



**An Institute for Civil Services**

**IAS TOPPER'S**

**TEST COPY**

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**RANK - 49**

**GS MAINS ETHICS**

## SECTION - A

Q1. Why does cultural relativism supposedly make us more tolerant of other cultures and, critically examine the view that moral values are relative? (150 Words) (10 Marks)

Cultural relativism refers to the concept that each and every cultures have evolved in their own ways and the values associated with each culture may be different.

What is valued in one culture may not be valued in other culture and vice versa.

For eg, close ~~too~~ knitted family relationships and getting the blessings of elders in the family is an integral aspect of Indian culture, but is not so in western societies where individualism ~~and~~ is given more importance. Similarly, in Japanese society, punctuality is a duty, not being punctual is unethical. But in Indian society, punctuality is a highly cherished value.

Some people hold the view that moral values are relative. Moral values are those individual values which are held close by people and adhered to in their lives. There are some values which are relative, for eg, a person may be pro life

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and may be against abortions in all circumstances. Another person may be alright with allowing abortion of foetus before some period of growth. Thus, we see values attached to certain objects, events, processes vary due to different individual preferences, beliefs, customs, etc.

But, at the same time there exist some fundamental moral values which are universal. They are universal because, they are desired by each and every human being and has been a part of human evolution and civilisational progress. Some of the universal moral values are,

- i) Truth — Nobody likes lies or to be lied to
- ii) Love / Caring
- iii) Justice
- iv) Peace

Hence, the argument that moral values are always relative, doesn't hold true. Understanding this aspect of moral values, the United Nations Declaration on Human Rights has been formulated.

Q2. What is the relation between conviction, integrity and courage? Illustrate. V  
need and importance of conviction in leading a society or a group or an organization  
achieve the goals of change and progress? (150 Words) (10 Marks)

Conviction refers to strong belief that one can achieve what one wills to.

Integrity is the <sup>trait</sup> ~~state~~ being honest, where ~~no one~~ no one is watching, i.e., the height of honesty at all times, in thoughts as well as deeds.

Courage is the ability to carry out a task despite all odds, obstacles and fears.

Courage is acting, despite being afraid.

These are the most necessary qualities in a leader. Taking the example of Nelson Mandela. He had a ~~conviction~~ deep conviction to free his country from the evils of apartheid and bring freedom to his fellow citizens. He was popular among his followers for exhibiting exemplary integrity when even after abolition of apartheid and during the making of new constitution for South Africa,

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he stood by his ideals of equality and brought in a constitution which did not distinguish the white from the black or any kind of retribution on the whites for the atrocities meted out against Blacks for decades.

He exhibited the moral courage to patiently wait in his jail for more than 20 years for the freedom of his people, non-violently, bravely fighting the unjust administration.

Conviction is necessary for any kind of progress. Only strong willed individuals can lead with conviction. Conviction is of the vision that the leader has envisaged for the group or organisation. Without conviction, efforts are not going to be successful. Conviction is the like the fuel which propels an engine. Mahatma Gandhi's conviction of liberating India finally led to her freedom. Mohammed Ali has said,

"Your beliefs become your conviction and your conviction becomes reality."

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The allegiance of the civil servants is first to the constitution and then to the larger public interest, only after that the political executive comes.

Some of the challenges in finding a solution from within the system are,

- i) Threat of ~~transfer, also threats~~ various kinds, frequent transfers, etc on the civil servant. T.S.R. Sbramanian, in his book, had highlighted this aspect.
- ii) the powerful senior bureaucrats, technocrats, politicians, etc sometimes do not let the system to change; being adapted to the system.
- iii) Max Weber's concept of rigid bureaucracy which he calls 'Iron cage of bureaucracy' is difficult to bring changes within the system.

Occasionally, whistle blowing is necessary for the system to self correct itself and come back to equilibrium. But it should not be at the cost of people losing trust in the govt (eg. article against Swachh Bharat Mission by a bureaucrat in newspaper). In these situations, Aristotle's golden mean principle is to be followed.

