

## An Introduction to Ethics

**Etymologically** the term “ethics” correspond to the Greek word “ethos” which means character, habit, customs, ways of behaviour, etc.

Ethics is also called “moral philosophy”. The word “moral” comes from Latin word “mores” which signifies customs, character, behaviour, etc.

Thus ethics may be defined as the systematic study of human actions from the point of view of their rightfulness or wrongfulness, as means for the attainment of the ultimate happiness.

It is the reflective study of what is good or bad in that part of human conduct for which human has some personal responsibility.

**In simple words**, ethics refers to what is good and the way to get it, and what is bad and how to avoid it. It refers to what ought to be done to achieve what is good and what ought not to be done to avoid what is evil.

**As a philosophical discipline**, ethics is the study of the values and guidelines by which we live. It also involves the justification of these values and guidelines. It is not merely following a tradition or custom. Instead it requires analysis and evaluation of these guidelines in light of universal principles.

As moral philosophy, ethics is the philosophical thinking about morality, moral problems, and moral judgments.

**Ethics is a science** in as much as it is a set or body of reasoned truths organised in a logical order and having its specific material and formal objects. It is the science of what human ought to be by reason of what one is. It is a rational science in so far as its principles are deduced by human's reason from the objects that concern the free will. Besides it has for its ulterior end the art by which human may live uprightly or comfortably to right reason. It is a normative/regulative science in as much as it regulates and directs human's life and gives the right orientation to one's existence.

**Ethics is also theoretical and practical.** It is theoretical in as much as it provides the fundamental principles on the basis of which moral judgments are arrived at. It is practical in as much as it is concerned about an end to be gained, and the means of attaining it.

**Ethics is sometimes distinguished from morality.** In such cases, ethics is the explicit philosophical reflection on moral beliefs and practices while morality refers to the first-order beliefs and practices about good and evil by means of which we guide our behaviour (e.g. music and musicology). However, in most cases they are referred to as having the same meaning.

### Scope of Ethics

Ethics deals with voluntary actions. We can distinguish between human actions and actions of human: human actions are those actions that are done by human consciously, deliberately and in view of an end. Actions of human may not be willfully, voluntarily, consciously and deliberately done but all the same they are done by human (e.g. sleeping, walking, etc.). It is the intention which makes the difference between human action and action of human. In ethics we deal only with human actions.

## ATTITUDE

### INTRODUCTION

“What a movie...I just love it!”, “I hate pollution”, “Black colour looks really classy”, and so on. All the above statements show that we react to our environment in an evaluative manner. We are constantly making judgments about whether objects, events, ourselves and others are favorable or unfavourable, likeable or unlikeable, good or bad. This falls in the domain of attitudes. Social psychologists who study attitudes investigate factors involved in such evaluations; how they are formed, changed, and so on.

### DEFINING ATTITUDES

The study of attitudes has been at the forefront of social psychology for many years. The chief reason why the concept of attitude is so central to psychology is because the aim of psychology is to study behaviour, and attitudes are supposed to influence behaviour.

Allport (1935) defined attitude as “a mental and neural state of readiness, organised through experience, and exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual’s response to all objects and situations with which it is related”.

Since Allport, the definition of attitude has evolved considerably and become narrower. Attitudes are now looked as evaluative statements— either favorable or unfavorable- concerning some aspect of the social world.

For instance, Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) define an attitude as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object”.

Psychologists use specialized terms to describe certain classes of attitudes. For e.g., an attitude towards the self is called self-esteem, negative attitudes towards specific groups are called prejudice, attitudes towards individuals are called interpersonal attraction, and attitude towards own job is called job satisfaction.

Simply defined, attitudes are generally positive or negative views of a person (including oneself) place, thing, or event (the attitude object).

### ATTITUDES, VALUES AND BELIEFS

There are two psychological constructs closely associated with attitudes: values and beliefs.

#### Attitudes and Values

The most frequently cited definition of what constitutes a human value is offered by Rokeach (1973) as an “enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of conduct or end-state of existence”.

Human values are strongly prescriptive in nature and form the core around which other less enduring beliefs are organised. As such they are important in a range of other processes, like attitudes. It is contended that the formation of specific attitudes is predicated upon more general values. Values indirectly influence behaviour through their influence on attitudes.

Although values can shape attitudes, it does not however mean that values shape all attitudes. For e.g. your attitude towards say love versus arranged marriage is probably shaped by your values, but your preference for one brand of toothpaste over another is less likely to be influenced by important life goals.

It is clear that some attitudes are formed through the influence of long-standing values internalized early in life. These are called symbolic attitudes, because the attitude object is a symbol of something else.

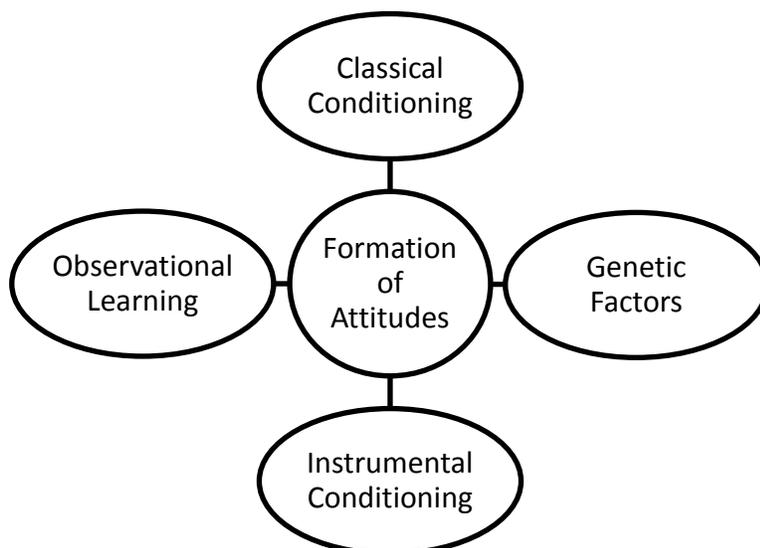
In contrast, there are some attitudes that are based on utility, a direct benefits and costs of the attitude object. These are called instrumental attitudes, because they are instrumental to meet those needs. Interestingly the same attitude object could serve a symbolic or an instrumental need. For e.g. your decision to eat only vegetarian food could be based on utility (if you stay in a place like Europe or America where it is more difficult to get vegetarian food) or taste-instrumentally based attitudes— versus considerations of animal rights and right to live-symbolically based values.

