



## Mains Practice Question

**Q.** "Ethical leadership often requires making difficult decisions that may be unpopular in the short term but beneficial in the long run." Discuss this statement with relevant examples. **(150 words)**

03 Oct, 2024 GS Paper 4 Theoretical Questions

### Approach

- Introduce the answer by mentioning the significance of ethical leadership justifying the given statement
- Give key arguments related to Balancing Short-Term Challenges with Long-Term Societal Gains
- Conclude suitably.

### Introduction

**Ethical leadership** is a cornerstone of **good governance and responsible management in both public and private sectors**. It involves making decisions based on moral principles, fairness, and the greater good, even when these choices may not be immediately popular or advantageous.

### Body

#### **Ethical Leadership: Balancing Short-Term Challenges with Long-Term Societal Gains:**

- **Prioritizing Long-Term Benefits Over Short-Term Gains:** Ethical leaders make decisions focused on long-term growth, despite short-term disruptions.
  - The **1991 economic liberalization under Dr. Manmohan Singh** was initially unpopular but opened India to global markets, fostering long-term economic growth.
- **Promoting Equality and Social Justice** Ethical leadership challenges cultural norms to advance fairness and equality.
  - The **abolition of Triple Talaq in 2019** faced opposition from conservative groups, but protected Muslim women's rights, promoting gender justice and constitutional equality.
- **Environmental Responsibility for Future Generations:** Ethical decisions may inconvenience industries in the short term but ensure environmental sustainability.
  - The **2022 ban on single-use plastics** faced industry resistance, but is vital for reducing pollution and safeguarding ecosystems.
- **National Security and Territorial Integrity:** Leaders may take politically risky decisions that ensure national security and unity.
  - **Indira Gandhi's integration of Sikkim in 1975** faced international criticism but secured India's strategic interests and contributed to the region's development.
- **Reforming Entrenched Systems for Long-Term Efficiency:** Ethical decisions often require reforming longstanding systems for greater fairness and efficiency.
  - The **Insolvency and Bankruptcy Code (IBC) of 2016**, despite initial resistance from defaulters and banks, has enhanced credit discipline and led to quicker resolutions of stressed assets.
- **Protecting Public Health Against Industry Opposition:** Ethical leadership involves decisions that protect public welfare, even when they face opposition from powerful lobbies.

- The **implementation of pictorial warnings on tobacco products**, despite strong resistance from the tobacco industry, aims to reduce smoking-related diseases and protect future generations.

## Conclusion

Ethical leadership that prioritizes long-term benefits over short-term popularity is **crucial for sustainable progress and development in India**. While such decisions may face initial resistance, they often lead to more significant positive outcomes for society as a whole.

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