Q4. Do you think that the best civil servant is one who acts as a whistle blower or one who tries to find the possible solution from within the system? Give reasons and cite examples. What are the challenges in finding a solution from within the system?

(150 Words) (10 Marks)

The best civil servant is the one who does not adopt any of these extremes. A civil servant is an agent of the government, s/he is not expected to be a 'whistleblower' all the time. If that happens, people will lose the trust and the credibility of the executive will be tarnished. Trust of the government by the people is extremely important for good governance. Also, the civil service conduct rules mandate finding solutions from within the system.

At the same time, finding solutions from within the system is not always easy. For eg, there are instances where during the recruitment to an important post, a politician's close relative is preferred upon the civil servants. Or another case, is where a politician has illegally acquired government property and the civil servant is forced to not take action. In such cases, solutions from within the system may not be possible. It will have to be reported to the media. Because,

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own money or starting a welfare fund by crowd funding for similar cases of destitute citizens in the district, etc.

Here, the aspect of epistemology comes into picture, where someone who needs help is not neglected, that becomes an unethical action. The ethical action would be to repose the faith the citizens of the district has on the district administration, the collector being in a powerful position to help, whatever be the administrative or bureaucratic disabilities maybe.

Here, the constitution and its Preamble (justice - social, political, economic) as well as Directive Principles of State Policy (welfare of the old aged, destitutes) which provides for the normative course of action.

Q3. Explain role of epistemology in administrative decisions through an example?  
(150 Words) (10 Marks)

Epistemology helps us to make decisions in difficult situations or dilemmas of life. Epistemology is an aspect of ethics which prescribes what action needs to be done in particular situations.

For eg, let us imagine that a widow approaches a district collector, asking for some kind of pension or benefits since she is abandoned by her children and is not well to work and earn. The collector finds out that in the absence of any documents to prove her situation, there is nothing ~~legally~~ to be done by the collector in his administrative roles/powers.

But, being a person of deep compassion, and empathy, the district collector may still choose to help the old widow by other means, for eg, contacting an NGO which can take care of the widow, helping her out of

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Q5. Explain and elaborate the following statements:

- (a) Never stop your heart from desiring and always surround yourself with people who will inspire you to push the envelope.
- (b) Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire.
- (c) Courage is the most important of all the virtues because without courage, you can't practice any other virtue consistently.
- (d) To walk safely through the maze of human life, one needs the light of wisdom and the guidance of virtue.
- (e) There was never a night or a problem that could defeat sunrise or hope.

(50 Words Each) (5 × 4 = 20 Marks)

a) One must always keep dreaming as former President A.P.J. Abdul Kalam said. Never stop aiming for the highest goals. Human potentials to achieve highest ideals are immense. Positive people around us help us to push our limits, helps bring the best out of people. eg. Role played by Anne Sullivan in Helen Keller's life.

b) Success is always sweet. But, what would have waited in before one tastes success would be bitter. Thomas Alva Edison performed hundreds of failed experiments before he finally ended up inventing bulb. Constant perseverance, relentless pursuit is necessary for one to succeed in life. eg. Steve Jobs

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c) Courage is doing something, despite all fears of doing it wrong or ~~the~~ of the consequences. Without courage, nothing much can be achieved. There will always be fear lurking around. For eg, even if one is virtuous enough to help one may not be of much value, if one remains less courageous. eg. Aung San Suu Kyi, the Nobel Peace Prize Laureate was accused by UN recently for not being able to do much for protecting Rohingyas against genocide in Myanmar.

