Ethics is a branch of philosophy that systematizes, defends, and recommends concepts of right and wrong behavior. On the other hand, Morality is a body of standards or principles derived from a code of conduct from a particular philosophy, religion, or culture, or it can be derived from a standard or ideal on which a person believes.

**Ethics**
- The word 'Ethics' originated from the Greek word *ethos* which means "character".
- Ethics is governed by legal guidelines and professional rules. The acceptability of ethics is confined within a particular space and time frame.
- Ethics are dependent on the prism of others. It can't be absolute. It is flexible with situations.
- Ethics are followed because society has decided that it is the right course of action.
- A person who follows the ethical principles need not necessarily have strong moral values, in fact, there are even possibilities that he may not have any morals.
- Ethics is something usually associated in the field of law, medicine or business. Ethics does not have a religious connotation.

**Morality**
- The word 'Morals' originated from the Latin word *Mos* which means "custom".
- Morality is seen from the perspective of an individual.
- Change in Morality depends on the change in the beliefs of an individual.
- When it comes to the acceptability of Morality it transcends the norms laid down by culture.
- Morality is followed because a person believes that it is the right course of action.
- There could be situations where ethics are violated by a moral person in order to maintain or uphold his moral values.
- Morality has a religious connotation.

**Main differences**
- Ethics focuses on the decision-making process for determining right and wrong depending upon the code of conduct whereas Morality is a code of behavior usually based on religious tenets.
- Morals come from within i.e. one’s own internal compass. On the other hand, Ethics are more extrinsic rule sets to guide us all.
- Ethics is a set of principles developed purposefully over time whereas Morality is something one feels intuitively.
• Ethics contains standards of what should be. What we “ought” to do. Morality is more of what we do – how we actually behave – focused on what “is” etc.

1. NORMATIVE ETHICS
   The four main branches of ethics include descriptive ethics, normative ethics, meta-ethics and applied ethics.

**Normative Ethics**

- Normative Ethics deals with “norms” or set of considerations i.e. how one should act.
- Thus, it’s a study of “ethical action” and sets out the rightness or wrongness of the actions.
- It is also called prescriptive ethics because it rests on the principles which determine whether an action is right or wrong.
- The Golden rule of normative ethics is “doing to others as we want them to do to us”.
  - Since we don’t want our neighbours to throw stones through our glass window, then it will not be wise to first throw stone through a neighbour’s window.
- Based on this reasoning, anything such as harassing, victimising, abusing or assaulting someone is wrong.
- Normative ethics also provides justification for punishing a person who disturbs social and moral order.
- Aristotle’s virtue ethics, Kant’s deontological ethics, Mill’s consequentialism (Utilitarianism) and the Bhaagwad Gita’s Nishkam Karma yoga are some of the theories in Normative Ethics.
  - **Virtue ethics**
    - Virtue ethics focuses on one’s character and the virtues for determining or evaluating ethical behaviour.
    - Plato, Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas were major advocates of Virtue ethics.
      - Plato gave a scheme of four cardinal virtues viz. prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude (courage).
      - His disciple Aristotle categorized the virtues as moral and intellectual.
      - He identified some of the moral virtues including “wisdom”.
  - **Deontological ethics**
    - Deontological ethics or duty ethics focuses on the rightness and wrongness of the actions rather than the consequences of those actions.
    - There are different deontological theories such as categorical imperative, moral absolutism, divine command theory etc.
    - First famous deontological theory is Immanuel Kant’s Categorical Imperative or Kantianism.
      - Kant said that the human beings occupy special place in creation and there is an ultimate commandment from which all duties and obligations derive.
The moral rules, as per Kant, should follow two principles viz. universality and principle of reciprocity.

- By universality, he meant that a moral action must be possible to apply it to all people.
- By principle of reciprocity, he meant said “do as you would be done by.

Such premise of morality is found in all religious systems, including Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Judaism, Buddhism etc.

Second famous deontological theory is Moral absolutism.

- It believes that there are absolute standards against which moral questions can be judged.
- Against these standards, certain actions are right while others are wrong regardless of the context of the act.
- For example, theft is wrong, regardless of context in which theft was carried out.
- It ignores that sometimes wrong act is done to reach out to right consequence

Third deontological theory is Divine command theory.

- It says that an action is right if God has decreed it to be right.
- As per this theory, the rightness of any action depends upon that action being performed because it is a duty, not because of any good consequences arising from that action.

