in a court is protected.

2.3. Ethical Dimensions of Body Shaming

Introduction

Body shaming is the act of criticising someone based on the shape, size, or appearance of their body. Anyone can be the target of body shaming.

Ethical Frameworks and Violations



Kantian Ethics

Judging people by appearance for profit or ideals violates **human dignity**, treating them as tools rather than individuals with intrinsic worth.



Utilitarianism

Though such practices may offer **short-term gains**, they cause **long-term harm** through mental health issues, stereotypes, and discrimination.



Virtue Ethics

A good society should promote **compassion** and **inclusivity**.



Justice as Fairness (Rawls)

No one would accept a system that **discriminates** by body type.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Stronger Regulations:** Enforce laws to ban ads that promote body-based discrimination.
- ◆ **Media Awareness:** E.g., Dove's "Campaign for Real Beauty" broke stereotypes
- ◆ **Ethical Marketing:** Businesses should focus on inclusivity and avoid content that shames bodies.
- ◆ **Mental Health & Dialogue:** Offer psychological support for those affected by body shaming.
- ◆ **Role of Parents/ Schools:** They should promote body positivity, avoid judging appearances, praise inner qualities, etc.

2.5. Happiness

Introduction

"**Happiness is a choice that requires effort at times**" – **Aeschylus**. The quote becomes significant in the backdrop of India being ranked **118th among 147** countries in **World Happiness Report 2025** where it ranks lower than its

neighbours such as Nepal and Pakistan.

Obstacles to Happiness in Contemporary Life

External Factors

- ◆ **Negative Social Comparisons:** E.g. Unrealistic standards (e.g. body, beauty).
- ◆ **Lack of Social Support Systems:** 19% of young adults across world reported having no one that they could count for social support (2023).
- ◆ **Financial Stress and Insecurity:** E.g. Poverty acts as a cognitive tax.
- ◆ **Exposure to Harmful Substances:** E.g. Addiction to Drug Abuse affects mental health.

Internal Factors

- ◆ **Self-Doubt and low self-esteem:** E.g. Negative self-perception of oneself leads to anxiety, depression, etc.
- ◆ **Not living in the Present Moment: Persistent pessimism, overthinking,** living in the Past or Future due to unresolved trauma.
- ◆ **Excessive Screen Time:** Increased screen time and reduced free play is making young people 'The Anxious Generation'. (Economic Survey 2023-24)

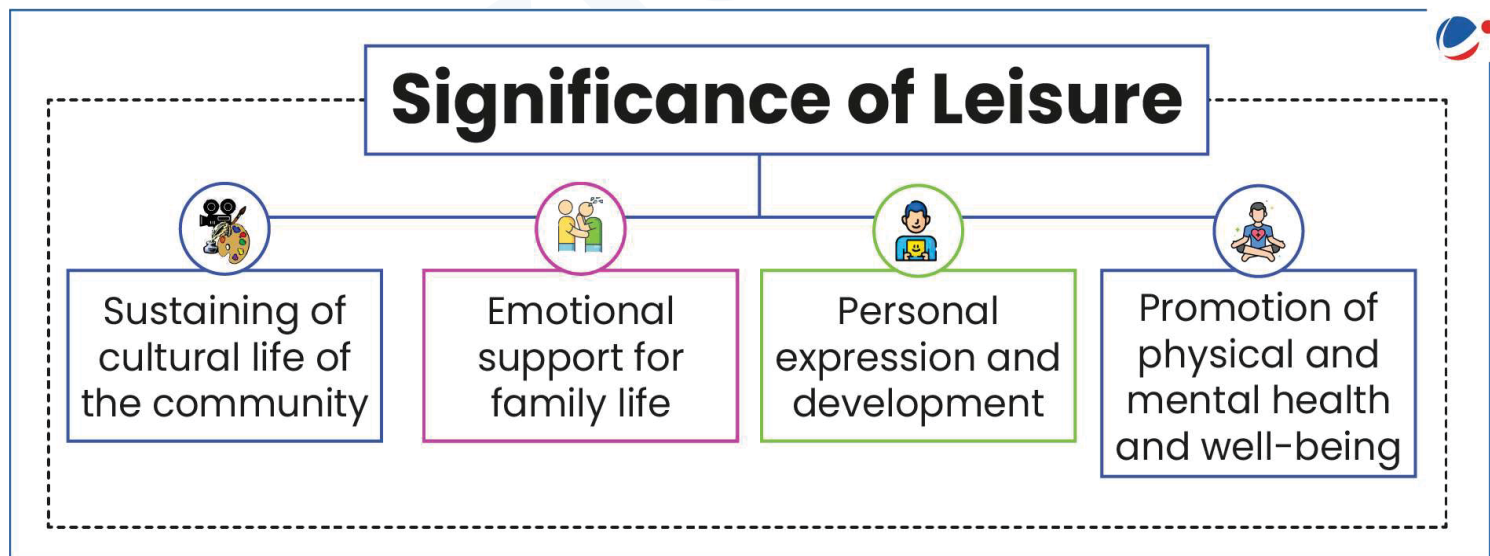
How Civil Servants Can Promote Happiness among Citizens?