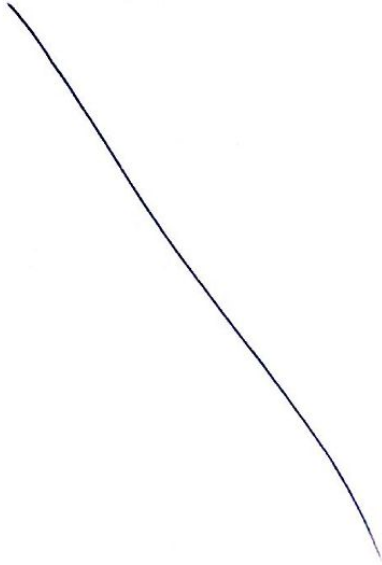
d) Human life is full of contradictions, problems, worries, joys, successes, failures, etc. It is a package of all sorts. There is a constant loom of one falling into trap or being cheated or preyed upon by evil forces. It is wisdom and virtue which will come to our rescue during those times of darkness. Wisdom guides us to take the right decisions to bounce back in life, and virtue is what brings happiness in our lives.

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e) Hope should be a constant companion of human beings. Hope is what keeps us all waiting to live. There is a saying, "This too shall pass". Night is always followed by Sunrise and despair by hope. Robert Frost in his poem, said, "I have promises to keep before I sleep".

This had inspired our freedom fighters, hope ~~made~~ of winning freedom one day, for the nation made many of these martyrs. It is hope that runs the world.

Q6. What is doctrine of double effect? Does 'Principle of Permissible Harm' stand the test of moral laws? (150 Words) (10 Marks)



*Remarks*

- Q8. Is innocence a positive or negative attribute? Can you say that the death of innocence is one of the main reasons for decline in faith in goodness? Would you agree that as the more intelligent and practical we become, there are more chance of death of innocence? (150 Words) (10 Marks)

Innocence is a positive virtue when it is accompanied by wisdom. It was the innocence of Melela Yousufsa<sup>o</sup> which made her think that her fellow children should be able to go to school and study. And she had the wisdom to pursue her ambition of bringing education to all those girls and was even shot on head for that.

Yes, death of innocence is one of the main reasons for decline in faith in goodness. People are constantly asked not to show the sensitive aspect of their self: Be more practical, etc. For eg, can innocent persons will never see the logic behind giving ~~bad~~ bribe to get his/her certificates speedily from a government office. Because, she/he is not socialised to think that way. In that case she/he becomes accused of not being practical.

When a child imagines/dreams to change something she/he sees bad in society, his/her voice is subdued

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alleging lack of practical wisdom.

Innocent people are often accused of being gullible and soft hearted.

We need to ~~indeed~~ inculcate the value of innocence, that is being losing faith in our society.

Q9. Can 'goodness' be learnt? Discuss the eightfold path suggested by Buddha in this regard and explain its relevance in contemporary times for ordinary citizens, leaders and administrators?

(150 Words) (10 Marks)

Goodness can be learnt. Like a skill, it can be acquired. The eightfold path suggested by Buddha ~~include~~, called "Asthalimarga" include,

- i) Right knowledge
- ii) Right faith
- iii) Right conduct
- iv) Right ~~act~~

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Q10. Define the following terms with respect to civil servants:

- (a) Beneficence
- (b) Self-integrity
- (c) Reciprocity
- (d) Serviceability

(50 Words Each) (4 × 5 = 20 Marks)

a) Beneficence refers to the virtue of being utmost good, loving and compassionate.  
eg. the trait of a civil servant who happens to visit a flood hit area and interacting with the affected people.

b) Self-Integrity

Integrity in one's own dealings. Being true to one's conscious conscience. When one's thoughts, deeds and feelings are in unison. eg) An administrator refusing to accept an invitation to a party organised by an alleged briber, ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> sensing that as a non monetary bribe.

c) Reciprocity

The act of doing to others, how one expects oneself to be treated - The golden rule of Confucius. eg. Civil Servants dedicating their one month's salary for the flood hit Kushi relief fund.

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d) Service ability

Understanding that service to humanity  
is the highest form of worship - Vircharande.  
Civil servants should cultivate service ability -  
as a trait.

