

LECTURE NOTES

ON

HUMAN VALUES AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

UNIT - I

UNIT-1

VARIETY OF MORAL ISSUES

1.1 INTRODUCTION:

Values form the basis for all our thoughts, behaviors and actions. Once we know what is valuable to us, these values becomes the basis, the anchor for our actions. We also need to understand the universality of various human values, because only then we can have a definite and common program for value education. Then only we can be assured of a happy and harmonious human society.

Morals

Morals are the welfare principles enunciated by the wise people, based on their experience and wisdom. They were edited, changed or modified or evolved to suit the geography of the region, rulers (dynasty), and in accordance with development of knowledge in science and technology and with time.

Morality is concerned with principles and practices of morals such as:

- a) What ought or ought not to be done in a given situation?
- b) What is right or wrong about the handling of a situation? And
- c) What is good or bad about the people, policies, and ideals involved?

VALUES

A value is defined as a principle that promotes well-being or prevents harm.” Another definition is: Values are our guidelines for our success—our paradigm about what is acceptable.” **Evolution of Human Values:**

The human values evolve because of the following factors:

1. The impact of norms of the society on the fulfillment of the individual’s needs or desires.
2. Developed or modified by one’s own awareness, choice, and judgment in fulfilling the needs.
3. by the teachings and practice of Preceptors (Gurus) or Saviors or religious leaders.
4. Fostered or modified by social leaders, rulers of kingdom, and by law (government)

Professional ethics

Profession is a commitment to a designated and organized occupation by virtue of being an authority over a body of knowledge with requisite skills acquired through specialized training.

An occupation becomes a profession when a group of people sharing the same occupation work together in a morally acceptable way with members setting and following a certain ethics code. A professional is a practitioner belonging to a specific profession.

Professional ethics, as opposed to personal values and morality, is a set of ethical standards and values a practicing engineer is required to follow. It sets the standards for professional practice, and is only learned in a professional school or while practicing one’s own profession. Today, it is an essential part of professional education because it helps students deal with issues they will face.

1.2 OBJECTIVES (WHY PROFESSIONAL ETHICS?)

The objectives of this course on ‘Professional Ethics and Human Values’ are:

- (a) To understand the moral values that ought to guide the profession,
- (b) Resolve the moral issues in the profession, and
- (c) Justify the moral judgment concerning the profession.

It is intended to develop a set of beliefs, attitudes, and habits that engineers should display concerning morality.

The prime objective is to increase one's ability to deal effectively with moral complexity in managerial practice.

Alternatively, the objectives of the study on Professional Ethics may be listed as:

(A) Improvement of the cognitive skills (skills of the intellect in thinking clearly)

1. Moral awareness (proficiency in recognizing moral problems)
2. Cogent moral reasoning (comprehending, assessing different views)
3. Moral coherence (forming consistent viewpoints based on facts)
4. Moral imagination (searching beyond obvious the alternative responses to issues and being receptive to creative solutions)
5. Moral communication, to express and support one's views to others.

(B) To act in morally desirable ways, towards moral commitment and responsible conduct

6. Moral reasonableness i.e., willing and able to be morally responsible.
7. Respect for persons, which means showing concern for the well-being of others, besides oneself.
8. Tolerance of diversity i.e., respect for ethnic and religious differences, and acceptance of reasonable differences in moral perspectives.
9. Moral hope i.e., believes in using rational dialogue for resolving moral conflicts.
10. Integrity, which means moral integrity, and integrating one's professional life and personal convictions.

1.3 VARIETY OF MORAL ISSUES

It would be relevant to know why and how do moral issues (problems) arise in a profession or why do people behave unethically? The reasons for people including the employer and employees, behaving unethically may be classified into three categories:

1. **Resource Crunch:** Due to pressure, through time limits, availability of money or budgetary constraints, and technology decay or obsolescence. Pressure from the government to complete the project in time (e.g., before the elections), reduction in the budget because of sudden war or natural calamity (e.g., Tsunami) and obsolescence due technology innovation by the competitor lead to manipulation and unsafe and unethical execution of projects. Involving individuals in the development of goals and

values and developing policies that allow for individual diversity, dissent, and input to decision-making will prevent unethical results.