- ◆ **Adoption of People-Centric Governance and efficient service delivery**
- ◆ **Reducing corruption through e-governance,** right to Information, Social Audit etc.
- ◆ **Promoting Mental & Emotional Well-Being**
- ◆ **Social Harmony & Community Building:** E.g. interfaith dialogues to curb communal tensions.

2.6. Good Life: The Art of Balancing Work and Leisure

Introduction

Research by Anglia Ruskin University suggests **that leisure activities** like painting, knitting, or pottery can **enhance well-being more than work.**



Relationship between Work and Leisure

Complimentary Relationship

- ◆ **Freedom of choice and intrinsic motivation:** E.g., writing novels or columns for newspapers might feel like leisure to persons who enjoy reading and writing.
- ◆ **Ensuring well-being:** E.g., **employment allows people to form relationships** and improve emotional control.

Contrasting Relationship

- ◆ **Freedom vs. Responsibilities:** Even leisure activities, such as sightseeing, can lead to fatigue, anxiety, etc. when performed owing to work commitments.
- ◆ **Self-Expression vs Personal growth:** Performance below a certain standard **may not be acceptable in workplace.**

Way Forward

- ◆ **Positive work culture:** Promote positive work culture by adopting **participative democratic leadership styles**, etc.
- ◆ **Embrace flexibility:** While technology has blurred boundaries, it also offers flexibility.
- ◆ **Set boundaries:** Clearly define work hours and stick to them.

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3. ETHICS AND BUSINESS

3.1. Philanthropy: A Moral Imperative for Social Good

Introduction

According to the **India Philanthropy Report 2025**, philanthropic funding in India is rising and is primarily driven by CSR spending.

Ethical challenges in Philanthropy

- ◆ **Elite capture of social agenda:** Large donors may influence policy decisions.
- ◆ **Corporate Dilemma:** Responsibility of businesses is to increase profits and philanthropy goes against shareholder's interest.
- ◆ **Regional and Geographical Inequality:** Urban-centric donations (**Maharashtra & Karnataka get maximum CSR funds, whereas Bihar & Odisha lag far behind**)
- ◆ **Accountability and Transparency Deficits:** Miniscule amount of NGOs which receives foreign funding's file returns.

Conclusion

Philanthropy should have foundations laid on ethical considerations of promoting an egalitarian society characterised by equity and justice. Philanthropy's potential to reach to the bottom rung of the society, where hundreds of millions of our citizens live, where neither the state nor the markets can reach, should be rightly utilized to reach that very last citizen.

3.2. Surveillance Capitalism

Introduction

With digital information growing exponentially—from just 1% in 1986 to 98% by 2013—personal data has emerged as the new gold of the 21st century. This transformation has fuelled the rise of **Surveillance Capitalism**, led by tech giants like **Google, Meta, and Amazon**.