Values are relatively more stable and enduring than attitudes, since they are basic notions about what is right and wrong. Attitudes are less stable than values. Further, if we know an individual's values, we are better able to predict his behaviour in a particular situation.

## FORMATION OF ATTITUDES

Right from our birth onwards, we are exposed to a wide variety of stimuli, both directly and indirectly, which lead to our acquiring particular attitudes towards the attitudinal object. It is believed that attitudes are by and large acquired as a result of various life experiences, although a small but growing body of evidence indicates that attitudes may be influenced by genetic factors, too.

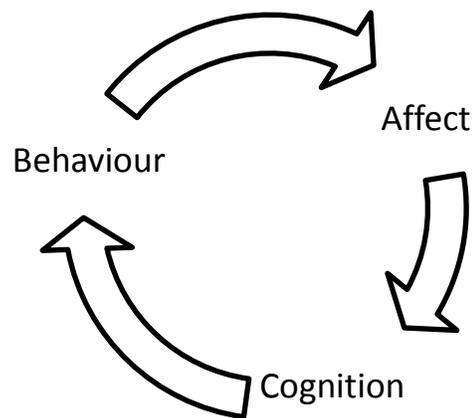
A number of theories have been used to identify what lead to formation and maintenance of attitudes:



## THE ABCs OF ATTITUDE

Favourable or unfavourable evaluations towards something that define a person's attitude can be exhibited in beliefs, feelings, or inclinations to act. This is known as the multidimensional or tricomponent view of attitudes. These three components represent the basic building blocks of attitudes.

Consider for example, my attitude towards swimming. Because I believe that it is an excellent form of exercise, I feel liking towards it, and therefore intend to swim every day (at least in summers!). These dimensions are known as the ABCs of attitudes: affect (feelings), behaviour (tendency to act), and cognition (thoughts)



The ABCs of Attitudes (Adapted from Myers, 2005, p. 134)

## Emotional Intelligence

*"IQ gets you hired, but EQ gets you promoted."*

The nearest and dearest emotion to many people is happiness, which is a state of well-being and contentment that is much to be desired. Happiness is the key to many things enabling the perception of the world as a safer place, healthier and more satisfying lives, and perception also that one has the ability to make decisions more easily.

Emotions play a very vital role in every individual's life. They add colour to our lives and without emotions there is no meaning to our lives. Life becomes boring and monotonous without presence of emotions. It makes life beautiful and also lively but at the same time the same emotions can make life even worst and miserable by making them commit worst of the crimes. It is very essential for an individual to understand the importance of emotions in our lives and the role they play making our lives happy and joyful and also in making our lives miserable and sad. The modern concept of emotions focuses on emotional competency and emotional intelligence. Having knowledge of emotional intelligence and enhancing one's own emotional competency levels to become emotionally competent helps in contributing towards maintaining good psychological status.

The modern concept of emotions focuses on Emotional competency and emotional intelligence. The term emotional intelligence has been widely used by many people.

It was first brought into focus that intelligence is not just the general ability but has three different levels of functioning i.e., abstract intelligence, mechanical intelligence and social intelligence.

Later Gardner (1983) has brought about the concept of multiple intelligence.

Mayer and Solovey (1990) had coined the term “Emotional Intelligence”, being aware of the previous work on non-cognitive aspects of intelligence. They described emotional intelligence as a form of social intelligence.

In the early 1990's Daniel Goleman became aware of Salovey and Mayer's work and eventually led into the study in his book “Emotional Intelligence”. Goleman has tried to make a distinction between emotional intelligence and emotional competencies. It is referred in relation to emotions.

The merging of emotion and intelligence as a cognitive ability under the caption of 'Emotional intelligence' was proposed by a Yale Psychologist (Salovey, Woolery, & Mayer, 1990) of university of New Hampshire.

Emotional intelligence may be more clearly distinguished from general intelligence as involving the manipulation of emotions and emotional content.

Emotional intelligence involves striking a balance between emotion and reason in which neither is completely in control. Emotionally intelligent people know when it is right to control their emotions and when it is right to be controlled by them. Emotional intelligence also involves the ability to read other people's emotions correctly.

Emotional intelligence determines our potential for learning the practical skills based on the five elements:

	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Hallmarks</b>
<b>Self Awareness</b>	the ability to recognize and understand you moods, emotions and drives, as well as their effect on others	self -confidence realistic self-assessment self-deprecating sense of humor
<b>Self Regulation</b>	the ability to control or redirect disruptive impulses and moods  the propensity to suspend judgment-to think before acting	trustworthiness and integrity comfort with ambiguity organizational commitment
<b>Motivation</b>	a passion to work for reasons that go beyond money or status  a propensity to pursue goals with energy and persistence	strong drive to achieve optimize, even in the face of failure organizational commitment
<b>Empathy</b>	the ability to understand the emotional makeup of other people  skill in treating people according to their emotional reactions	expertise in building and retaining talent cross-cultural sensitivity  service to clients and customers
<b>Social Skill</b>	proficiency in managing relationships and building networks  an ability to find common ground and build rapport	effectiveness in leading change persuasiveness  expertise in building and leading teams

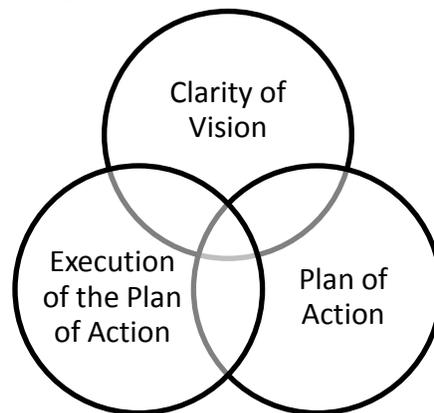
## Ethics in Governance

“As human beings, our greatness lays not so much in being able to remake the world - that is the myth of the atomic age - as in being able to remake ourselves” -Mahatma Gandhi

The Mahatma’s vision of a strong and prosperous India - Purna Swaraj - can never become a reality if we do not address the issue of the stranglehold of corruption on our polity, economy and society in general.