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Q11. 'Only when correct reasoning and right desire come together does truly virtuous action results'. Do you agree? Justify. (150 Words) (10 Marks)

Any human action is judged, based on the intention it carries. The intention needs to have a correct reasoning, it should be based on right desire and only then, the action becomes virtuous.

For eg, attainment of freedom was a desire, that desire came out of the correct reasoning that we had been historically exploited and oppressed under the British rule.

The reasoning adopted by Gandhiji was to ~~do~~ use non violent struggle for attainment of Swaraj - the desired result. The reasoning and the desire being right, lead to the virtuous action of non violent Satyagraha. Similarly is the case of Martin Luther King who non violently fought for the civil rights of Blacks in America. It resulted in the virtuous action of liberation from oppressions.

Remarks

## SECTION - B

Q12. One of your friend, a mid-level bureaucrat, is highly upset because of his job related stress and family problems and often expresses his disenchantment with life. He gave an application for 3 week leave, which was sanctioned by his boss. However, a senior officer (placed higher than his boss), called him during his leave period to office for handling a sudden exigency and this was not the first time when such a thing had happened to him. It happens very often because the officer is very efficient and reliable. The officer has a feeling that those who work honestly are overused while those who work less but keep a personal liaison with seniors work less and get various rewards and privileges. He is disillusioned. He is unable to give reasonable time to his ageing sick mother, his wife who is under depression and children who are going to face their 10th and 12th board examinations. The officer is very upset and broken because of his inability to reconcile his official duties and family responsibilities. He seems to be very disturbed and broken. Despite being an honest and efficient officer he has not been given adequate rewards and recognition and space for looking after his personal needs; he displays signals of suicidal tendencies. What would be your suggestions to him? Discuss merits and demerits of each option. (250 Words) (20 Marks)

The officer is seriously disillusioned and looks burdened by his responsibilities and roles. Some of the suggestions which could be given to him are,

i) Take a long leave after consultations with senior bureaucrats, and attend stress relief sessions.

Hint: Because suicidal tendencies are too dangerous and needs to be sorted out as soon as possible. It may reflect on the quality of his job also.

Demerit: The senior bureaucrat may disallow taking leave.

ii) The officer may delegate some of his duties at office to someone else and take a cool off period with less

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responsibilities for some time.

Hurt : → Some relief from the burden

Demot - → Work efficiency will be affected.

iii) The officer may attend Yoga classes, Meditation, etc to find some emotional balance in life and to have a positive outlook about life, move towards spirituality.

iv) Voluntary retirement from services and joining an NGO, if the suicidal tendencies increase to an extent of needing medical counselling.

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Q13. As a District Magistrate in a tribal area, you have found that there are many superstitious practices which inhibit the welfare of the people such as - believing in super natural powers responsible for droughts, famines, natural disasters and diseases, witch hunting, fatalism (surrendered to fate rather than making efforts to change). While aspiring to act as an agent of change and development in the region, you find that there is opposition by people to modern ideas and practices. Answer the following questions:

- How will you proceed to remove superstition in tribal area and instill rationality among the people?
- Do change and progress needed to dismantle the local traditions in the tribal area?
- How a civil servant can win the trust of the people in a tribal area?
- How to ensure people's participation in any measure which you have suggested? (250 Words) (20 Marks)

a) The first and foremost thing is education. The question is how the education is carried out in the tribal area. The following ways can be tried:

- As part of school education, include in value education classes, aspects on morality, etc.
- During adult education programmes, use examples and anecdotes which can dispel dogmas & myths.
- Repe in NGOs who are efficient at this.
- Consult the religious heads of tribes and instill rationality in their leaders.

b) Local traditions in the ~~village~~ tribal area needs to be respected. Constitution provides them all rights to their culture under articles 29 and 30. But, at the same time, it is the responsibility of the District Magistrate to ensure that certain aspects of this culture is inflicting harm to the members of the tribal society. Such practices needs to

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be condemned. (eg. Abolition of untouchability under article 17) which was earlier considered to have religious sanction.)

c) Civil servant can win the trust by,

- i) Make the efforts of the civil servant visible to the tribal people.
- ii) Visits and interactions with the people of the tribal village.
- iii) Visit schools, check the provisions, mid day meal programme implementation, quality of facilities available to people, etc.
- iv) Make an effort at quickness redressal, reduce social distance between the DM and the people. easy access to people.