2. Opportunity:

- (a) Double standards or behavior of the employers towards the employees and the public. The unethical behaviors of World Com (in USA), Enron (in USA as well as India) executives in 2002 resulted in bankruptcy for those companies,
- (b) Management projecting their own interests more than that of their employees. Some organizations over-emphasize short-term gains and results at the expense of themselves and others,
- (c) Emphasis on results and gains at the expense of the employees, and
- (d) Management by objectives, without focus on empowerment and improvement of the infrastructure.

This is best encountered by developing policies that allow ‘conscience keepers’ and whistle blowers and appointing ombudsman, who can work confidentially with people to solve the unethical problems internally.

3. Attitude:

Poor attitude of the employees set in due to

- (a) Low morale of the employees because of dissatisfaction and downsizing,
- (b) Absence of grievance redressal mechanism,
- (c) Lack of promotion or career development policies or denied promotions,
- (d) Lack of transparency,
- (e) Absence of recognition and reward system, and (f) Poor working environments.

Giving ethics training for all, recognizing ethical conduct in work place, including ethics in performance appraisal, and encouraging open discussion on ethical issues, are some of the directions to promote positive attitudes among the employees.

To get firm and positive effect, ethical standards must be set and adopted by the senior management, with input from all personnel.

Professional Codes of Ethics

A code of ethics prescribes how professionals are to pursue their common ideal so that each may do the best at a minimal cost to oneself and those they care about. The code is to protect each professional from certain pressures (for example, the pressure to cut corners to save money) by making it reasonably likely (and more likely than otherwise) that most other members of the profession will not take

advantage. A code is a solution to a coordination problem. A professional has obligations to the employer, to customers, to other professionals- colleagues with specific expectations of reciprocity.

1.4 UNDERSTANDING THE HARMONY IN SOCIETY

SOCIETY:

Society or human society is the set of relations among people. Society or human society is the set of relations among people, including their social status and roles. By extension, society denotes the people of a region or country, sometime even the world, taken as a whole.

Used in the sense of an association, a society is a body of individuals outlined by the bounds of functional interdependence, possibly comprising characteristics such as national or cultural identity, social solidarity, language or hierarchical organization. Human societies are characterized by patterns of relationships between individuals sharing a distinctive culture and institutions. Like other communities or groups, a society allows its members to achieve needs or wishes they could not fulfill alone.

The world society may also refer to an organized voluntary association of people for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic, or other purpose. Today the term society is currently used to cover both a number of political and scientific connotations as well as a variety of associations.

1.4.1 SOCIETY BEING AN EXTENSION OF FAMILY:

Extended relationship from family to society

As we begin to understand our relationship in the family and live harmoniously in these relationships, we become aware of our relatedness to all human beings. Family is the first place to understand our relationships, recognizing the feelings in these relationships live according to these feelings and attain mutual happiness. Our natural acceptance is to feel related to everyone. We can easily explore this within ourselves. We find that in reality we do not only want ourselves to be happy but also want to make other happy.

Our competence might be limited at the moment and we might feel we are unable to do so but we spontaneously accept that we wish for their happiness as well, along with ours; this is our intention. We expect the same from the other. We feel relaxed when we

are with people who feel related to us and we enjoy a feeling of assurance and trust when we live in this social web.

Harmony in the family is the building block for harmony in the society. Harmony in society leads to an undivided society when we feel related with each and every human being. Our natural acceptance, however, is for relatedness with all and we can very naturally extend into the world Family. This is the basis of an undivided society (akhand samaja), a feeling of relatedness with all. As we begin to understand and become aware of the harmony at this level in our living, **Identification of the comprehensive human goal**

In order to facilitate the fulfillment of the basic aspirations of all human beings in the society, the following comprehensive human goal needs to be understood.

1. Right understanding is necessary for the human beings, for all human beings. When one does not have the right understanding one remains disturbed and also acts in a manner so as to create disharmony with other human being as well as with rest of nature.
2. Prosperity is needed in every family. Prosperity in the family means that the family is able to identify its needs and is able to produce/ achieve more than its requirements.
3. Fearlessness/Trust in society means every member of society feels related to everyone else and therefore there is trust and fearlessness.
4. Co-existence in nature means there is a relationship and complementarity among all the entities in nature including human beings.

This is the comprehensive human goal. With little exploration, we find that all four are required for human society. We are not satisfied with anything less than this. This is the basic minimum requirement to ensure sustainable happiness and prosperity. We can't cut down any of them. This is the minimum level that each one of us wants, and also the maximum we can think of. We can't think of anything more than this. This is the target for each one of us, the whole human race and the human tradition. The moment we leave anyone of them out, there will be loss of continuity, and the goal cannot be achieved.