Ethical Implications of Surveillance Capitalism

- ◆ **Manipulation:** Algorithms exploit **cognitive biases** to shape user decisions unconsciously.
- ◆ **Privacy Erosion:** Data is often collected without proper consent, leading to mass surveillance.
- ◆ **Commodification of Personal Data:** E.g., In 2018, Sleep apnea machines in the U.S. secretly sent usage data to insurance firms.
- ◆ **Democratic Violations:** State and corporate surveillance weaken **citizen autonomy**.
- ◆ **Mental Health Risks:** E.g., Social media algorithms prioritize content that triggers anger and fear, amplifying political polarization

Way Forward

- ◆ **Stronger Regulatory Frameworks:** E.g., India should **strengthen the DPDP Act**
- ◆ **Antitrust Measures:** **Break up tech monopolies** to reduce their unchecked power.
- ◆ **Global Cooperation:** **Harmonize international standards** to prevent data exploitation in less-regulated regions.
- ◆ **Ethical Technology Design:** Encourage tech firms to prioritize **privacy-by-design**.

3.3. Ethics of Business Downsizing

Introduction

Microsoft announced the layoff of **3% of its global workforce**, impacting thousands of employees across all levels, teams and geographies. The downsizing which is aimed at **productivity, profits, competitiveness, etc. is being seen as contradictory to Business Ethics**

Key Stakeholders				
Employees	Owners/ Shareholders	Consumer	Society	Government & Regulators

Ethical Dilemmas involved in Business Downsizing

- ◆ **Utilitarianism Vs Kantian Capitalism:** Kant's idea of **moral firm** does not favour treating employee as a means.
- ◆ **Deontological Vs Teleological Perspective:** **Deontological approach** does not justify downsizing as it leads to violation of principles of fairness
- ◆ **Ethical Relativism Vs Universalisation of Justice:** Justice demands fairness for all without any discrimination.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Use it as Measure of Last Resort**
- ◆ **Voluntary Layoffs** (in exchange of attractive severance packages)
- ◆ **Agile Talent Strategy:** E.g., Companies like Amazon offer '**Education as a Benefit Programme**' to its employees.
- ◆ **Aiding Displaced workers:** Proactively help terminated workers find new meaningful employment.

3.4. Responsible Capitalism

Introduction

At the Tech Leaders Roundtable in Mexico, Finance Minister while **emphasizing on need for responsible capitalism**.

What's the need for Responsible Capitalism?

- ◆ **Addressing global challenges:** Help companies and governments respond to challenges like inequality.
- ◆ **Business sustainability:** Help in better adaptation to tech-disruptions like AI, etc.
- ◆ **Ethical Governance and Stakeholder Capitalism:** Promotes fairness in decision-making.

Measures taken to promote Responsible Capitalism in India

- ◆ **Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR):** Mandated under **section 135 of Companies Act, 2013**.
- ◆ **Environmental regulations:** E.g., Plastic Waste Management Rules, etc.
- ◆ **Labor reforms:** Code on Wages, Occupational Safety; Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, etc.
- ◆ **Financial sector initiative:** RBI's Priority Sector Lending norms, SEBI's Green Bond guidelines, etc.



4. ETHICS AND MEDIA

4.1. Media Ethics and Self-Regulation

Introduction

Recently, during Operation Sindoor, Government has asked all media channels, digital platforms and individuals to refrain from live coverage or real-time reporting of defence operations and movement of security forces.

Key Stakeholders			
Media Actors	Government	General Public	Police

Why the need for effective Media Ethics is becoming paramount in India?

- ◆ **Confidentiality and Integrity** (E.g., Reporters covered special stories based on information concerning an individual's personal conduct in private life.)
- ◆ **Cross-media ownership by big corporate companies** has assumed alarming proportions.
- ◆ **Current self-regulatory mechanism has not been effective** due to reasons like **inadequate penalty**,

Way Forward

- ◆ Strengthening of **Self-regulation system** of media.
- ◆ **Penalties should be in proportion** to the profits earned by an errant channel.
- ◆ There should be a **universal code of ethics** which specifies the following guidelines for journalists

4.2. Social Influence and Persuasion

Introduction

Social media influencers are increasingly playing a significant role in shaping our opinions, consumer's interests and purchasing decisions and influence our notion of fashion, health, and music.

