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ETHICS

By: Kshyama Sagar Meher

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**Sample Preview
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QUESTION PAPER

(June – 2019)

(Solved)

ETHICS

Time: 3 hours]

[Maximum Marks: 100

Note: (i) Answer all the five questions.
(ii) All questions carry equal marks.

Q. 1. "We must act out of a sense of duty."
Explain the statement in the light of Kantian ethics.
Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 22, 'Immanuel Kant'.

Or

Give an account of the philosophical views on suicide.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-15, Page No. 93, 'Philosophical Views'.

Q. 2. Give a comparative account of the ethical views of Plato and Aristotle.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 9, 'Platonic Ethics' and Page No. 10, 'Aristotelean Ethics'.

Or

Discuss the norms for moral judgement.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-13, Page No. 78, 'Norm of Morality-Basic Understanding', 'Conscience As Subjective Norm of Morality' and Chapter-14, Page No. 85, 'Ethical or Moral Phenomenon' and Page No. 86, 'Reason and Morality'.

Q. 3. Answer the following questions:

(a) Define ethics. Examine its nature.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-1, Page No. 4, Q. No. 1 and Page No. 6, Q. No. 4.

(b) Examine the contributions of St. Augustine to moral philosophy.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-3, Page No. 19, Q. No. 2, 3, 4, Page No. 20, Q. No. 5 and Page No. 21, Q. No. 3.

(c) Explain briefly the practical Vedanta of Swami Vivekananda.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 56, 'Ethics of Swami Vivekananda'.

(d) Explain briefly, terrorism and social ethics.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 117, 'Terrorism and Social Ethics'.

Q. 4. Answer the following questions:

(a) What is Meta-ethics?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-5, Page No. 30, 'Meta-Ethics or Second Order Ethics'.

(b) Describe the moral dilemma involved in euthanasia.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-16, Page No. 98, 'The Dignity of Human Life is Internal, Not External' and Page No. 99, 'A Spiritual Response'.

(c) What do you understand by Hedonistic Calculus?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-4, Page No. 24, 'Hedonistic Calculus'.

(d) Describe the moral principles advocated by Amartya Sen.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-9, Page No. 59, 'Ethics of Amartya Sen'.

(e) Give a brief account of Buddhist ethics.

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-6, Page No. 39, 'Buddhism'.

(f) What are the major moral views advocated by Arya Samaj?

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-8, Page No. 52, 'Ethical Teachings of Swami Dayanand Saraswati and the Arya Samaj'.

Q. 5. Write short notes on the following:

(a) Epicurean Ethics

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-2, Page No. 13, Q. No. 2.

(b) Moral Dilemma

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-10, Page No. 66, 'Moral Dilemmas'.

(c) Naturalistic Fallacy

Ans. In philosophical ethics, the term naturalistic fallacy was introduced by British philosopher G. E. Moore in his 1903 book *Principia Ethica*. Moore argues it would be fallacious to explain that which is good reductively, in terms of natural properties such as pleasant or desirable.

Moore's naturalistic fallacy is closely related to the is-ought problem, which comes from David Hume's *A Treatise of Human Nature* (1738-40). However, unlike Hume's view of the is-ought problem, Moore (and other proponents of ethical non-naturalism) did not consider the naturalistic fallacy to be at odds with moral realism. The naturalistic fallacy should not be confused with the appeal to nature fallacy, which is exemplified by forms of reasoning such as "Something is natural; therefore, it is morally acceptable" or "This property is unnatural; therefore, this property is undesirable." Such inferences are common in discussions of medicine, sexuality, environmentalism, gender roles, race, and carnism.

(d) Brahmacharya

Ans. "Brahman" means "the divine" or "ultimate," "charya" means "the path." If you are on the path of the divine, you are a *brahmachari*. To be on the path of the divine means you have no personal agendas of your own. You simply do what is needed. You have no personal ways of deciding where you should go in your life, what you should do, or what you like and dislike; all these things are simply taken away from you. If you do this unwillingly, it can be an absolute torture. If you do it willingly, it makes your life so wonderful and beautiful because there is nothing to bother you anymore. You simply do what is needed; life is so simple. Once you have given yourself like that, you do not have to bother about the spiritual path or worry about your spirituality. It is taken care of. You do not have to really do anything about it.

(e) Virtue

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-11, Page No. 68, 'Meaning of Virtue'.

(f) Pragmatism

Ans. Pragmatism considers words and thought as tools and instruments for prediction, problem solving and action, and rejects the idea that the function of thought is to describe, represent, or mirror reality. Pragmatists contend that most philosophical topics — such as the nature of knowledge, language, concepts, meaning, belief, and science — are all best viewed in terms of their practical uses and successes. The philosophy of pragmatism "Emphasizes the practical application of ideas by acting on them to actually test them in human experiences". Pragmatism focuses on a "Changing universe rather than an unchanging one as the idealists, realists and Thomists had claimed".