Samadhan

We can solve society's problems when we see beyond the contradictions of life. When we live in a higher consciousness, we obtain the higher knowledge that sees the higher harmonies which enable the resolution of every problem.

Samridhi (Prosperity)

Prosperity is the state of flourishing, thriving, success, or good fortune. Prosperity often encompasses wealth but also includes other factors which are independent of wealth to varying degrees, such as happiness and health.

Abhay

Man is eager to live and afraid to die. Most problems owe themselves to this fact. The fear of death might be reckoned as a prime fear but the most primeval and basic fear is that of expectation being defeated, or more specifically, that of losing what one delusively thinks one owns (the delusion "this is mine"). Fear of losing what one is attached to (the family, for example) gives birth to the fear of death and therefore the former is the most basic fear because one is attached to the body and is afraid to lose it. Fear resides within and not outside us. External fear is mere fiction. If we succeed in cultivating fearlessness no incident, no external circumstances can strike fear in us.

Abhay is not associated with bhaya and nirbhaya, at all. Abhaya means fearlessness; it is a permanent state where there is no question of ever experiencing any fear.

Fear is only a delusion created by the mind; lack of fear is also a delusion created by the mind. Mistaking one thing for another leads to fear; recognizing the mistake and rectifying it, leads to the removal of fear. These two, Bhaya and Nirbhaya, are associated with fear and the freedom from fear.

Factors for fear:

There are many factors which can make a person develop fear.

1. Ignorance and distorted perception of the world.
2. Fear of the unknown is the most common factor.
3. Fear of the past is due to guilty feelings attached to our past actions.
4. Fear of the future is insecurity.
5. Death is another major cause of fear for many people. **Steps to attain abhaya**

1. Fear can be overcome when we enquire into the nature of its cause objectively and the causative factors are resolved.

2. Fear of the past can be overcome if we take responsibility for our actions and stop doing things which will add to our guilt later.
3. Insecurity can be overcome if we accept our limitations and perceive the wonderful cosmic order as a humble spectator.

Co-existence

The world is full of Diversity – there are different nations, cultures, religions, communities, languages, and beliefs. The beauty of existence can only be maximized if everything in this world is in harmony. Peaceful, symbiotic co-existence is the key to harmony in the world. For peaceful co-existence to occur in a diverse society the following must happen:

1. People must recognize that traditional interpretations of peaceful co-existence are outdated,
2. Governments and individuals must recognize that society needn't be homogeneous or institutionalized to serve an important purpose for people,
3. Members of varying cultures, countries and faiths must learn to respect the traditions, beliefs and boundaries of one another,
4. Religion and politics must be separate and
5. People must agree to disagree regarding certain moral values and beliefs and come to recognize that others can be different from them and yet be equally capable in their own unique manner.

We may also understand it in the following sequence

Right understanding → Prosperity → Fearlessness (trust) → Co-existence

Programs needed to achieve the comprehensive human goal: the five dimensions of human endeavour

The five dimensions of human endeavour are:

1. Education – Right Living (Siksha – Sanskar)
2. Health – Self Regulation (Svasthya – Sanyam)
3. Justice – Preservation (Nyaya – Suraksha)
4. Production – Work (Utpadan – Kriya)
5. Exchange – Storage (Vinimaya – Kosh)

We can now see how these five dimensions of humanistic society are able to ensure the human goal:

Education – Right living leads to Right understanding

Having the process of education and right living leads to right understanding in the individual.

Health – Self-regulation leads to Prosperity

Having the program for health and sanyam leads to well being of the body, and identification of need for physical facilities which along with production ensures feeling of prosperity in the family.

Justice – Preservation leads to Fearlessness and Co-existence

Ensuring justice in relationship, or mutual fulfilment in relationship on the basis of values like Trust, Respect, etc leads to fearlessness in society, while Suraksha of nature – via enrichment, protection and right utilization leads to co-existence in nature. **Production –**

Work leads to Prosperity and Co-existence

Production and work are for physical facilities, and this leads to a feeling of prosperity in the family. Production is done in harmony with nature, and hence, this also leads to co-existence with nature.