It is a well known fact that Government plays a vital role in shaping the future of any organization as the optimum utilization of all resources hinges upon the efficacy of the management.

The core of a successful management lies in Government’s:



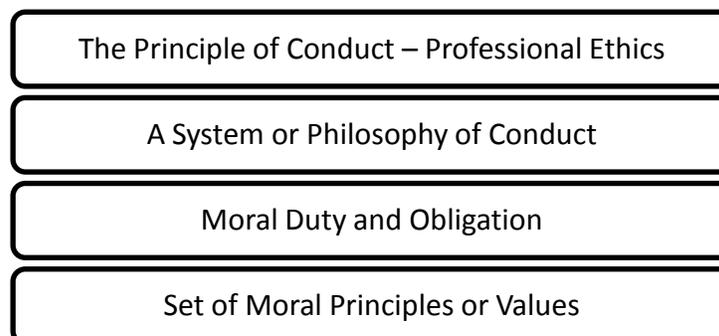
It is here that the importance of Corporate Governance and Ethics comes into being.

### What are Ethics?

To better understand ethics let us understand and contrast the definition of ethics and law

- ✓ Law is a consistent set of universal rules that are widely published, generally accepted and usually enforced. These rules describe the ways in which people are required to act in society.
- ✓ Ethics defines what is good for the individual and for society and establishes the nature of duties that people owe to oneself and others in society

Thus ethics are:



Successful governments, markets and corporate performance are founded on a commitment to basic ethical principles aligned as much as possible to the interests of individuals, corporations and society.

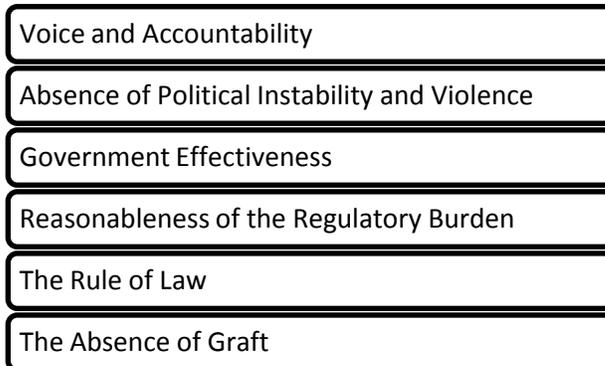
### Facets of Ethics in Governance



## Good Governance

Governance is admittedly the weak link in our quest for prosperity and equity. Elimination of corruption is not only a moral imperative but an economic necessity for a nation aspiring to catch up with the rest of the world. Improved governance in the form of non-expropriation, contract enforcement, and decrease in bureaucratic delays and corruption can raise the GDP growth rate significantly.

The six perceived governance quality measures, each an aggregate of a number of sub-measures, are:



Of these, the last two are the most directly significant in the context of ethical governance.

Good Governance must be founded on moral virtues ensuring stability and harmony.

Confucius's prescription for good governance is ideally suited for a country like India where many of our present day players in governance do not adhere to any principle and ensure only their own interests. Confucius emphasizes the righteousness for life and character building.

### Art of Good Governance

Confucius described righteousness as the foundation of good governance and peace.

The art of good governance simply lies in making things right and putting them in their right place.

## Good Governance

### Introduction

"Good governance is exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises of the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate their differences." - UNDP

Good governance is a concept that has come into regular use in political science, public administration and, more particularly, development management. It appears alongside such terms such as democracy, civil society, participation, human rights and sustainable development. In the last decade, it has been closely associated with the public sector reform. Good governance is also responsive to the present and future needs of society. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decision-making.

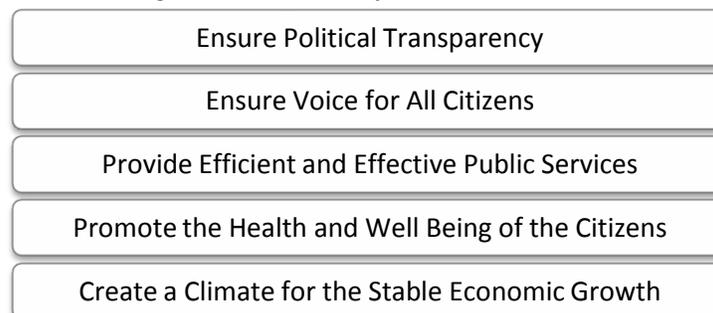
Governance is normally described as involving government, civil society and the private sector in managing the affairs of a nation, which means that the responsibility for managing the affairs of a nation is not limited to government alone, but includes a wide variety of stakeholders as shown below:



And each actor has a specific role to play based on its source of legitimacy and comparative advantage.

### Meaning of Good Governance

Good Governance means government's ability to:



### Need for Good Governance in India

Below mentioned are the factors which make Good Governance a necessity in India:

Corruption
Lack of Probity and Honesty
Criminalization of Politics
Rising Inequalities
Regional Disparities
Lack of Transparency
Lack of Participation in Democratic Processes
Lack of Accountability
Lack of Equity
Ineffectiveness and Inefficiency
Growth in Violence

Corruption As with many developing nations, corruption is widespread in India. India is ranked 84 out of a 180 countries in Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index.