Key Stakeholders					
Citizen	Society	Market	Government	Social Media	Influencers

Ethical Issues in Influencer Culture

- ◆ **Mindless Consumption:** Promote products as status symbols, not for need.
- ◆ **Psychological Manipulation:** This is done by triggering Fear of Missing out (FOMO) and social comparison.
- ◆ **Lack of Accountability:** Many influencers act as informal opinion leaders.
- ◆ **Privacy Violations:** Large influencers collect and handle user data, often without proper safeguards.
- ◆ **Harm to Mental Health:** Idealized lifestyles online promote anxiety, low self-esteem, and dissatisfaction.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Implementation of Guidelines:** "Endorsements Know-hows!" must be followed by celebrities, influencers, and virtual influencers.
- ◆ **Increased Awareness and Education:** The question of "**whether influencers are truly experts?**" should be raised.

4.3. Persuasion and Disinformation

Introduction

Persuasion as a **social tool** offers a **proactive approach** to counter disinformation.

How Persuasion Can Work Against Disinformation?

- ◆ **Building trust and reduce resistance:** E.g., In vaccine hesitancy, using local doctors or religious leaders for communication.
- ◆ **Use of narratives:** E.g. Nudging people towards washing hands during Covid.
- ◆ **Promotes Critical Thinking without Confrontation:** E.g., Deradicalization programs use **dialogue-based**

interventions

- ◆ **Sustained engagement:** Repeated exposure to persuasive, respectful messaging can erode false beliefs gradually.

Conclusion

In an age where disinformation spreads rapidly, persuasion offers a humane and strategic countermeasure by fostering trust, empathy, and critical thinking. Through consistent, narrative-driven, and respectful engagement, it helps individuals question falsehoods and arrive at truth through their own reasoning.

4.4. Obscenity on Digital Platforms

Introduction

The Supreme Court, while hearing a case on obscene remarks in the India's Got Latent show on YouTube, urged the Solicitor General to propose **regulatory measures to curb vulgar content online** while balancing free speech.



Key Stakeholders				
Content Creator	Digital Platform	Government	Regulatory Bodies	Society at Large

Ethical Issues in Regulating Obscene Digital Content

- ◆ **Censorship vs. Reasonable Restrictions:** Over-regulation could stifle creativity.
- ◆ **Evolving Social Norms and Cultural Sensitivity:** **Obscenity is a cultural construct** that changes over time.
- ◆ **Power Dynamics:** Questions arise about **who decides what content is acceptable**.
- ◆ **Agency and Paternalism:** There's an ongoing tension between **protecting users from harmful content** and **respecting their autonomy to make choices**.
- ◆ **Regulating Obscene vs. Artistic Freedom:** Tension between censorship to **protect public morality** and **freedom of artists to express themselves** creatively.

Conclusion

A responsible digital media space requires **legal clarity, self-regulation, public awareness, and global cooperation**. By upholding ethical values such as **justice, dignity, transparency, and accountability**, digital platforms can strike a balance between **creative freedom and social responsibility**.


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5. ETHICS AND TECHNOLOGY

5.1. Ethics of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

Introduction

The rapid integration of AI into everyday life—from healthcare and policing to education and governance—has brought forth not only technological advancements but also complex ethical dilemmas.

Key Stakeholders				
Users	Companies/ Developers	Investors	State and Regulators	Civil Society Organizations (CSOs)

Ethical issues associated with AI

- ◆ **Privacy intrusion & Surveillance:** E.g., Data Surveillance, theft, privacy breaches and misuse of personal data.
- ◆ **Manipulation and Deepfakes:** Deepfake videos or audio impersonations can be used for spreading misinformation.
- ◆ **Opacity:** Decisions taken by the AI system **are not transparent (Black Box Problem)**.
- ◆ **Biasedness:** If the training data contains biases related to race, gender, etc., the AI system may **perpetuate and amplify these biases**.
- ◆ **AI hallucinations:** AI model perceives patterns or objects that are nonexistent or imperceptible to human observers.