Exchange – Storage leads to Prosperity and Fearlessness

When we store and exchange for mutual fulfilment and not for exploitation, then it leads to fearlessness (trust) in society.

1.5 INTEGRITY:

Integrity is defined as the unity of thought, word and deed (honesty) and open mindedness. It includes the capacity to communicate the factual information so that others can make wellinformed decisions. It yields the person's 'peace of mind', and hence adds strength and consistency in character, decisions, and actions. This paves way to one's success.

It is one of the self-direction virtues. It enthuse people not only to execute a job well but to achieve excellence in performance. It helps them to own the responsibility and earn self-respect and recognition by doing the job. Moral integrity is defined as a virtue, which reflects a consistency of one's attitudes, emotions, and conduct in relation to justified moral values.

Integrity comes in many forms, but honesty and dependability are two traits that are expected in most workplace situations. Without responsible behavior, distrust can make a work environment tense and uncomfortable. A strong work ethic shows co-workers and clients that you're reliable and take your responsibilities seriously. Polite

communication, respectable behavior and fiscal responsibility also help you stand out as a trustworthy employee.

Examples of integrity at workplace:

(i) Work When You're on the Clock

Working diligently when you're on the clock is a clear example of workplace integrity. Socializing, surfing the Internet, making personal phone calls, texting and frequent snacking are activities that detract from work time. Saving those activities for break time will show your boss, co-workers and customers that you work hard when you're on the clock. The career website Calibrate Coaching recommends honoring your work hours by not stealing time from your employer. Even if you don't actually clock in and out with a time card, focusing on your work responsibilities while you're at your desk, work station or production area will showcase your strong work habits.

(ii) Follow Company Policies

Abiding by company policies is a powerful way to demonstrate integrity. Cutting corners and neglecting to follow workplace regulations can lead to mistakes, problems and even dangerous situations. Your willingness to properly record financial transactions, safely dispense of hazardous or toxic materials, follow company protocol for dealing with clients, perform clean-up or set-up procedures and properly maintain equipment shows others that you're not just looking for the easy way out. Establishing yourself as a trustworthy worker who submits to company policies shows your boss and co-workers that you'll faithfully carry out your duties.

(iii) Respect Co-workers and Build Trust

Respecting those you work with reveals your desire to create a healthy work environment. Polite communication, appropriate interactions and respect for co-workers' thoughts and ideas demonstrate your ability to look beyond your own interests to pursue team-centered work goals. As you deal with co-workers honestly and respectfully, you establish a level of trust with them. According to Amy Rees Anderson, a contributor to Forbes magazine,

those who trust you will spread the word of that trust to their associates, and word of your character will spread like wildfire.

(iv) Exhibit Responsible Behavior

Integrity in the workplace often stems from moral and ethical behavior. Making sure there's no reason to question your conduct is one of the best ways to prove that you are an honest and dependable employee. Avoid using company products or equipment for personal use and submit exact receipts for travel or meal reimbursements. Don't over-promise what you can't provide and strive to meet deadlines. Work productively and cooperate during company meetings so you don't appear lazy or apathetic, and don't call in sick if you aren't. By exhibiting responsible behavior, you don't give co-workers or clients the opportunity to question your integrity.

1.6 COURAGE:

Courage is the tendency to accept and face risks and difficult tasks in rational ways.

Selfconfidence is the basic requirement to nurture courage.

Courage is classified into three types, based on the types of risks, namely

(a) Physical
courage,
Social courage, and

(b)

(c) Intellectual courage.

(a) **Physical courage:** In physical courage, the thrust is on the adequacy of the physical strength, including the muscle power and armaments. People with high adrenalin, may be prepared to face challenges for the mere 'thrill' or driven by a decision to 'excel'.

(b) **Social courage:** The social courage involves the decisions and actions to change the order, based on the conviction for or against certain social behaviors. This requires leadership abilities, including empathy and sacrifice, to mobilize and motivate the followers, for the social cause.

(c) **Intellectual courage:** The intellectual courage is inculcated in people through acquired knowledge, experience, games, tactics, education, and training.

In professional ethics, courage is applicable to the employers, employees, public, and the press.

One should perform Strengths, Weakness, Opportunities, and Threat (SWOT) analysis. Calculate

(estimate) the risks, compare with one's strengths, and anticipate the end results, while taking decisions and before getting into action.