Corruption has taken the role of a pervasive aspect of Indian politics, bureaucracy, Judiciary, Police and religious institutions.

As per Transparency International India, "India Corruption Study 2007", Kerala is the least corrupt State in India. Bihar, on the other hand, is the most corrupt State. Jammu & Kashmir ranks next to Bihar. Himachal Pradesh followed by Gujarat is ranked second and third respectively after Kerala. Transparency International (TI) in India found that more than 50% of the people had firsthand experience of paying bribe or peddling influence to get a job done in a public office.

A 2009 survey of the leading economies of Asia, revealed Indian bureaucracy to be not just least efficient out of Singapore, Hong Kong, Thailand, South Korea, Japan, Malaysia, Taiwan, Vietnam, China, Philippines and Indonesia; further it was also found that working with the India's civil servants was a "slow and painful" process. Many state-funded construction activities in India, such as road building, are dominated by construction mafias, which are groupings of corrupt public works officials, materials suppliers, politicians and construction contractors. Shoddy construction and material substitution (e.g. mixing sand in cement while submitting expenses for cement) result in roads and highways being dangerous, and sometimes simply washed away when India's heavy monsoon season arrives.

In Government Hospitals, corruption is associated with non availability of medicines (or duplicate medicines), getting admission, consultations with doctors and availing diagnostic services.

Corruption is rampant in the judicial system of India. According to Transparency International, judicial corruption in India is attributable to factors such as "delays in the disposal of cases, shortage of judges and complex procedures, all of which are exacerbated by a preponderance of new laws".

Despite state prohibitions against torture and custodial misconduct by the police, torture is widespread in police custody, which is a major reason behind deaths in custody. The police often torture innocent people until a 'confession' is obtained to save influential and wealthy offenders.

The chief economic consequences of corruption are the loss to the, an unhealthy climate for investment and an increase in the cost of government-subsidized services. The TI India study estimates the monetary value of petty corruption in 11 basic services provided by the government, like education, healthcare, judiciary, police, etc., to be around Rs.21, 068 crores.

Lack of Probity and Honesty Probity in governance is an essential and vital requirement for an efficient and effective system of governance and for socio-economic development. An important requisite for ensuring probity in governance is absence of corruption. The other requirements are effective laws, rules and regulations governing every aspect of public life and, more important, an effective and fair implementation of those laws, etc. Indeed, a proper, fair and effective enforcement of law is a facet of discipline. Unfortunately for India, discipline is disappearing fast from public life. With the growth of corruption (as discussed above), criminalization of politics, erosion of ethics, inefficient and corrupt bureaucracy it is evident that probity, honesty and discipline in Indian public life is fading away.

Criminalization of Politics Criminalization of Indian politics is a problem. Nearly a fourth of the 540 Indian Parliament members faced criminal charges. These acts are not as much due to mixing religion with politics as they are a consequence of the brazen use of criminal means to win political battles. The issue is, therefore, not so much the survival of secularism as it is the increasing criminalization of our political life, and the active protection criminals receive from the political machinery. It is this nexus which needs to be broken. Almost all political parties are involved in this nexus with criminals and rely heavily on criminal activities as murder, mayhem, loot, rape and arson. Criminalization of politics is based on money power, political power and muscle power.

## **Probity in Governance**

“You must be the change you wish to see in the world.” - Mahatma Gandhi

### **Introduction:**

Probity in governance is an essential and vital requirement for an efficient and effective system of governance and for socio-economic development. An important requisite for ensuring probity in governance is absence of corruption. The other requirements are effective laws, rules and regulations governing every aspect of public life an effective and fair implementation of those laws, etc. Transparency means that decisions taken and their enforcement are done in a manner that follows rules and regulations. It also means that information is freely available and directly accessible to those who will be affected by such decisions and their enforcement. Transparency ensures that enough information is provided and that it is provided in easily understandable forms and media. Indeed, a proper, fair and effective enforcement of law is a facet of discipline.

Gunnar Myrdal, has pointed out, no real progress is possible. Discipline implies inter alia public and private morality and a sense of honesty. While in the West a man who rises to positions of higher authority develops greater respect for laws, the opposite is true in our country. Here, the mark of a person holding high position is the ease with which he can ignore the laws and regulations. We are being swamped by a culture of indiscipline and untruth; morality, both public and private, is at a premium. Instilling a sense of discipline among the citizens is more the function of the society, its leaders, political parties and public figures and less a matter which can be legislated upon. Even so, things have come to such a pass that measures need to be contemplated.

### **Menace of corruption in public life**

1. The scope for corruption increases when control on the public administrators is fragile and the division of power between political, executive and bureaucracy is ambiguous. Political corruption which is sometimes inseparable from bureaucratic corruption tends to be more widespread in authoritarian regimes where the public opinion and the Press are unable to denounce corruption. The paradox of India, however, is that in spite of a vigilant press and public opinion, the level of corruption is exceptionally high. This may be attributed to the utter insensitivity, lack of shame and the absence of any sense of public morality among the bribe-takers. The increase of opportunities in State intervention in economic and social life has vastly increased the opportunity for political and bureaucratic corruption, more particularly since politics has also become professionalized.

India is rated in year 2009 at 84 out of 180 countries in the corruption perception index prepared by a non-governmental organization, Transparency International. Corruption today poses a danger not only to the quality of governance but is threatening the very foundations of our society and the State.

Corruption in defense purchases, in other purchases and contracts tend to undermine the very security of the State. Some of the power contracts are casting such financial burden upon some of the States that the very financial viability of those States has fallen into doubt. There seems to be a nexus between terrorism, drugs, smuggling, and politicians, a fact which was emphasized in the Vohra Committee Report.