(g) Rasa

Ans. It connotes a concept in Indian arts about the aesthetic flavour of any visual, literary or musical work that evokes an emotion or feeling in the reader or audience but cannot be described. It refers to the emotional flavours/essence crafted into the work by the writer and relished by a 'sensitive spectator' or *sah[daya]*, literally one who "has heart", and can connect to the work with emotion, without dryness.

Rasas are created by *bhavas*: the state of mind.

The rasa theory has a dedicated section in the Sanskrit text *Natya Shastra*, an ancient scripture from the 1st millennium BCE attributed to Bharata Muni. However, its most complete exposition in drama, songs and other performance arts is found in the works of the Kashmiri Shaivite philosopher Abhinavagupta (c. 1000 CE), demonstrating the persistence of a long-standing aesthetic tradition of ancient India. According to the Rasa theory of the *Natya Shastra*, entertainment is a desired effect of performance arts but not the primary goal, and the primary goal is to transport the individual in the audience into another parallel reality, full of wonder and bliss, where he experiences the essence of his own consciousness, and reflects on spiritual and moral questions.

(h) Swadharna

Ans. Ref.: See Chapter-7, Page No. 45, 'Concept of Swadharna'.



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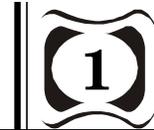
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ETHICS

PERSPECTIVES IN ETHICS: WESTERN

An Introduction to Ethics



INTRODUCTION

The term ethics has been derived from the Greek word 'Ethos', which means habit or custom. Ethics means a systematic study of human actions, whether they are right or wrong, as means for achieving the ultimate happiness. Ethics is understanding what is good and the way to get it and what is bad and how to avoid it. Ethics can also be defined as a system of moral principles. Ethics shows what is good for individuals and society and is described as moral philosophy. It is a normative/regulative science as it regulates and directs our life and gives the right orientation to our existence. Ethics is both theoretical and practical. In theory, it provides the basic principles on the basis of which individuals make moral judgements. In practical, it is concerned about an end to be gained and the means of achieving it. Ethics and morality are different. Ethics is the explicit philosophical reflection on moral beliefs and practices, while morality is the first-order beliefs and practices about good and evil by means of which people shape their behaviour. Ethics is not only a set of codes or used to restrict one's behaviour. It is used to help one to find what is good and how to get it?

CHAPTER AT A GLANCE

SCOPE OF ETHICS

In ethics, we deal with human actions which are different from actions of human. Human actions are carried out consciously, deliberately and in view of an end. Actions of human may not be done wilfully, voluntarily, consciously and deliberately. *For examples*, sleeping and walking.

HISTORY OF ETHICS

Before the people learned to use the written words, parents and elders must have passed down the first

ethical precepts by word of mouth. The first ethical beliefs must have been written down when the societies learned to use the written word.

Ethics has evolved as a discipline. In the Western Philosophy, ethics started in the fifth century B.C. with Socrates. He wanted to awaken people to the need for rational criticism of their beliefs and practices. He started searching for reasons for established modes of conduct. Looking for rational grounds for ethical judgements, he brought attention to the problem of tracing the logical link between values and facts and created ethical philosophy.

Plato's theory of forms first defended moral realism and offered an objective ground for moral truths. Plato developed a systematic view of nature, God and human from which ethical principles were derived. His ethical philosophy showed the way toward a vision of the good.

Aristotle was different in his method of inquiry and his conception of the role of ethical principles in human affairs. While Plato's ethics was religious and idealistic, Aristotle engendered the naturalistic tradition.

In his writings, *Eudemian Ethics*, the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Politics*, Aristotle developed the first systematic investigation into the foundations of ethics. Aristotle's account of the virtues is one of the first sustained inquiries in normative ethics. It was a mix of Greco-Roman thought, Judaism and elements of other Middle Eastern religions.

During the medieval period, Christian philosophers and theologians like Augustine and Thomas Aquinas dominated the ethical scenario. Philosophy and religion were closely related. Ethics became a mixture of the pursuit of earthly well-being with preparation of the soul for eternal salvation. Thomas Aquinas brought a reconciliation between Aristotelian science and philosophy with Augustinian theology. Aquinas proved

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the compatibility of Aristotelian naturalism with Christian dogma and constructing a unified view of nature, human and God.

The end of medieval period and the rise of modern age of industrial democracy led to a new wave of thinking in ethics. The development in science, commerce and industry, the Reformation, the rise of strong secular governments demanded new principles of individual conduct and social organization.

Francis Bacon, René Descartes, Thomas Hobbes, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Benedict de Spinoza, John Locke, David Hume, Immanuel Kant, John Stuart Mill and Friedrich Nietzsche were some of the modern philosophers who contributed to the great changes in ethical thinking.