Learning from the past helps. Past experience (one's own or borrowed!) and wisdom gained from self-study or others will prepare one to plan and act with self-confidence, succeed in achieving the desired ethical goals through ethical means. Opportunities and threat existing and likely to exist in future are also to be studied and measures to be planned. This anticipatory management will help anyone to face the future with courage.

Expression of courage:

Facing the criticism, owning responsibility, and accepting the mistakes or errors when committed and exposed are the expressions of courage. In fact, this sets their mind to be vigilant against the past mistakes, and creative in finding the alternate means to achieve the desired objectives.

Prof. Sathish Dhawan, Chief of ISRO, was reported to have exhibited his courage and owned responsibility, when the previous space mission failed, but credited Prof. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam (now our revered President), when the subsequent mission succeeded.

The courageous people own and have shown the following characteristics, in their professions:

- (a) Perseverance (sustained hard work),
- (b) Experimentation (preparedness to face the challenges, that is, unexpected or unintended results),
- © Involvement (attitude, clear and firm resolve to act), and
- (d) Commitment (willing to get into action and to reach the desired goals by any alternative but ethical means).

1.7 WORK ETHICS:

Industry and Society are the two systems which interact with each other and are interdependent. Society requires industry/business system which provides manufacturing, distribution and consumption activities. It needs investment (capital input), labor (input), supply (raw materials), production (industries, business organizations), marketing and distribution (transport), and consumption (public, customer). A lot of transactions (and interactions) between these sub-systems involving people are needed for the welfare of the society. It is here, the work ethics plays an essential role.

Work ethics is defined as a set of attitudes concerned with the value of work, which forms the motivational orientation. It is a set of values based on hard work and diligence. It is also a belief in the moral benefit of work and its ability to enhance character. A work ethic may include being reliable, having initiative, or pursuing new skills. The 'work ethics' is aimed at ensuring the economy (get job, create wealth, earn salary), productivity (wealth, profit), safety (in workplace), health and hygiene (working conditions), privacy (raise family), security (permanence against contractual, pension, and retirement benefits), cultural and social development (leisure, hobby, and happiness), welfare (social work), environment (anti-pollution activities), and offer opportunities for all, according to their abilities, but without discrimination. Workers exhibiting a good work ethic in theory should be selected for better positions, more responsibility and ultimately promotion. Workers who fail to exhibit a good work ethic may be regarded as failing to provide fair value for the wage the employer is paying them and should not be promoted or placed in positions of greater responsibility. Work ethic is not just hard work but also a set of accompanying virtues, whose crucial role in the development and sustaining of free markets.

1.8 EMPATHY:

Empathy is the ability to mutually experience the thoughts, emotions, and direct experience of others. The ability to understand another person's circumstances, point of view, thoughts, and feelings is empathy. When experiencing empathy, you are able to understand someone else's internal experiences.

Empathy is social radar. Sensing what others feel about, without their open talk, is the essence of empathy. Empathy begins with showing concern, and then obtaining and understanding the feelings of others, from others' point of view. It is also defined as the ability to put one's self into the psychological frame of reference or point of view of another, to know what the other person feels. It includes the imaginative projection into other's feelings and understanding of other's background such as parentage, physical and mental state, economic situation, and association. This is an essential ingredient for good human relations and transactions.

To practice 'Empathy', a leader must have or develop in him, the following characteristics:

1. Understanding others: It means sensing others feelings and perspectives, and taking active interest in their welfare.

2. Service orientation: It is anticipation, recognition and meeting the needs of the clients or customers.

3. Developing others: This means identification of their needs and bolstering their abilities. In developing others, the one should inculcate in him the 'listening skill' first.

Communication = 22% reading and writing + 23% speaking + 55% listening

One should get the feedback, acknowledge the strength and accomplishments, and then coach the individual, by informing about what was wrong, and giving correct feedback and positive expectation of the subject's abilities and the resulting performance.

4. Leveraging diversity (opportunities through diverse people): This leads to enhanced organizational learning, flexibility, and profitability.

5. Political awareness: It is the ability to read political and social currents in an organization.

The benefits of empathy include:

1. Good customer relations (in sales and service, in partnering).
2. Harmonious labor relations (in manufacturing).
3. Good vendor-producer relationship (in partnering.)