- ~~///~~
- d) People's participation can be ensured by,
- i) Roping in participation of students in schools for community development projects.
  - ii) Increasing participation by asset creation in village, etc.
  - iii) People should see the benefits of engaging with the administration.

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Q14. You are CEO of a company, which is involved in manufacturing of large-scale copper products. It has created good employment opportunity for the locals. But the local residents are not happy with the management of the company and big group of local residents are protesting continuously. They are demanding closer of the plant as factory discharge is contaminating the local water sources.

Your father is a senior IAS officer placed in the concerned Ministry. He is influential and very well networked. Company's management is pushing you to manage the situation and local authority through your father, as putting high quality production facility in plant will increase the cost of production, and company may lose market share in terms of sales if cost goes high. Based on the above situation answer the following questions:

- What are the options available to you?
- Discuss merits & demerits of each option.
- What will be your final call? Justify.

(250 Words) (20 Marks)

a) The above case entails a situation of conflict of interest. Being the CEO of the company, I have a moral duty to safeguard the interests of my company, at the same time, being a person with compassion for the society and high moral grounds, it is my duty to uphold welfare of the society.

The stakeholders are, the CEO of the company (myself) who is in a moral dilemma, the people who are protesting against the company's actions, the management of the company who represent the interests of the company, the employees of the company, the senior IAS officer (my father) and the society at large who is affected by the company's location in their vicinity.

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of this option is that, if the management heeds, it is a big victory to the protestors. The demerit is the cost incurred for the company.

3) Using my father's influence is unethical as it is totally against my morality to do so. It has the merits of bringing down the protest for sometime, but it is not right. It will become abuse of power and corruption.

c) As the CEO of the company, it is my duty (dharma) to not bring losses to my company. But, at the same time, I cannot do an immoral act of making the society suffer due to pollution from the factory. I will approach the problem in the following way:-

Call a meeting of the local authorities and protestors and explain to them the predicament of the company; Also, point out to them that the ~~that~~ ~~the~~ ~~has~~ company has brought development to the locality, provided jobs, etc. I will ask the protestors to give the company some time to make arrangements for water treatment processes. Bring out statistics to the people and reassure them that company will always stand for their interests too. Before that, I will negotiate with the management of the company to install treatment processes, as it is against law (Water Act, 1972) as well as unethical. The employees of the company may be asked to contribute to the treatment facilities.

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Q15. You are head of a charitable trust that takes care of education, clothing, food & other basic needs of children from marginal community. Your organization also offers health services to the members of weaker section. You find it difficult to serve qualitatively because of the crunch of funds. Trust runs on donations and contributions from donors only. There is a regular fall in contribution from several imminent persons who were prime donors previously. Now you have decided to go for small advertisement to get donation for the good cause. Response is not very encouraging, however, a prominent local politician with a criminal record offers a hefty donation. The options available are:

- Take donation from that politician.
- Reject offer of that politician as his track record is poor.
- Ask him to directly assist to those who are in need.
- Reduce your operational scale to affordable level, so that you can sustain charitable work.

Analyse each option with its consequences.

(250 Words) (20 Marks)

~~Q15~~ a) There is a Greek saying that, "let there be lie, let the whole world be filled with lie, but the darkness of lie, will not pass through me." Similarly, I do not intend to become a partaker of a money or wealth earned through corrupt means. That will extinguish the noble cause that I am doing to the children. ~~The options available to me are,~~ Hence, I ~~will not resort to taking~~ ~~donation~~ will not resort to taking donation from that politician.