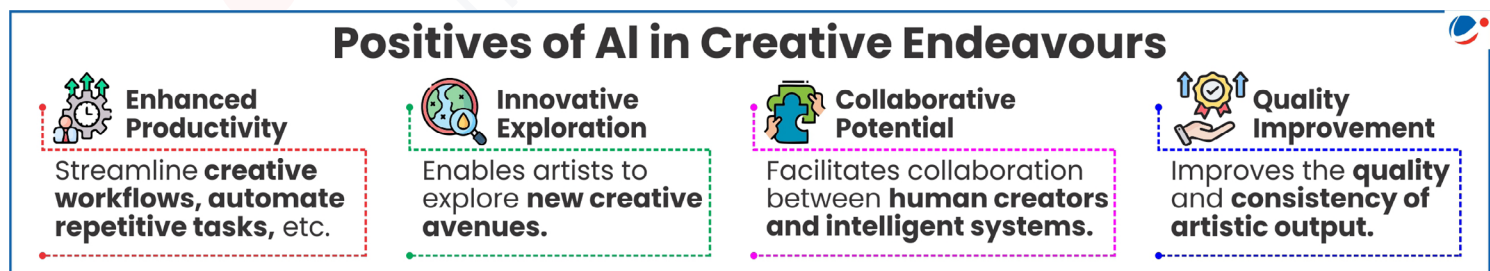
Way Forward (UNESCO principles for the ethical use of AI)

- ◆ **Proportionality and Do No Harm** (use of AI should not infringe upon human rights)
- ◆ **Continuous assessment of the human, social, cultural, economic and environmental impact** of AI technologies.
- ◆ **Promote Right to Privacy and Data Protection**
- ◆ **Human oversight and determination** for attributing the ethical and legal responsibility.

5.1.1. AI and Creativity

Introduction

Recently, social media platforms were flooded with images inspired by Ghibli-style art, which were generated using AI tools. While these artworks gained widespread attention and appreciation for their aesthetic appeal, they have also sparked debate within the artistic community.



Ethical Issues related with use of AI in Art related Work

- ◆ **Artistic Integrity:** AI-generated content raises concerns about maintaining the authenticity and integrity of art.
- ◆ **Consent and Ownership:** Questions arise regarding the rights of artists, creators, and participants involved in AI-driven projects.
- ◆ **Preservation vs. Exploitation:** Raises ethical concerns about preserving heritage versus exploiting identities for profit.
- ◆ **Technological determinism:** Widespread AI use in creative fields may lead to homogenization.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Ensure transparency and disclosure** in AI-driven creative processes.
- ◆ **Uphold the authenticity of artistic expression**, acknowledging the contributions of human creators.
- ◆ **Develop ethical guidelines and best practices** for the ethical use of AI in creative endeavours.

5.2. Ethics of Online Gaming

Introduction

Voluntary Code of Ethics for Online Gaming Intermediaries (OGI) has been issued as a Joint Declaration of the members of Digital Gaming Committee of the Internet and Mobile Association of India (IAMAI) in collaboration with the All India Gaming Federation (AIGF), E-Gaming Federation (EGF) and Federation of Indian Fantasy Sports (FIFS).

Key Stakeholders				
Gamers	Game Developers	Platform Provider	Regulatory Bodies	Civil societies

Ethical concerns with Online Gaming

- ◆ **Gaming vs. Gambling:** Gaming involves skill-based activities while gambling entails wagering money on uncertain outcomes.
- ◆ **Privacy concerns:** Collection of extensive user data.
- ◆ **Fair play:** Real money game outcomes can be **manipulated by malicious actors**.
- ◆ **Accountability:** Some online games promote betting, etc.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Privacy ethics and data protection:** Adopt **data anonymization** and **encryption** techniques.
- ◆ **Responsible gaming:** Emphasize on collaborative efforts among industry stakeholders, regulators, and advocacy groups.
- ◆ **Ensure Self-regulation:** E.g., Identity and age verification and **Regular audits**.