Through the above three, we can maximize the output and profit, as well as minimizing the loss. While dealing with customer complaints, empathy is very effective in realizing the unbiased views of others and in admitting one's own limitations and failures. According to Peter Drucker, purpose of the business is not to make a sale, but to make and keep a customer. Empathy assists one in developing courage leading to success.

1.9 SELF-CONFIDENCE:

Certainty in one's own capabilities, values, and goals, is self-confidence. These

people are usually positive thinking, flexible and willing to change. They respect others so much as they respect themselves.

Self-confidence is positive attitude, wherein the individual has some positive and realistic view of himself, with respect to the situations in which one gets involved. The

people with selfconfidence exhibit courage to get into action and unshakable faith in their abilities, whatever may be their positions.

They are not influenced by threats or challenges and are prepared to face them and the natural or unexpected consequences.

The self-confidence in a person develops a sense of partnership, respect, and accountability, and this helps the organization to obtain maximum ideas, efforts, and guidelines from its employees.

The people with self-confidence have the following characteristics:

1. A self-assured standing,
2. Willing to listen to learn from others and adopt (flexibility),
3. Frank to speak the truth, and
4. Respect others' efforts and give due credit.

On the contrary, some leaders expose others when failure occurs, and own the credit when success comes.

The factors that shape self-confidence in a person are:

1. Heredity (attitudes of parents) and family environment (elders),
2. Friendship (influence of friends/colleagues),
3. Influence of superiors/role models, and
4. Training in the organization (e.g., training by Technical Evangelists at Infosys Technologies).

The following methodologies are effective in developing self-confidence in a person:

1. Encouraging SWOT analysis. By evaluating their strength and weakness, they can anticipate and be prepared to face the results.
2. Training to evaluate risks and face them (self-acceptance).
3. Self-talk. It is conditioning the mind for preparing the self to act, without any doubt on his capabilities. This make one accepts himself while still striving for improvement.
4. Study and group discussion, on the history of leaders and innovators (e.g., Sam Walton of Wal-Mart, USA).

1.10 MORAL AUTONOMY:

Moral autonomy is defined as, decisions and actions exercised on the basis of moral concern for other people and recognition of good moral reasons. Alternatively, moral autonomy means 'self determinant or independent'. The autonomous people hold moral beliefs and attitudes based on their critical reflection rather than on passive adoption of the conventions of the society or profession. Moral autonomy may also be defined as a skill and habit of thinking rationally about the ethical issues, on the basis of moral concern.

Viewing management as social experimentation will promote autonomous participation and retain one's professional identity. Periodical performance appraisals, tight-time schedules and fear of foreign competition threatens this autonomy. The attitude of the management should allow latitude in the judgments of their managers on moral issues. If management views profitability is more important than consistent quality and retention of the customers that discourage the moral autonomy, managers are compelled to seek the support from their professional societies and outside organizations for moral support. It appears that the blue-collar workers with the support of the union can adopt better autonomy than the employed professionals. Only recently the legal support has been obtained by the professional societies in exhibiting moral autonomy by professionals in this country as well as in the West.

The managerial skills related to moral autonomy are listed as follows:

1. Proficiency in recognizing moral problems in management and ability to distinguish as well
As relate them to problems in law, economics, and religion,
2. Skill in comprehending, clarifying, and critically-assessing arguments on different aspects of moral issues,
3. Ability to form consistent and comprehensive view points based on facts,
4. Awareness of alternate responses to the issues and creative solutions for practical difficulties,
5. Sensitivity to genuine difficulties and subtleties, including willingness to undergo and tolerate some uncertainty while making decisions,
6. Using rational dialogue in resolving moral conflicts and developing tolerance of different perspectives among morally reasonable people, and
7. Maintaining moral integrity.

Autonomy which is the independence in making decisions and actions is different from authority. Authority provides freedom for action, specified within limits, depending on the situation. Moral autonomy and respect for authority can coexist. They are not against each other. If the authority of the manager and the moral autonomy of the operator are in conflict, a consensus is obtained by the two, upon discussion and mutual understanding their limits.

1.11 CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSY

Literally, consensus means agreement, and controversy means disagreement.

When an individual exercise moral autonomy, he may not be able to attain the same results as other people obtain in practicing their moral autonomy. Here there might be some differences in the practical application of moral autonomy. This kind of controversies i.e., disagreements are inevitable.

Since exercising moral autonomy is not as precise and clear cut as arithmetic, therefore the moral disagreements are natural and common. So in order to allow scope for disagreement, the tolerance is required among individuals with autonomous, reasonable and responsible thinking.

