



ETHICS CASE STUDY - GS 4 MAINS

You are working as an employee in a private company. One afternoon in the office you get a frantic call from your wife that your two year old daughter is very ill and her condition is critical. Unfortunately nobody is there around to help your wife in any way. Your car is the only option to take your daughter to the hospital, you have to rush to help your daughter as soon as possible.

You soon leave the office. On your way back home you hit an old woman and she is critically injured and before you notice she dies. Nobody has noticed the accident as it has taken place on a stretch of road that's always free of traffic and people. Your wife is calling you frantically for help. Any delay would cost your daughter's life.

(a) In this scenario what will you do? And why? (150 Words)

(b) Examine the ethical dilemma and values which come into the picture in the above scenario.

Course of action:

- Driving in an emotionally charged state has caused the death of an ailing old lady.
- Since the lady is already dead and my daughter is struggling for life my immediate step would be to ensure that my daughter's life is not lost because of my emotionally charged reaction towards the dead lady. According to **consequentialism**, this decision would minimize the harmfulness. Saving the life even I'm feeling guilty of causing the innocent to die.
- I will call the police and tell them about the accident and give them my personal details which ensures I abide by the **rule of law**.
- Law demands that the dead body should not be displaced to determine the exact cause of death.
- So without disturbing the dead body I will drive to my home and take my daughter to the nearest hospital. **Compliant to the duty of the father**.
- My next step after ensuring her treatment would be to submit myself to the nearest police station.
- This is a case of culpable homicide not amounting to murder for which bail is an available remedy if the culprit submits to law.
- My submission and cooperation with the police will earn me a bail immediately. So I can take care of my daughter.
- I will also inquire about the family of the dead lady to explain to them the cause of the accident and seek pardon for my own self satisfaction. As a **compassionate** man, I will also offer them some monetary help if they are poor.
- Rest I will leave to the court to decide. I would obey the verdict of the court.



Ethical dilemma involved:

1. Compassion vs Personal affection and love towards the daughter
 - a. Leaving the dead old lady makes me feel guilty. But in the love of my daughter, I went home to take my daughter to the nearest hospital.
2. Utilitarianism vs Deontological ethics
 - a. Utilitarianism evaluates the activity based on results. The result here is saving my daughter even though I left the dead body. Saving life is the good outcome based on which I can justify my action as ethical.
 - b. However, the duty-bound feature of deontological ethics questions my action. That's why I informed the police station about the accident and confessed my mistakes.
3. Conscience vs consciousness
 - a. My consciousness urged me to save my daughter but my conscience stopped me.
 - b. In order to satisfy my conscience, I informed the police and surrendered after the treatment. If I didn't fail to inform the police, I will be punished by my own conscience.
 - c. Because of conscience, I would like to give some monetary help to the family of the old lady. Even Though we will not compensate for life with money, this will at least help their family and convince my own conscience.

Values involved: [explain with the above situation]

- Compassion
- Rule of law
- Integrity
- Conscience keeping