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6. KEY PERSONALITIES IN NEWS

6.1. Mahatma Gandhi and Compassion

Introduction

Recently, former United Nations Secretary-General, Ban-Ki-Moon, highlighted the significance of **Mahatma Gandhi's compassion**.

Contemporary relevance of Mahatma Gandhi's Compassion



Addressing climate crisis: Gandhi's philosophy promotes living in harmony with nature.



Resolving contemporary conflict: His approach of "hate the sin, not the sinner" provides a framework for engaging with those we disagree with while maintaining human dignity.



Dealing with economic crisis: He emphasized on **self-sufficiency, decentralised mode of production; idea of trusteeship**, etc.



Inspiration for Social Change: His ideas guided initiatives like the Swachh Bharat Mission.



Dealing with Fragmentation in Society: His vision of inclusive spirituality respects all faiths.

Ways to Imbibe Compassion

- ◆ **Fostering Social Responsibility:** Understanding the challenges faced by the social sectors and taking up initiatives to reform them.
- ◆ **Practicing Self-Compassion:** Understand the sufferings and emotions of others.
- ◆ **Accepting mistakes and failures:** Focus on being patient and showing forgiveness.

6.2. Ratan Naval Tata

Introduction

Recently, former chairman of Tata Group, Ratan Naval Tata passed away.

Key lessons from the life of Ratan Tata

Compassionate Capitalism: 60–65% of Tata Sons' dividends directed to charitable causes. He pioneered India's first cancer hospital.

Business Ethics: Believed in **ethical leadership and prioritised strong ethical principles, integrity, and social well-being over short-term profits**.

Promoting Entrepreneurship: He invested in **many of the startups**, such as Cashkaro, Snapdeal, etc. encouraging a **culture of innovation**.

Promoted Sustainability: The Tata group's carbon neutrality target is to achieve net zero emissions by 2045.

Conclusion

Life of Ratan Tata was a **beacon of ethical leadership**, offering valuable lessons in **compassion, resilience, humility, and perseverance**.

7. MISCELLANEOUS

7.1. Ethics of War

Introduction

Ongoing military conflicts between Russia-Ukraine and Israel-Hamas and the continuous circulation of images and stories in social media about the atrocities of war raise various ethical questions. These conflicts also violate **Just War Theory**.

What are the Ethical concerns that arise in a war?

- ◆ **Reduction to Right side vs. wrong side:** War and violence is often reduced to a judgement that one side is right and the other wrong.
- ◆ **Punishment and Revenge:** Rationale based on **punishment and revenge** is often seen as a moral path to correct a wrong.
- ◆ **Degradation of Human beings:** Humans are often treated as tools to achieve the objectives of war.
- ◆ **Individual vs. Collective identity:** War doesn't see individuals as they are and see them only in terms of a collective identity.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Strengthening International Cooperation and Institutions** that govern the conduct of war.
- ◆ **Advocacy for stricter Arms control and disarmament**
- ◆ **Peace-building and Conflict Resolution**

7.2. Aspects of Peace

Introduction

Recently, World Leaders at 10th Global Forum of **UN Alliance for Civilizations** adopted the **Cascais Declaration**, pledging to **promote peace**.

Key Stakeholders	
Global/Political Peace	Governments, International Organizations, Civil Society Organizations
Social and Cultural Peace	Community Leaders, Religious & spiritual Leaders, Mainstream media & social media
Individual/Inner Peace	Individuals, Families, Educational Institute

Some Philosophical Aspects of Peace

- ◆ **Gandhian Conception:** Peace is rooted in **Ahimsa (nonviolence)** and **Satya (truth)**.
- ◆ **Utilitarian Concept:** A peaceful society is one that enhances collective well-being.
- ◆ **Kantian Notion:** Peace is not a passive state but an **active moral obligation of individuals and nations**.
 - Immanuel Kant believed in perpetual peace **through rationality, universal morality**, and international cooperation.