According to the principle of tolerance, the objective of teaching and studying management ethics is to discover ways of promoting tolerance in the exercise of moral autonomy by managers.

Thus the goal of teaching professional ethics is not merely producing always a unanimous moral conformity; it is about finding the proper ways and means for promoting tolerance in the practical applications of moral autonomy by managers.

In a way, the goal of courses on professional ethics and goals of responsible professionals have some similarities. Both situations require the need for some consensus regarding the role of authority.

Relationship between autonomy and authority

1. Moral autonomy and respect for authority are compatible with each other. Exercising moral autonomy is based on the moral concern for other people and recognition of good moral reasons. Also moral autonomy emphasizes the capabilities and responsibilities of people. Authority provides the framework through which learning attitudes are encouraged.
2. Sometimes, conflicts will arise between individuals' need for autonomy and the need for consensus about authority. This situation can be rescued by having open and frank discussion regarding a moral issue with the help of authority.

Illustration:

Consider the relationship between autonomy and authority, with reference to a classroom. In the classroom, the teachers have authority over students. Authority of the teachers helps in maintaining the dignity and decorum of academic climate in an institution; also in restoring the confidence and respect between teachers and students.

As per the first point, there should be the acceptance of authority of authority by both the teachers and students, in order to conduct the classes in orderly ways.

When the authority is misused, conflicts may arise between autonomy and authority. As per the second point, allowing open discussions between teachers and students can reduce the unhealthy academic atmosphere.

1.12 PROFESSION AND PROFESSIONALISM:

PROFESSION is defined as any occupation/job/vocation that requires advanced expertise (skills and knowledge), self-regulation and concentrated service to the public good. It brings a high status, socially and economically.

The characteristics of profession are:

1. Advanced expertise: Many professions require sophisticated skills (do-how) and theoretical knowledge (know-how and why). Formal education, training, continuing education, updating are needed.
2. Self-regulation: Professional societies play important role in setting standards for admission to profession, drafting codes of ethics, enforcing standards of conduct and representing the profession before the public and the Government.
3. Public good: The occupation provides some important public good, by concerted efforts to maintain ethical standards. For example, a physician promotes health, a lawyer protects the legal rights, an engineer provides a product or a project for

use by the public towards their health, welfare and safety. Teaching is also claimed as a profession as it helps shaping and training the minds of the students, young as well as old.

PROFESSIONAL relates to a person or any work that a person does on a profession and which requires expertise (skills and knowledge), self-regulation and results in public good. The term professional means a 'person' as well as a 'status'.

PROFESSIONALISM: It is the status of a professional which implies certain attitudes or typical qualities that are expected of a professional. It is defined as the services related to achieving the public good, in addition to the practices of the knowledge of moral ideals.

The criteria for achieving and sustaining professional status or professionalism are:

1. **Advanced expertise:** The expertise includes sophisticated skills and theoretical knowledge in exercising judgment. This means a professional should analyze the problem in specific known area, in an objective manner.
2. **Self-regulation:** One should analyze the problem independent of self-interest and direct to a decision towards the best interest of the clients/customers. An autonomous judgment (unbiased and on merits only) is expected. In such situations, the codes of conduct of professional societies are followed as guidance.
3. **Public good:** One should not be a mere paid employee of an individual or a teaching college or manufacturing organization, to execute whatever the employer wants one to do. The job should be recognized by the public. The concerted efforts in the job should be towards promotion of the welfare, safety, and health of the public.

Characteristics

The characteristics of the 'profession' as distinct from 'non-professional occupation' are listed as Follows:

1. **Extensive Training:** Entry into the profession requires an extensive period of training of intellectual (competence) and moral (integrity) character. The theoretical base is obtained through formal education, usually in an academic institution. It may be a Bachelor degree from a college or university or an advanced degree conferred by professional schools.

