

# The Impact of Ethics in Educational and Sociological Scenario: A Study

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**Abstract-** Society is a collective body comprising mainly five processes namely cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. These five processes give shape to the society. However it is not an easy task to define society because it consist of many elements like family, school, law, religion ,culture, politics, economy etc. which performs their functions appropriately for its welfare. Individual and society have close relation with each other. In other words society itself educates and trains its individual members for its own nourishment. According to the structural functionalism theory society can only be run smoothly when efforts of its elements functions ethically and appropriately. Any imbalances in functioning will make society disorganised. Hence, ethical education should be the part and parcel of individual life. It protects us from vice and strengthens our conscience and incurs peace in individual life and society. Therefore, ethics plays an important role in our society. It directs our behaviour and regulates our actions. Our society is composed of various elements. In this paper an attempt is made to discuss about these elements of society and also an attempt is made to discuss the impact of ethics in developing the elements of society.

**Keywords:** Ethics, Society, Individual, Education, Religion, Law, Economy etc.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In this complex world we human beings sometimes have to take such decisions which more emphasis on social welfare rather than personal gratification. The extent to which the individual take right decisions is depends on how much stronger his conscience. The conscience sometimes referred to as “Voice of God” or “Inner light of God” which aware us “what should be done”, “what ought to be” and set some norms and principles before us in order to make right decisions in the right time. Our conscience developed by the experience and education we gathered and acquired through formal and informal means. It is an internal intuitive ability to differentiate between right and wrong. In the field of philosophy, ethics is a branch which studies these notions.

The word ‘ethics’ is used in public domain to cover a range of issues and interests. Generally, for example, it can bear upon the psychological, religious, political or aesthetic aspects of whatever is under consideration. Philosophers commonly divide ethical theories in to three subject areas- Meta ethics, Normative ethics and Applied ethics. In this paper, we also tried to analyse the concept of applied ethics and its impact on different perspective in society. Applied ethics is the application of ethical principles to solve our practical problems.

Religion is based upon morality. Before religious commitment, we are capable to make moral judgment. Most philosophers including Kant have accepted the autonomy of morality. Modern moral philosopher Peter Singer, in his book "Practical ethics" states that ethics is entirely independent of religion. Ethics is concerned with human voluntary actions. The objective of ethics is to tell us what we ought to do and what not. Ethics is related to man's welfare living in the society. To solve our modern day's problem we should make ethics free from religion. Giving up our personal emotion and faith we should look after our problems from scientific outlook. In this respect relevance of ethics is worth mentioning. Generally a society is considered as a group of individual of an area, who shared their customs and laws. Therefore, the development of a society is depending on the individual of that particular society. So the main aim of society must be to made individual ethically sound. When an individual is able to learn the ethical norms then he can do everything for the welfare of the society. Then he will be able to understand the value of humanity and democracy and its role in upbringing social status and gradually contributes his best services towards welfare of the nation. Hence, we can easily state that ethics plays an important role in upgrading a society.

#### I. OBJECTIVES

- *To discuss the concept of society and its element.*
- *To analyse the importance of ethics in developing a society.*

#### 2. METHODOLOGY

The data for the study are collected from various sources like books, seminar proceedings, thesis, journals, news papers, online resources etc. The study is mainly analytic and descriptive. After collecting data's from the above mentioned sources, I have analyzed them in a descriptive way, to bring out the conclusion.

#### ETHICS AND SOCIETY

Generally speaking society refers to the groups of individuals living together in a particular geographical area with some common objectives and engaged in a process of dynamic interpersonal relationships as well as share some laws and customs. Society in the words of MacIver is "a web of social relationship". It is a collective body comprising mainly five processes namely cooperation, competition, conflict, accommodation and assimilation. These five processes give shape to the society. However it is not a easy task to define society because it consists of many elements like family, school, law, religion, culture, politics, economy etc. which performs their functions appropriately for its welfare. Every society is unique and different from each other but its prime objective is to educate and develop its members.