2. Corruption has flourished because one does not see adequately successful examples of effectively prosecuted cases of corruption. The acceptance of corruption as an inexorable reality has led to silent reconciliation and resignation to such wrongs. There needs to be a vital stimulation in the social consciousness of our citizens. It is true that the present process of withdrawing the State from various sectors in which it should have never entered or in which it is not capable of performing efficiently may reduce the chances of corruption to some extent but even if we migrate to a free market economy, there has to be regulation of economy as distinct from restrictions upon the industrial activity.

3. Gunnar Myrdal had described the Indian society as a 'soft society'. He also clarified what the expression 'Soft Society' means.

In fact, he has stressed the second aspect more than the first. According to him, if there is no discipline in the society, no real or meaningful development or progress is possible. It is the lack of discipline in the society - which expression includes the administration and structures of governance at all levels - that is contributing to corruption. Corruption and indiscipline feed upon each other. One way of instilling the discipline among the society may be to reduce the chances of corruption and to deal with it sternly and mercilessly wherever it is found. For this purpose, the inadequacies in the criminal judicial system have to be redressed.

4. The famous economist, Late Mehabub-Ul-Haq succinctly and poignantly set out the ill-effects of corruption in a South Asian country like ours. He said:

“Corruption happens everywhere. It has been at the center of election campaigns in Italy and the United Kingdom, led to the fall of governments in Japan and Indonesia, and resulted in legislative action in Russia and the United States. But, if corruption exists in rich, economically successful countries, why should South Asia be worried about it? The answer is simple: South Asian corruption has four key characteristics that make it far more damaging than corruption in any other parts of the world.

Corruption in South Asia occurs up-stream, not down-stream. Corruption at the top distorts fundamental decisions about development priorities, policies, and projects. In industrial countries, these core decisions are taken through transparent competition and on merit, even though petty corruption may occur down-stream.

## **ETHICS IN CONTEMPORARY INDIAN PHILOSOPHY**

### **Introduction**

Besides the cultural matrix and religious patrimony of India, the contemporary Indian thinkers were very much influenced by empiricist, utilitarian, agnostic, humanistic and analytic ethics in the West, especially of the thoughts of John Stuart Mill, Jeremy Bentham, Herbert Spencer, Tolstoy and Wittgenstein. These Western-oriented ideas served to generate a secular and rational ethics and stimulated social and religious movements. Among those who deserve our special mention for their original contributions to ethical thinking are Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan and Amartya Sen.

### **Ethics of Swami Vivekananda**

Swami Vivekananda was the pioneer of the rationalist movement in modern India, in the spheres of Ethics and religion. He tried to read Sankara's Advaita into Ramakrishna's teaching. He tried to give an intelligent, concrete and scientific account of practical Vedanta. His philosophy is more or less the synthesis of the philosophy of Shankara and the humanism of Buddha and Ramanuja. He liberated the Vedantic ideas and ideals from the caves, forests and made them available to the common man. Therefore his Vedanta is called Practical Vedanta. The practical teachings of Vivekananda are full of activism and humanism.

His philosophy may be summarised thus all is Brahman; the jiva is none other than Siva; every creature is God himself in particular mode of name and form. According to him the manifestation of Brahman is not the same everywhere. The moon and the star, the lowest worm and the highest man are lower and higher forms of manifestations. From the stand point of the Absolute Brahman, nothing else is. From the stand point of the world of Mâya, everything is real. All human beings are potentially divine and perfect. Vivekananda did not accept a totally impersonal and indeterminate Brahman as a reasonable concept of metaphysics.

The following are the characteristics of Practical Vedanta according to Vivekananda.

#### **Universality**

Vedanta is universal in the sense that its truths apply to the whole of mankind in general. It is the same current that flows through every human being. And that is spirit. Vedanta is universal in the sense that it is rooted in the idea of the oneness of all, in the idea of unbroken continuity of existence.

#### **Impersonality**

Vedanta depends upon no persons or incarnations. Its eternal principles depend upon its own foundations. Hence it alone is the universal religion. Vedanta alone is based on principles, whereas all other religions are based on the lives of their founders.

#### **Rationality**

Vedanta is in complete agreement with the methods and results of modern science. Its conclusions are preeminently rational, being deduced from widespread religious experience. For example the grand Vedantic idea of the spiritual oneness of the whole universe. According to science all things in the universe are waves. Vedanta has discovered that there is but one soul throughout the universe and that all being are only Configurations of that one Reality. From this oneness the solidarity of the universe can be deduced. Vivekananda firmly believes in this oneness of humanity. Vivekananda says that it is the spiritual oneness of Vedanta that serves as a firm ground of all ethical teaching. "Love your neighbors as yourself", one loves another, because one sees one's own self in the other. The application of Vedantic truth to political and social life, results in the spiritualisation of democracy, socialism, liberty, equality and fraternity.

According to him Vedanta is thoroughly rational and scientific. Vedanta does not discard reason in favor of faith. It recognizes intuition or inspiration as a higher faculty than reason. But the truths derived from intuition have to be explained and systematized by reason.

#### **Catholicity**

According to Swami Vivekananda action, devotion, meditation, knowledge all have their due place in the scheme of religious life. Its conception of the four yogas gives a complete chart religious life. Guidance is here given to all kinds of aspirants in all stages of growth. Hinduism is often compared to a mansion in which rooms are available to all classes of men, from the lowest peasant to the highest mystic.

#### **Optimism**

Optimism (Hopefulness) is the life breath of Vedanta. Vedanta is a religion of strength and hope, not a religion of weakness and despair. It teaches unshakable optimism. It alone makes men

strong and self-reliant. It insists upon the inherent divinity of the human soul under all circumstances. It gives hope of infinite progress to every man. It accords man a sense of Sacredness and dignity unknown to other religions. It teaches that man is essentially divine. Hence his salvation must come from within. Vivekananda says "Vedanta is a strength-giving-religion and man making education". The people of India are incurably religious. They are not ignorantly religious but intelligently religious.