2. **Knowledge and Skills:** Knowledge and skills (competence) are necessary for the well-being of the society. Knowledge of physicians protects us from disease and restores health. The lawyer's knowledge is useful when we are sued of a crime, or if our business is to be merged or closed or when we buy a property. The Chartered Accountant's knowledge is important for the success of recording financial transactions or when we file the income return. The knowledge, study, and research of the engineers are required for the safety of the air plane, for the technological advances and for national defense.
3. **Monopoly:** The monopoly control is achieved in two ways:
 - (a) The profession convinces the community that only those who have graduated from the professional school should be allowed to hold the professional title. The profession also gains control over professional schools by establishing accreditation standards
 - (b) By persuading the community to have a licensing system for those who want to enter the profession. If practicing without license, they are liable to pay penalties.
4. **Autonomy in Workplace:** Professionals engaged in private practice have considerable freedom in choosing their clients or patients.

Even the professionals working in large organizations exercise a large degree of impartiality, creativity and discretion (care with decision and communication) in carrying their responsibilities. Besides this, professionals are empowered with certain rights to establish their autonomy.

Accordingly physicians must determine the most appropriate medical treatments for their patients and lawyers must decide on the most successful defense for their clients. The possession of specialized knowledge is thus a powerful defense of professional autonomy.

5. **Ethical Standards:** Professional societies promulgate the codes of conduct to regulate the professionals against their abuse or any unethical decisions and actions (impartiality, responsibility) affecting the individuals or groups or the society.

1.13 VIRTUES:

Virtues are positive and preferred values. Virtues are desirable attitudes or character traits, motives and emotions that enable us to be successful and to act in ways that develop our highest potential. They energize and enable us to pursue the ideals that we have adopted. Honesty, courage, compassion, generosity, fidelity, integrity, fairness, transparency, self-control, and prudence are all examples of virtues.

Virtues are tendencies which include, solving problems through peaceful and constructive means and follow the path of the golden mean between the extremes of 'excess and deficiency'. They are like habits, once acquired; they become characteristics of a person. Moreover, a person who has developed virtues will naturally act in ways consistent with moral principles. The virtuous person is the ethical person.

Civic Virtues

Civic virtues are the moral duties and rights, as a citizen of the village or the country or an integral part of the society and environment. An individual may exhibit civic virtues by voting, volunteering, and organizing welfare groups and meetings.

The duties are:

1. To pay taxes to the local government and state, in time.
2. To keep the surroundings clean and green.
3. Not to pollute the water, land, and air by following hygiene and proper garbage disposal.

For example, not to burn wood, tyres, plastic materials, spit in the open, even not to smoke in the open, and not to cause nuisance to the public, are some of the civic (duties) virtues.

4. To follow the road safety rules.

On the other hand, the rights are:

1. To vote the local or state government.
2. To contest in the elections to the local or state government.
3. To seek a public welfare facility such as a school, hospital or a community hall or transport or communication facility, for the residents.
4. To establish a green and safe environment, pollution free, corruption free, and to follow ethical principles. People are said to have the right to breathe in fresh air, by not allowing smoking in public.
5. People have inalienable right to accept or reject a project in their area. One has the right to seek legal remedy, in this respect, through public interest petition.

George Washington embodied the civic virtues as indispensable for a selfgoverning administration. These virtues are divided into four categories:

1. Civic Knowledge

Citizens must understand what the Constitution says about how the government is working, and what the government is supposed to do and what not to do. We must understand the basis of our responsibilities as citizens, besides duties and rights. We must

be able to recognize when the government or another citizen infringes upon our rights. It implies that the government requires the participation of the enlightened citizens, to serve and survive.

2. Self-Restraint

For citizens to live in a free society with limited government each citizen must be able to control or restrain himself; otherwise, we would need a police state—that is, a dictatorial government to maintain safety and order. He advocated for morality and declared that happiness is achieved and sustained through virtues and morals. He advocated and demonstrated self-restraint several times in his private and public life, and naturally he was a great leader.

3. Self-Assertion

Self-assertion means that citizens must be proud of their rights, and have the courage to stand up in public and defend their rights. Sometimes, a government may usurp the very rights that it was created to protect. In such cases, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish that government (e.g., voting rights, rights call back).

4. Self-Reliance

Citizens who cannot provide for themselves will need a large government to take care of them. Once citizens become dependent on government for their basic needs, the people are no longer in a position to demand that government act within the confines of the Constitution. Self-reliant citizens are free citizens in the sense that they are not dependent on others for their basic needs. They do not need a large provider-government, which has the potential to become an oppressive government, to meet those needs. Only a strong self-reliant citizenry will be able to enjoy fully the blessings of liberty.

These civic virtues, applicable to local, state, and central governments, nourish freedom and civil liberty at the root of democracy.