Human organism is social in nature. As he grows up gradually learns to interact with family members, peers, classmates, teachers, community members etc. and acquire socially accepted patterns of behaviour, social norms, folkways and mores, traditional values, culture and develop various social qualities like- sympathy, empathy, honesty, truthfulness, brotherhood, patriotism etc. He also understands the value of humanity and democracy and its role in upbringing social status and gradually contributes his best services towards welfare of the society and ultimately the nation. Hence, we can easily state that individual and society have close relation with each other. In other words society itself educates and trains its individual members for its own nourishment. It is found in Mathur that according to the structural functionalism theory society can only be run smoothly when its elements functions

ethically and appropriately, any imbalances in functioning will make society disorganised[2]. Hence, ethical education should be the part and parcel of individual life. It protects us from vice and strengthens our conscience and incurs peace in individual life and society. Therefore, ethics plays an important role in our society. It directs our behaviour and regulates our actions. It is a moral code which acquaints us with the concept of right and wrong, Virtue and vice, good and bad and help in taking right decisions in the journey of life. However, our society is composed of various elements. These are:

- A. *Individual*
- B. *Community*
- C. *Religion*
- D. *Politics and government*
- E. *Economy*
- F. *Law and control*
- G. *Education*
- H. *Environment*
- I. *Health*
- J. *Culture*

Here, we discussed why ethics is important for the development of a society.

#### *A. Ethics and Individual*

There is a popular statement - "As you sow so shall you reap" which implies that whatever a person does in his lifetime, comes back to him in some or other way. Therefore, Individual should follow the ethical principles in order to make his life peaceful and happier. According to a study on "the science of karma" conducted by American Psychological Association (APA), those person who are givers (who help others without expectation) get in higher position and live in peace and harmony rather than those who are takers[7]. Buddhist philosophy emphasis on good karma to attain 'nirvana', in fact Buddha introduced among his disciple about the eight fold path to get rid of suffering from life. By analysing the eight fold path we can easily conclude that being ethical does not mean our actions alone should be good, in fact our perspective and intention of performing an action also matters a lot [4]. As a human being we have responsibilities towards ourselves, family members, community, society and nation. Ethically shouldering the responsibilities will bring positive results in these aspects.

#### *1) Ethical responsibilities of individual towards himself:*

- Maintain good physical and mental health.
- Maintain good behaviour with elders and have good social qualities.
- Show love and empathy towards younger.
- Be honest, loyal, truthful, positive and avoid bad company
- Knowledge seeker and non-discriminative attitude
- Treat each gender equally.
- Should not engage in anti- social activities.
- Emotional stability, confident and independent.
- Should earn his livelihood through right ways and means.
- Controlling, redirecting and sublimating his instincts.

#### *2) Ethical responsibilities of individual towards family:*

- Educate their children for good education(Article 51A(k) of Indian Constitution)
- Service towards their parents and guardians.
- Show equal respect for women in the family and non-discriminative treatment for their girl and boy child.
- Teach their child about the concept of right and wrong, inculcate good values, behaviour and try to build good rapport with his family members.

3) *Ethical responsibilities of individual towards society:*

- Sense of patriotism.
- Conserve and transmitting cultural heritage of the society.
- Comply with the norms and laws of the society.
- Stay away from anti-social activities like corruption, bribes, loot, robbery etc.
- Should have democratic attitude and sense of equality.
- Protector of natural environment.
- Help others in society and fight against prejudices, superstitions and blind beliefs.

*B. Importance of Ethics in Education*

Development of nation primarily relies on the quality of education. Education is a lifelong activity and its main focus on equipping such knowledge, skill and attitudes which bring all-round development in individual and promote national integration and international understanding. It is the mean to uphold socio-economic and political stability and upbringing culture. Therefore, teachers, educators, parents should feel the accountability to provide quality education to the future generation ethically, equally and appropriately. However following are the points which reflects why ethics in education is important-

In terms of students

- 1) *To Learn the Value of Discipline:* Ethics in education will enable the students to be disciplinarian. Discipline is essential part of educational institution as it ensures smooth and organized functioning which is indispensable for improving academic performance.
- 2) *Better Decision Making:* The inculcation of ethics among students will act as a support system in taking right decision in their personal and professional life and they will be able to understand the value of honesty, truthfulness, fairness, integrity and genuineness.
- 3) *Self Concept and Self-Esteem:* Self concept means realizing one's own potentials and attributes and self-esteem implies the feeling respect towards oneself. Imbibing ethical values will help the students to understand themselves and building moral identity as well as improves self worth.
- 4) *Preventing Anti-Social Behaviour:* The students with high ethical and moral value never engaged in any kinds of activities which are beyond social and institutional norms. In educational institutions those students will stay away from wrongdoings and never adopt any unfair means to pass the examination and always give priority on hard work. This sense of ethical behaviour will build good character and develop all-round personality among them.
- 5) *Building Equality and Equity:* Ethical education will also enable the students to become non-discriminative, admirer of equality and equity, good citizenship, devaluing corruption and illegality and become highly educated rather than educated illiterate.