Karl Marx and Sigmund Freud were two other great philosophers. The Utilitarianism, dominated by British and French Philosophy, was the most influential ethical thought during this period.

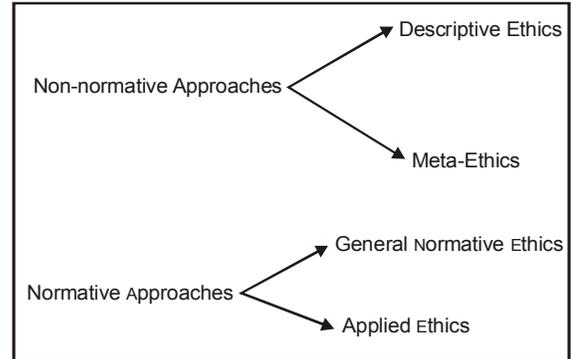
The contemporary European ethics covers a generous range of philosophies running from phenomenology to theories of communicative action. G.E. Moore's *Principia Ethica* (1903) is the starting point of contemporary ethical theory. Other prominent contemporary philosophers are Martin Buber, Gabriel Marcel, Emmanuel Levinas, Max Scheler, Franz Brentano and John Dewey.

METHODS OF ETHICS

Both the inductive method and deductive method are used in ethics. In deduction, knowledge is gained independently through pure logical reasoning. Deductive reasoning starts with a universal or general truth and leads to knowledge of a particular instance of it. The syllogism is the classical form of deductive reasoning. In this, a necessary conclusion is derived from two accepted premises: *For example*, All men are mortal, Arun is a man and therefore, Arun's is mortal. Induction is a process of arriving at knowledge through experience. In induction, the particular leads to the universal, a generalization. *For example*, if all ravens observed are black and if no raven has been encountered that is not black, the inferences to the conclusion that the next observed raven will be black or to the general conclusion that all ravens are black.

DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO THE STUDY OF ETHICS

There are four different approaches to the study of ethics. Diagrammatically, as Tom L. Beauchamp presents in his book *Philosophical Ethics: An Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, these approaches are:



In the non-normative approaches, morality is examined without judging what is morally right or wrong. In the normative approaches, judgements are made on the basis of what is morally right or wrong.

Descriptive ethics describe and try to explain the moral and ethical practices and beliefs of certain societies and cultures. In their studies and research, sociologists, anthropologists and historians simply describe the practices observed in the different groups or cultures, but do not make judgements about the morality of the practices and beliefs. Meta-ethics analyses the meanings of the central terms used in ethical reasoning and decision-making. It answer questions of meaning.

DIVISION OF ETHICS

Ethics can be divided into General Ethics and Special Ethics. General Ethics include the nature of moral activity, norm of morality, foundation of morality and end of morality. Special Ethics applies the principles of general ethics to the various actions of human activity.

On the basis of the ethical theories, philosophers divide them into three types: Meta-ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics.

Meta-ethics studies the origin and meaning of ethical concepts and analyses the underlying principles of ethical values.

Normative ethics make a conclusion about moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. It shows what can be stated as proper behaviour.

Applied ethics examines specific issues like abortion, infanticide, animal rights, environmental concerns, homosexuality and so on. Applied ethics uses meta-ethics and normative ethics to resolve these controversial issues.

The difference between meta-ethics, Normative ethics and applied ethics is often in distinct. For

example, the abortion issue is an applied ethical topic when it involves a specific type of controversial behaviour, but it is also an issue involving normative principles like the right of self-rule and the right to life and an issue having meta-ethical issues like understanding about the origin of rights and who have rights.

ETHICS AND OTHER SCIENCES

As a science, ethics is concerned with an end or ideal or standard. Most other sciences are concerned with certain standardisations of human experience—with the ways in which certain classes of objects like rocks

or plants are found to exist, or with the ways in which certain classes of events like phenomena of sound are found to happen.

Ethics is different from the natural sciences since it has a direct reference to an end that an individual desires to achieve. Ethics is also regarded as a practical science, but it is different from medicine, engineering or architecture as it is not directed towards the realization of a definite result. Ethics is considered as the fruit of all the sciences since it ultimately perfects human person.

Other Sciences		Ethics
Psychology	How a man behaves (a descriptive science)?	How a man MUST behave (a normative science).
Anthropology	Nature of human beings and its activity	How man’s actions OUGHT to be.
Social and Political Sciences	Deals with the organization of man’s social and political life	How man’s social and political life MUST or OUGHT TO BE organized in order to be moral?
Economics	Concerned with goods i.e., with those objects which are the means of satisfying human wants	Deals with those ACTS which are the conditions of the attainment of the highest end of life.

ETHICS AND RELIGION

Ethics is not linked with any religion, but it is perceived that without God or religion, ethics would have no point. Therefore, God or religion and ethics are related. Ethics exists in all human societies which means ethics is a natural phenomenon that arises in the course of the evolution of human beings who have the capacity to recognize each other and to remember the past.