Initiatives Undertaken to Restore and Promote Peace

- ◆ **Global Peace:** Global institutions like World Bank, UN, etc. foster the dialogue and cooperation, multipolarity to ensure global stability and peace.
- ◆ **Political Peace:** E.g., **International Court of Justice (ICJ)**
- ◆ **Ecological Peace:** E.g., **Paris Agreement**
- ◆ **Inner Peace:** E.g., **International Yoga Day** and **World Meditation Day**
- ◆ **Cultural Peace:** **UNESCO's World Culture Forums** promote understanding between diverse cultural groups.

7.3. Ethical Considerations in Contemporary Foreign Aid

Introduction

In recent times, the concept of foreign aid has been subject to intense scrutiny, particularly with the United States' actions to suspend the operations of the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) for 90 days.

Ethical Considerations in Contemporary Foreign Aid



Dependency:

E.g., Many **African nations** have become aid-dependent, affecting their economic policies.



Corruption:

E.g., **Sri Lankan economic crisis** due to corruption and mismanagement of foreign aid.



Cultural Insensitivities:

E.g., In some African and Asian countries, **women's reproductive rights campaigns** face resistance due to cultural or religious beliefs that see them as promoting immorality.



Political Manipulation:

E.g., China has been weaponizing investment on foreign soil as a part of its '**debt-trap diplomacy**'.



Environmental Harm:

Some aid projects, like large-scale agricultural initiatives, have led to environmental degradation.

Way Forward

- ◆ **Enhance transparency** in aid allocation, management, and impact evaluation.
- ◆ **Prioritize environmental sustainability** in aid projects, focusing on **climate resilience, renewable energy**, etc.
- ◆ **Engage local communities** to align aid with **cultural contexts**.

7.4. Ethics and Climate Change

Introduction

Glaciologists and local communities mourned the loss of Nepal's Yala glacier after it has shrunk by 66% since the 1970s, making it among Nepal's first likely to be declared dead. Melting of glaciers has accelerated due to climate change.

Key Stakeholders				
Governments	Intergovernmental Organizations	Businesses and Corporations	Indigenous People	Scientific Community

Ethical issues with regard to Climate Change

- ◆ **Disproportionate effect across different regions and populations:** Developing countries and marginalized communities often bear a greater burden of climate.
- ◆ **Unequal distribution of responsibilities:** Industrialized countries caused most emissions, but climate change harms everyone—especially the vulnerable.
- ◆ **Climate Justice for Indigenous Peoples:** Climate change threatens their lands and disrupts their traditional ways of life.
- ◆ **Technological Inequity:** Access to **climate-friendly technologies** and clean energy solutions is not uniform.

Way Forward (UNESCO's Declaration of Ethical Principles in relation to Climate Change)

- ◆ **Prevention of harm:** Better anticipate the consequences of climate change
- ◆ **Precautionary approach:** To not postpone the adoption of measures to prevent or mitigate the adverse effects of climate change
- ◆ **Solidarity:** Support the people and groups most vulnerable to climate change and natural disasters,

7.5. Ethics of Capital Punishment

Introduction

Amnesty International's 2024 report notes a 32% global surge in executions from countries like China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, etc., making capital punishment a highly contentious issue in modern criminal justice and ethics. It is based on the **principle of retributive justice**.

Arguments for the Death Penalty

- ◆ **Deterrence:** Death penalty may **deter serious crimes**.
- ◆ **Closure and vindication:** Often argued that the death penalty provides relief to the families of victims.
- ◆ **Drain on public finances:** Maintaining a secure prison system for high-risk violent offenders.
- ◆ **Other:** Prevention of re-offending, etc.