Consequentialism (Teleology)

- Consequentialism or teleological ethics says that the morality of an action is contingent with the outcome of that action.
- So, the morally right action would produce good outcome while morally wrong action would produce bad outcomes.
- Based on the outcome, there are several theories such as Utilitarianism {right action leads to most happiness of greatest number of people}, Hedonism {anything that maximizes pleasure is right}, Egoism {anything that maximizes the good for self is right}, Asceticism {abstinence from egoistic pleasures to achieve spiritual goals is right action}, Altruism {to live for others and not caring for self is right action}.

- The core idea of consequentialism is that “the ends justify the means”. An action that might not be right in the light of moral absolutism may be a right action under teleology.

2. INTEGRITY

**Introduction:**

Integrity is a concept of consistency of actions, values, methods, measures, principles, expectations, and outcomes. In ethics, integrity is regarded as the honesty and truthfulness or accuracy of one’s actions.
Integrity is a personal choice where an individual stands on his morals and ethics, spiritual and artistic values and principles with uncompromising and consistent commitment. Integrity compels us to be socially conscious and to welcome both personal and professional responsibility. Integrity requires self-discipline and will-power to resist temptation. The reward it offers then is peace of mind and true dignity.

Development of Integrity:
It is a fact that we are not born with integrity. How well it is ingrained into our character depends upon the healthy development of certain key personality traits, especially during the critical stages of early childhood. How well we maintain personal integrity once it develops depends thereafter on the strength of our values and the moral choice we make.

Integrity in Civil Services:
Public service is a ‘vocation’ and only on this foundation upon which a moral and responsible government can be based. The civil servants need to be pillars with absolute integrity because only then they will take the civil service as a ‘vocation’. It strengthens the sense of mission which a civil servant is supposed to undertake to serve the public; perform duties and fulfill obligations.

A similar doctrine of vocation was enunciated several thousand years ago by Lord Krishna in Bhagwad Gita. It has been mentioned there, that "Securing" universal welfare by one’s action is the ultimate measure of a human being but more so of those who hold public office”.

Civil servants have to set highest standards of integrity and morality. This requires self-sacrifice; a concept that rises above individualism and ‘hedonism’ to create an environment of public duty among the civil servants. An exemplary civil servant is not simply one who obeys the laws and behaves within the confines of law but is also one who strives for a moral government.

Integrity requires a civil servant to incorporate the values of honesty, sympathy, empathy, compassion, fairness, self-control and duty so that a civil servant will be able to uphold high personal and professional standards in all circumstances.

- ‘Honesty’ requires ‘truthfulness’, freedom from deception and fraud, fair and straightforward conduct.
- Sympathy enables a person to be deeply affected and concerned about the well beings of others, to imagine their suffering and be moved by their experience of others especially people who need assistance compassion is a form of spirituality, a way of living and walking through life.

‘Civil Service Conduct Rules’ recommends ‘absolute integrity’ for civil servants, whether they are IAS, IPS, IFS, IRS, etc. Also, every civil servant is supposed to take all possible steps to ensure the integrity of all government servants for the time being under his/her control and not only be honest but should also have the reputation of being so.

Honesty and faithful discharge of duty, promptness and courtesy, observance of government policies, general good conduct strengthen ‘integrity’ in civil services.
3. HONESTY V/S PROBITY

**PROBITY:**
Probity is the quality of having strong knowledge of moral principle and integrity (in personal or public relations). It includes honesty and decency of a person or organisation in applying their moral principles in personal and public life. Probity represents the maximalist approach to life in which a person adheres to the best principles and ideals rather than simply avoiding corrupt or dishonest practices in personal and public relations.

**PHILOSOPHICAL BASIS OF PROBITY IN GOVERNANCE:**

- The philosophical basis of good governance that is probity in governance started with epics like Ramayana, a model of ideal good governance.
- Kautilya in his Arthashastra quoted traits of a king and ways to stop corruption. He also wrote about disciplinary proceedings against corrupt officials.
- Aristotle, for him good governance and political stability are vital components of a state and morality is the basic foundation of political attitudes. Possession of virtues like justice, charity, generosity for the benefit of society.
- Thomas Hobbes linked concepts of ethics with rationality and objectivity in a state.
- Immanuel Kant states the concept of duty central to morality.
- Utilitarian principle, the greatest good to greatest number of people.