Marx and Nietzsche considered religion as a profound source of social conformity. They saw religion as a means of maintaining the *status quo* and keeping people confined to their existing social and economic positions. Yet religion may be considered as a liberating force in individual’s lives and an important factor for social change.

IMPORTANCE OF STUDYING ETHICS

There are various issues affecting human life. Terrorism, civil wars, industrial pollution, misleading advertising, deceptive labelling, unfair wages, crime syndicates, forced prostitution, highjacking, match-fixing and illegal gambling have been prevailing all over the world. There is hardly a few areas in life remain

untouched by growing demoralization. We should study because of the following reasons:

First, the study of ethics helps a person to look at his own life and to evaluate his actions/choices/decisions and helps him in knowing what is good for him.

Second, the study of ethics can help us think better about morality and clarify our moral positions when we make judgements. As we face various situations in our day to day life, it improves our perspective and our thinking about specific moral issues.

Third, the study of ethics can sharpen our general thinking processes and trains our mind to think logically and reasonably and to handle moral issues with greater clarity.

WHY BE MORAL?

By nature human being tend to be good— *summum bonum*. Everyone wants what is best for him. The ethical principles and moral practices help us attain what is best. It helps an individual to perfect himself as amoral being. Morality is a deep down desire in every person and is something to do with the very nature of human being. The rational nature of human person

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makes him aware of certain fundamental principles of logical and moral reasoning. Thus, both the subjective and objective aspects of a person prompt to base himself on certain common principles.

The functioning of the society needs certain rules and regulations. The institutions designed to make life easier and better for human kind cannot function without certain moral principles. Morality is like nutrition. Nutrition improves our physical health, while morality shapes our moral health. It helps us determine what will nourish our moral life and what will poison it. It seeks to enhance our lives, to help us to live better lives.

CHECK YOUR PROGRESS

Q.1. Define ethics.

Ans. Ethics is a systematic study of human actions, whether they are right or wrong, as means for achieving the ultimate happiness. Ethics means understanding what is good and the way to get it and what is bad and how to avoid it. Ethics can also be defined as a system of moral principles. Ethics shows what is good for individuals and society and is described as moral philosophy. It is a normative/regulative science as it regulates and directs our life and gives the right orientation to our existence.

Q. 2. Briefly describe development of ethics in ancient Greece.

Ans. In the Western Philosophy, ethics started in the fifth century B.C. with Socrates. He wanted that people should be aware about the need for rational criticism of their beliefs and practices. He started searching for reasons for established modes of conduct. Looking for rational grounds for ethical judgements, he brought attention to the problem of tracing the logical link between values and facts and created ethical philosophy.

In the theory of forms, Plato defended moral realism and offered an objective ground for moral truths. Plato developed a systematic view of nature, God and human from which ethical principles were derived. His ethical philosophy showed the way towards a vision of the good.

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inquiries in normative ethics. It was a mix of Greco-Roman thought, Judaism and elements of other Middle Eastern religions.

Q. 3. What are the methods used in ethics?

Ans. Inductive and deductive methods are used in ethics. Inductive method is a process by which a person makes a generalization based on specific, individual experiences. The process begins with observation. A person collects data through the five senses, then analyzes the gathered information to draw a general conclusion that may be applied to other situations.

Deductive method is essentially the opposite of inductive. Deductive method begins with a generalization as part of its premise to draw a conclusion about a specific and individual instance. The generalization applied is usually a stated law or theory—something that has not yet been proven untrue.

Q. 4. What are the main divisions of ethics?

Ans. Ethics can be classified as General Ethics and Special Ethics. General Ethics include the nature of moral activity, norm of morality, foundation of morality and end of morality. Special ethics applies the principles of general ethics to the various actions of human activity.

On the basis of the ethical theories, ethics are of three types: Meta-ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics. Meta-ethics deals with the origin and meaning of ethical concepts and analyses the underlying principles of ethical values. Normative ethics explains moral standards that regulate right and wrong conduct. It shows what can be stated as proper behaviour. Applied ethics examines specific issues like abortion, infanticide, animal rights, environmental concerns, homosexuality and so on. Applied ethics uses meta-ethics and normative ethics to resolve these controversial issues.

Q. 5. How is ethics related to religion?

Ans. Ethics is not related to any particular religion, but it is perceived that ethics would have no point without God or religion. Therefore, God or religion in general and ethics are related. Ethics exists in all human societies which means ethics is a natural phenomenon that arises in the course of the evolution of human beings who have the capacity to recognize each other and to remember the past. Marx and Nietzsche considered religion as a profound source of social conformity. They saw religion as a means of maintaining the *status quo* and keeping people confined to their existing social and economic positions.