### **Humanism**

Humanism is the dominant note of Vivekananda's practical Vedanta. The masses should be our Gods. Service to man is service to God. We should perceive Siva in every Jīva. We should serve not Narayana in the temple but Lame-Narayana, blind-Narayana, hungry Narayana and have not Narayana. Vivekananda says, "first food then Brahman. It is sin to teach Vedanta to the poor". The poor and the hungry should be fed first. He again says, "I am not interested in my own moksha. I shall not have it till each one gets it". Ignorance and illiteracy are the greatest stumbling blocks in the path of progress. Every educated youth should contribute his mite towards the eradication of ignorance and illiteracy. His supreme task was to work for the religious regeneration of the land through renunciation and service. He urged his countrymen to dedicate themselves to the service of starving and oppressed millions. We may say that Vivekananda's whole life was one prolonged cry for the uplift of the toiling millions of his beloved country. He was a great humanist. Swami Vivekananda was a man of Religion. His concern was with spiritual truth not with physical, dogmatic or scientific discoveries. For him religion is a matter of experience and not a system of dogmas. Thus he clearly illustrates the attitude of the East and the West towards spirit. The western idea is that man is a body and has a soul. According to the East man is a soul and has a body.

### **Aristotle (IV Century BC)**

Aristotle's ethics begins with the observation that all beings seek their perfection. Humans are no exception to this universal principle and, indeed, 'happiness' is really to be founded in the attainment of human perfection or self realization. He then goes on to distinguish between two kinds of human actions that can help us attain authentic happiness and these are the moral and intellectual virtues. Virtue is defined as a habitual state or disposition of the soul and Aristotle is well-known for his dictum that virtue is golden mean between two extremes: thus courage is the mid-point between the "vice of excess" of foolhardiness and the "vice of the minimal," cowardice. He gives pride of place and space to the five intellectual virtues: practical knowledge (techne), prudence (phronesis) ratiocination or the ability to make arguments and proofs thanks to logic (episteme) intuitive insight (nous) and wisdom (sophia), the highest and noblest of them all. It is wisdom which enables us to attain the true happiness which is our last end. It is clear that his is a teleological ethics par excellence: the guiding motive in it all is not law or obligation, but what is conducive to one's end. In other words, for Aristotle, moral rightness or wrongness is seen more in terms of the "good" consciously intended by the human agent. Thus, moral badness is linked to ignorance in the sense that no one seeks evil knowingly and willingly, as such.

Thomas Aquinas (1224-1274)

Thomas Aquinas, basing his moral philosophy on the teleological eudemonia of Aristotle stressed God as the ultimate end or “supreme good” of humans (as, indeed, of all beings). His Christian convictions, however, led him to aver that only with the help of God’s grace – a free, supernatural gift – could we attain our fullest encounter with our last end, in the next life. God has a plan for all creation – not a kind of fatalistically predetermined one, but rather a vision of creative development, enshrined in the dynamism of every being and directing it to its full flowering. In other words, God’s eternal law for all beings is manifest in the natural law, inbuilt into their own natures or essences. This “natural law” is accessible to humans partly through revelation and partly through human reason.

The norm of morality for Aquinas, then, is ultimately God’s eternal law or “eternal reason”, but more proximately it is “human reason” which can work out its implications by critically reflecting on what the “natural law” entails. That which is in conformity with the demands of the natural law, as discovered partly by the right use of human reason, is morally good; that which is not, is morally bad. Obviously, for Aquinas, the norm of morality (“natural law”) is intrinsic to the human act and not an extrinsic command or anything else outside of it.

### Right To Information Act 2005: Main Features

The Right to Information Act 2005 is comprehensive which includes provisions for independent appeals, penalties for non-compliance, proactive disclosure and clarity and simplicity of the access process.

Its main features include:

✓ **A Broad Definition of Information**

The Act confers a right to “information” rather than just “records” or “documents”. Information includes permitting the inspection of public works. It also covers “information relating to a private body which can be accused by a public authority under any law”.

✓ **Proactive Disclosure**

The list of information to be proactively published by public authorities is broad. In addition to standard provisions commonly contained in access list, public authorities are to publish: the budget allocated to each agency, including plans, proposed expenditure and respects on disbursements; the manner of execution of subsidy programmes, including the amounts allocated and beneficiaries; recipients of concessions, permits, licenses; and relevant facts while formulating policies.

✓ **Appointment of Public Information Officers (PIOs)**

The Act provides for the appointment of PIOs in all administrative units/offices as may be necessary to provides information to persons requesting it – Assistant PIOs are also to be appointed at each sub-divisional or sub disbud level. These provisions are designed to bring access closer to the people by ensuring that applicants can submit requests in their local area.

✓ **Time Limits**

The Act lays down the time limits as thirty days for normal applications and 40 days where a third party submissions is to be called for. In a novel approach, these time limits are

reduced to a mere 48 hours where the information sought “concerns the life and liberty of a person”.

✓ **Fees**

The application fee is to be reasonable and no fee shall be charged for persons who are below the poverty line as determined by the government where a public authority fails to comply with time limits under the Act, the information shall be provided free of charge to them.

✓ **Information Commissions**

The Act provides for the establishment of new Information Commissions at the Centre and in all the states comprising Chief Information Commissioner and ten Information Commissioners. The Commissions can make any order required to bring about compliance with the law, including release of documents, appointment of PIOs and publication of specified information.

✓ **Penalties**

Every PIO can be penalised Rs. 250 per day upto a maximum of Rs. 25,000 for not accepting application, delaying information release without reasonable cause, and providing incomplete, and incorrect, misleading information.

The Act exempts providing of certain categories of information. These include cabinet papers, information covering a wide range of central intelligence and security agencies and that, which is more than twenty years old etc.