~~Q15~~ b) If I reject of the offer of the politician, I will face a severe cash crunch, will not be able to pursue my dream of bringing light to the lives of those children, to the extent that I intend to. But, I will still uphold my sense of morality

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and high standards that I have kept for myself.

c) I ~~will~~ could rather keep a distance from politicians with criminal backgrounds and would not encourage his funds being used for anything with the marginal communities that I am associated with, since with a criminal background, I sense a malicious intent with him.

d) Sustaining charitable work is my main intention being the head of the trust, but if there is a lack of funds, I will have to bring down the operational cost. But I can go for innovative methods like use social media funding, conduct events and shows for fund raising, etc.

Q16. You are a District Collector. A seven-year boy has been killed in a school. Parents are angry and protesting. They have blocked the traffic and want speedy action. Parents are scared as it happened during the school hours. They also want tough action against school administration. Few parents don't want to send their children to same school. They tried admission in different schools but all of them have been denied admission. Now, few parents seek help from administration for admission of their children at different places. They don't want to send their children to same school where a boy has been killed. It is harming their children's study as examination is approaching. What are the options before you as District Collector to address the concerns of the parents?

(250 Words) (20 Marks)

The various stakeholders in this case are, the school authorities, ~~the~~ the students of the school, the parents of the murdered child and protestors, the media and society at large, the police who are investigating the crime, and the district authorities;

The district collector has to act with wisdom in this case, that too swift action is necessary.

The various options are,

i) I will ~~first~~ make a visit to the school, and ask the school authorities to fully cooperate with the investigation which is underway. There is a high chance that, they may ~~not be~~ be resisting investigation fearing a reputational school's image. By doing so, the parents' trust in the school authorities can be brought in to some extent.

ii) Before that, I will address the protestors who are blocking the roads and traffic.

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and assure them that speedy action will be taken as soon as possible.

3) I will then contact the media persons and then ask them not to sensationalise the issue which is causing much hue and cry in the public, and to stop the media trial and let the investigation go its way.

4) I will ask the investigating agency to take into account all the factors and evidences and bring out a thorough enquiry on the issue.

5) I will ~~sure~~ get the school authorities to reassure the parents, ~~the~~ and students of the school, especially the board exam students ~~the~~ that all their grievances will be taken care of. The school will have to provide necessary compensation and pay for the lapses on the part of administration.

Q17. As a young IAS officer, you have been posted as the Sub-Divisional Magistrate in a remote area. You have found that schools, road connectivity, community halls are not in good conditions. You know that allocated budget is not sufficient and also the whole process of getting nod from higher authority is time consuming. You have found an alternative to do it through public participation. Mention the steps you will follow in this case and justify each step. (250 Words) (20 Marks)

The second Administrative Reforms Commission calls for citizen centric participation at all levels of the government. In the case of funds not being available, getting the coordination of the ~~set~~ public in this regard, will only make them more accountable ~~to citizens~~ and active citizens.

The steps that I will follow could be,

- i) Make all arrangements for getting the budget allocated funds, and nod from the higher authority. Because, the citizens should not feel that government is delegating its duty on citizens. They deserve to get the funds fully and at the earliest.
- ii) Engage youth volunteers from the areas, to set up social media donation accounts and give enough publicity asking the residents to contribute to the initiative.
- iii) The residents may initially not cooperate,

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but after showing that government funds along with their own funds can contribute to something unimaginable otherwise for the area, the people in ~~is~~ select in.

iv) A lot will depend on the social persuasion capabilities of the district Magistrate. I will take a tour of the village and convince people to contribute generously. It is important to develop a trust with the people for which interpersonal relations have to be built.

v) I will promise that all funds collected will be used in a very transparent manner and will be subjected to social audit mechanism, by people's representatives.

xx Participation of all segments of the society will also bring in solidarity in the society. Citizen participation is an integral part of good governance as well.

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