Arguments against the Death Penalty

- ◆ **Violation of Human Rights:** Actions (e.g., taking human life) are **morally wrong** regardless of their consequences (**Deontological Ethics**).
- ◆ **Risk of Irreversible Error and Discrimination:** Once a person is executed, the error cannot be reversed.
- ◆ **Lack of Deterrence and Alternatives:** Studies show little proof that the death penalty stops crime better than life in prison

Way Forward

- ◆ **Law Commission Recommendation:** **Abolish the death penalty** for all crimes **except terrorism and related offences**.
- ◆ **Implementing International Perspective:** Article 6 of the **International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR)** permits the death penalty **only for the "most serious crimes"**
- ◆ **Human Rights Organizations:** Recommend a shift toward **victim-centric justice and restorative practices**.

Key Stakeholders		
Condemned Individuals	Victims' Families	Society at Large
Legal and Judicial Systems	Human Rights Organizations	Governments and Policymakers




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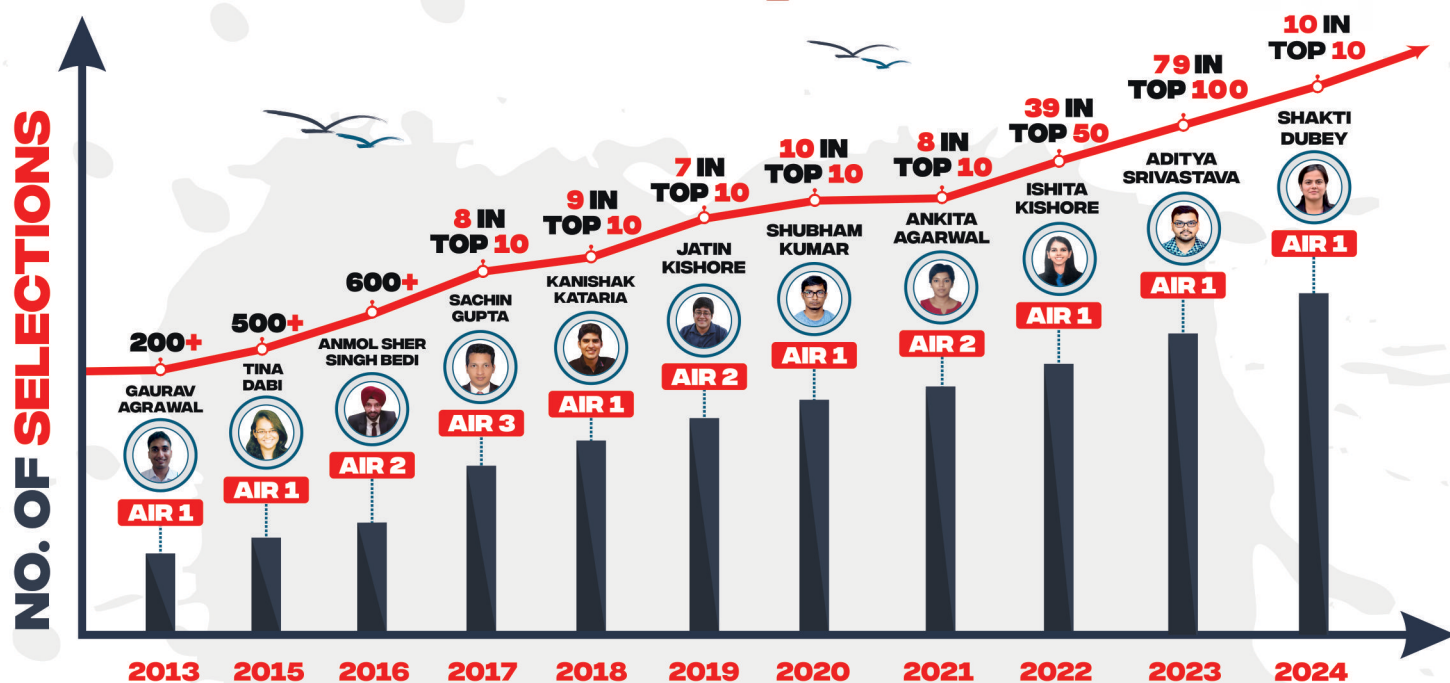
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