### **Implementing Right to Information: Tasks Ahead**

Experience reveals that mere enactment of FOI legislation would not be enough to provide open and transparent public administration. It would just be the beginning of a long and costly process. The first and foremost task, would be to suitably review and revise such legislations as the Official Secrets Act, 1923, and the Indian Evidence Act 1872, so as to replace the inhospitable or negative provisions therein with suitable provisions, encouraging dissemination of information and limiting the clauses relating to withholding of information. Section 5 of the Official Secrets Act, for example, is regarded as “catch-all provision”, as it covers all kinds of secret official information irrespective of the effect or consequence of disclosure. Again, Section 123 of the Indian Evidence Act provides that no one shall be permitted to give any evidence from unpublished official records, relating to any affairs of the state, except with the permission of the head of the department who shall give or withhold such permission as he or she thinks fit. Even the courts can be denied documents if the government holds that they relate to affairs of the state.

Likewise, the Commission of Enquiry Act, 1952 would also need to be thoroughly scanned and suitably amended so as to make it obligatory for the governments to present the reports of all such commissions before the legislatures within the stipulated time. The amendment should also provide for publication of these reports within a fixed time from the date of presentation in the legislatures. In this context, the following observation of Justice Krishna Iyer (1985) is worth consideration, “When Commissions prolong their enquiries and produce reports, which are

shelved for long in government pigeon-holes, matters of public importance suffer, fade-out and the people are stultified by denial of information...” In most such legislations, governments enjoy the option to accept or reject the report, which means that an administration may use Enquiry Commissions as crisis tactics, the end product being conveniently discarded if unfavourable. Thus, unless governments become really interested and wish to prove their bona fides as democracy promoters from the angle of freedom of information, the strategy of constituting Commissions may prove to be informational treachery.

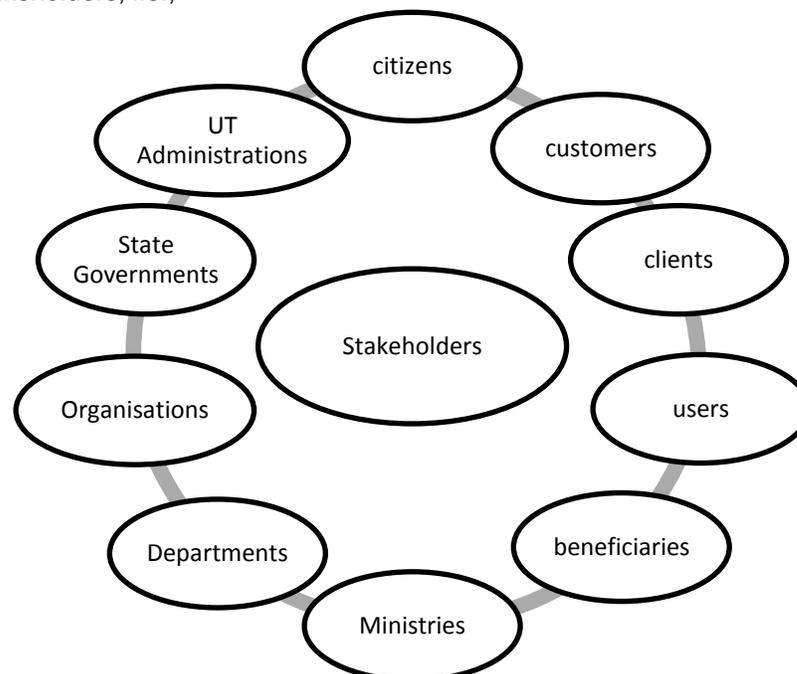
## The Citizens' Charter

### Introduction

*Citizen's Charter is a document which represents a systematic effort to focus on the commitment of the Organisation towards its Citizens in respects of Standard of Services, Information, Choice and Consultation, Non-discrimination and Accessibility, Grievance Redress, Courtesy and Value for Money.*

This also includes expectations of the Organisation from the Citizen for fulfilling the commitment of the Organisation.

The term 'Citizen' in the Citizen's Charter implies the clients or customers whose interests and values are addressed by the Citizen's Charter and, therefore, includes not only the citizens but also all the stakeholders, i.e.,



Citizen's Charter initiative not only covers the Central Government Ministries/ Departments/ Organisations but also the Departments/ Agencies of State Governments and UT Administrations. Various Departments/ Agencies of many State Governments and UT Administrations have brought out their Charters. More than 600 Citizen's Charters have so far been issued by Agencies/ Organisations of 24 States/ Union Territories.

The Citizen's Charter is not legally enforceable and, therefore, is non-justiciable. However, it is a tool for facilitating the delivery of services to citizens with specified standards, quality and time frame etc. with commitments from the Organisation and its clients.

It has been recognised world over that good governance is essential for sustainable development, both economic and social. The three essential aspects emphasised in good governance are transparency, accountability and responsiveness of the administration. "Citizens' Charters" initiative is a response to the quest for solving the problems which a citizen encounters, day in and day out, while dealing with the organisations providing public services.

## Corruption

Probity in governance is an essential and vital requirement for an efficient and effective system of governance and for socio-economic development. An important requisite for ensuring probity in governance is absence of corruption.

Corruption is an abuse of public resources or position in public life for private gain.

Another species of corruption not generally recognised as corruption is extravagant expenditure of public money. Extravagant expenditure of public money amounts to inflicting an undue charge on the general public by spending public funds on purposes that are not essential or spending more than necessary on essential purposes.

Corruption may be defined as the deliberate and intentional/exploitation of one's position, status or, resources directly or indirectly, for personal aggrandizement whether it be in terms of material gain or enhancement of power, prestige or influence beyond what is legitimate or sanctioned by commonly accepted norms to the detriment of the interests of other persons or the community as a whole.