**Probity in Governance:**
Probity in governance is defined as having strong ethical and moral values in the process of governance. Probity is the evidence of ethical behaviour in a particular process. For Government employees and agencies, maintaining probity involves more than simply avoiding corrupt or dishonest conduct. It involves applying public sector values such as impartiality, accountability and transparency. Probity in governance is an essential and vital requirement for an efficient and effective system of governance and for sustainable development. It incorporates:

- Rule of law
- Equity and inclusiveness
- Consensus orientation (persuasion)
- Participation
- Transparency
- Accountability
- Responsibility
- Selflessness
- Justice

**HONESTY**
Honesty is a facet of moral character that connotes positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, straightforwardness, including straightforwardness of conduct, along with the absence of lying, cheating, theft, etc.

- Honesty also involves being trustworthy, loyal, fair, and sincere.
- Honesty is valued in many ethnic and religious cultures.

Honesty as a policy always comes with a price.
The path of honesty, like dharma, is straight yet seldom simple. The honest, however, go on regardless, perhaps driven by an inner force that borders on recklessness.

**Importance of Honesty in Civil Services**

- Trust Building & Credibility – This will help the civil servant gain trust and build confidence among other colleagues and senior officials. Also, honest Officers are liked by the people
- A True leader can set a good example for the ones following him or her. If the predecessor is trustworthy and reputed, the followers would also move on the same path
- It is easier for an honest leader to face the challenges in front of them as they can courageously deal with them
- If the civil servant himself is honest, he/she can take good and bold decisions, without the fear of getting caught themselves
- An honest leader shall have an honest and impactful result on the lives of the people
- A civil servant who is honest will fulfil their responsibility faithfully and as per law and in terms with national integrity

4. **RESPONSIBILITY V/S ACCOUNTABILITY**

**Accountability:**
Accountability means to take ownership of the outcomes of an action and address the issues arising out of it fairly and promptly.

- Accountability is one of the main pillars of good governance.
- An office which is accountable demonstrates commitment and sincerity to duty and is focused on achieving outcomes despite setbacks.
- It maintains a strong focus on the priorities and swiftly responds to changing requirements.

**Responsibility:**
Responsibility refers to “a sphere of duty or obligation assigned to a person by the nature of that person’s position, function or work.”
A responsible person may be seen as one whose job involves a predetermined set of obligations that need to be met in order for the job to be accomplished.

According to Aristotle, moral responsibility was viewed as originating with the moral agent as decision-maker, and grew out of an ability to reason, an awareness of action and consequences, and a willingness to act free from external compulsion.
**Difference between Accountability and Responsibility:**

- Responsibility refers to being in-charge of certain duties which are expected to be performed by virtue of being in a certain position. Accountability is one step ahead. It includes answerability, i.e. being liable for the outcomes achieved due to performance of the duty. Therefore, accountability can be held on to a person only after the task is done.
  - An example would be: A judge is responsible for delivering a judgment, but is not accountable if the outcomes are not as expected.
  - A DM is both responsible as well as accountable for ensuring compliance with RTE in her district.

- In individualistic terms, responsibility can also refer to what one expects of oneself or the others. To be morally responsible for something, is to be worthy of particular kind of reaction, such as praise or blame in pursuance of the act.
  - For e.g. helping a destitute is a responsibility of the affluent and empathetic. However, they cannot be held accountable for not helping them. They can be condemned, if one wishes so.

- Also, responsibility can be delegated but accountability cannot be.

5. **APTITUDE**

It can be defined as the natural or inherent talent to acquire a certain skill or ability in the future through appropriate training. Aptitude can be both mental as well as physical.

The word is derived from the Latin Word "Aptus" meaning fitness or adeptness.

While intelligence is the ability of an individual to gain knowledge and understand cumbersome situations, aptitude can be defined as the capacity to apply the same knowledge.

- For example, a person may be intelligent enough to gain knowledge about military, navy, and air force or defense related matters; but may not possess an aptitude to practice the same effectively in his/her real life.

Aptitude reflects specialized abilities and personal strengths & weaknesses. Aptitudes are natural talents, special abilities for doing, or learning to do, certain kinds of things easily and quickly.

- They have little to do with knowledge or culture, or education, or even interests. They have to do with heredity. Musical talent and artistic talent are examples of such aptitudes.

**Types of Aptitude:**

- Civil service aptitude
- Intellectual aptitude
- Moral aptitude
- Emotional aptitude
Aptitude in a Civil Servant:
An administrator needs to have such desired aptitude in a civil servant, which include:

- Good communication/interpersonal skills
- Leadership, management and organizational skills
- Critical thinking and listening ability
- Skill to effectively manage and raise resources
- Ability to establish collaborative networks and successful teamwork
- High level of professionalism
- Ability to think on their feet and develop innovative solutions
- Skill of persuasion and ability to negotiate with difficult people

Sources

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