Section 161 of the Indian Penal Code defines 'corruption' in legal terms, as under:

"Whoever being or expecting to be public servant accepts, or obtains, or agrees to accept, or attempts to obtain from any person for himself/ herself or for any other person any gratification whatever other than legal remuneration as a motive or reward for doing or forbearing to do any official act, or for showing, or to show, in the exercise for his/ her official function, favour or disfavour to any person, or for rendering or attempting to render any service or disservice to any person, with the Central or any State Government or Parliament or Legislature of any State or with any public servant as such, shall be punished with imprisonment of either description for a term which may extend to three years, or with fine, or with both."

## Causes of Corruption

There are various causes of corruption which result in lack of integrity.

### 1. Historical Causes

In India, corruption has its roots in the colonial rule of the past. British administration was not interested in the overall development of the country. All Lower posts were offered to Indians. Salaries to these posts were very low. So they indulged in corrupt practices. After World War II,

scarcities led to many types of controls. It gave added opportunities to these low paid employees to resort to corrupt practices. Then it became habitual. It was during World War II that corruption reached the highest mark in India. The climate for integrity which had been rendered unhealthy by wartime controls and scarcities was further aggravated by the post-war flush of money and the consequent inflation.

## **2. Environmental Causes**

The second important cause of corruption in public service is fast urbanisation and industrialisation where material possessions, position and economic power determine the status and prestige of a in the society. Since salaries are low and inflation is unabated, poor civil servants fall easy prey to corrupt practices in order to maintain status in the society.

## **3. Economic Causes**

Inadequate remuneration of salary scales and rising cost of living is probably one of the important causes of corruption. In recent years, the fast rising cost of living has brought down the real income of various sections of the community, particularly the salaried classes. The urge to appear prestigious by material possessions has encouraged those who had the opportunities to succumb to temptations.

## **4. Lack of Strong Public Opinion against the Evil of Corruption**

People do not report to government against corrupt officials. Instead they offer bribes to get their illegitimate claims accepted. People must fight against corruption and build a strong public opinion against corruption.

## **5. Complicated and Cumbersome Procedures and Working of Government Offices**

It is alleged that the working of certain government departments e.g., the Customs and Central Excise, Imports and Exports, Railways, Supplies and Disposals, Police, Income Tax., etc, is complicated, cumbersome and dilatory. This has encouraged the growth of dishonest practices like the system of 'speedy money'.

## **6. Inadequate Laws to Deal with Corruption**

Indian Penal Code and other laws which deal with corruption cases are outmoded and provide insufficient penalties. It takes too much time to get a corrupt officials punished under the laws. Summary trials and stricter punishments should be awarded to end corruption. Therefore the laws will have to be changed accordingly.

## **7. Undue Protection Given to the Public Services in India**

Article 311 of the Indian Constitution which provides protection to civil servants, as interpreted by our courts, made it difficult to deal effectively with corrupt public servants. Reluctance of higher officials to take disciplinary action against corrupt officials due to their collusion with them has further aggravated the situation.

## **8. Collusion of Commercial and Industrial Magnates and Others to Serve their Individual Interests**

Big businessmen, dishonest merchants, suppliers and contractors, bribe the civil servants in order to get undue favours from them. Sometimes they share a portion of their ill earned profit with the government servants.

## **9. Pressure Groups**

Pressure Groups like Indian Chamber of Commerce, 'Trade Associations, State Chambers of Commerce, are said to help in breeding corruption through their activities of getting favours for their communities. They influence ruling elite through dinners, parties, luncheons. etc.

## Value Education

The ability to make moral judgment based on sound reasoning is a very important aim of value education and has to be deliberately cultivated. Value education is important to help everyone in improving the value system that he/she holds and put it to use. Once, all have understood their values in life, they can examine and control the various choices they make in their life. One has to frequently uphold the various types of values in his life such as cultural values, universal values, personal values and social values.

Since values serve the basis for judgment, choice or rejection and these values systems are in turn, influenced by the social and cultural base of the society, hence they are developed positively. The most important agents of socialization in the society are the groups that influence our behaviour and attitudes. These groups include

- ✓ The Family which is responsible for determining one's attitudes toward religion and career goals;
- ✓ The School which is the agency responsible for socializing groups of young people in particular skills and in society;
- ✓ Peer Groups; and
- ✓ Mass Media.

The values are acquired with the help of experiences which an individual gains in the social institutions (school, family), from peers, through media.

### The family

It is the basic social unit of the society and whatever we learn from our family becomes our value system, forms our perceptions and basis of actions. Since an individual is known by his or her actions; therefore the most important role of family is to give proper identity.

The family/home environment influences the individual's learning throughout life and the kind of experiences (pleasant and unpleasant) shape a child's personality. A sense of security is a basic pre-requisite to all development including learning. Children desire a conducive environment at home. During early years, the social and emotional environment of home becomes a critical factor in influencing the individual's come of learning and development. Some of the basic strategies and styles of learning in fact begin to be moulded even before the child goes to a formal school. The informal learning endeavours that children engaged at home and in the surrounding community set the tone for their learning explorations in later life.

The behaviour which can impact the values of an individual can be inculcated by the following processes:

- ✓ Parents' use of induction,
- ✓ expression of nurturance and support,

- ✓ demand and limit setting,
- ✓ modeling of socio-moral behaviour, and
- ✓ Implementation of a democratic open family discussion and conflict resolution style are positively related to the "building blocks" of morality.

### Impact of culture

Culture is defined as a wide ranging set of activities that feature in all human societies. The word culture therefore may mean a set of ideas, beliefs, values, knowledge, behaviour, education of a particular society. UNESCO's Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity adopted in November 2001, defines culture as the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of a society or social group, that encompasses, in addition to art and literature, life styles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs. Culture leads to a state of perfection and refinement of the individual through social agencies like family, educational institutions and the community. Cultural attainments are thus not inborn but acquired over a period of time through socialization and learning. Therefore culture constitutes the spiritual, material, emotional, intellectual aspects of a society along with language, literature, arts, music, dance, values, beliefs, ideas, customs, traditions and the like.

Indian culture has many different parts; each is closely related with the other and has intricately woven values.