In terms of educators and administrative body of the educational institution

- 1) *Meeting Educational Objectives:* If teachers and policy makers of educational institutions are ethically perform their duties and responsibilities then it is obvious that all the activities (scholastic and co-scholastic) of the institution can be easily completed within an appropriate time. Hence educators should be committed to his/her work and duties and actively participate in all the affairs of the institution.
- 2) *Proper Development of the Students:* Teachers with ethical sense is generally become a role model for the students. If teachers are punctual, unbiased, responsible, man of good character, having positive and democratic attitude as well as good social skills then students also develop themselves like their teachers.
- 3) *Imparting Quality Education:* Teacher should try to impart good quality education. He should prepare the lesson plan daily before entering to the actual classroom and try to present the subject matter effectively to the students by keeping in view their individual differences. He must gather feedback from them and clarify their doubts as well as evaluate their result without any bias and favouritism. So that healthy and quality educational environment can be provided to each and every student.
- 4) *Building Cordial Relationships:* Teacher should show love and affection towards pupils so that he/she can come closer to the emotional aspects of the students. He/she should also respect the privacy of the other staffs and important information of the institution must be kept confidential. He should avoid backbiting, bullying, and disrespecting attitude and try to build the attitude of cooperation, democracy, integrity, fairness etc. It will flourish a good rapport with the students as well as other members of the educational institution.
- 5) *Building a good and educated society and nation:* Teachers not only have duties towards students, colleagues and other staffs of the institution but also have duties and responsibilities towards shaping a good society. He/she should conserve the cultural heritage and transmitting it to the future generation. He must develop human resources and channelize the man power in the right direction. He must teach and train the society for patriotism, good citizenship, democracy, secularism, brotherhood, unity and integrity in order to protect the nation from disorganization and disintegration. Moreover, he should be flexible and should have positive outlook for the sake of meeting changing social needs.

#### *C. Ethics and Politics & Government*

Our administration and government sectors play a vital role in country. It is a planning body which frames plans and policies related to the various sectors i.e. Society and Community, Economy and resources, Education, Health, Law, Defence, Environment etc. In democratic system of government every people get the equal opportunity to participate in the various affairs of the nation. They have the power to elect their representative and accordingly government also has the responsibility to improve their quality of life by availing education and employment, establishing equality and equity as well as peace, security and justice and more importantly building a safe nation for them. Therefore, government must perform its duties with strong ethical norms for the purpose of promoting stability and smooth functioning of the society.

#### *D. Ethics and Religion*

Religion is considered as a system of practices and beliefs by means of which individuals struggle with the absolute problems of their life. It relates humanity to an order of existence. In religion God occupies a central place. We may consider religion as a practical attitude which the people translate into action in their own life. Almost all the religion has an ethical element. The study of ethics is a normative science of the individual's conduct living

in a society. It analyses the rightness and wrongness of our voluntary as well as habitual actions with reference to the highest good, whereas applied ethics is like application of ethical norms to solve our practical problems. By using ethical norms we can made religion a strong weapon by which we can vanish ill-treats, communalism and all other evil forces. This way we can establish peace in our society. By applying the ethical norms we can fulfil our dream of universal religion. If every people are aware of duties and rightness and wrongness of their actions then all the conflicts among religions can be stopped. If we are aware of the fact that achieving peace is the only reality, it will become easy to establish universal brotherhood. If every people know about their moral obligations, by applying ethical norms they can establish a religion of faith, belief and peace. Every people will follow this religion with a sense of universal brotherhood, where everyone will try to help other individuals. Ultimately ethics can play a great role in reforming our religion.

#### *E. Ethics and Culture*

Culture represents and reflects the characteristics of society. In fact, society finds its own identity because of culture. Culture includes both materialistic and non-materialistic aspects. Buildings, tools, machines, equipments are comes under materialistic culture whereas beliefs, attitudes, customs, traditions etc are comes under the non-materialistic culture. Culture refines our personality by showing us about moral and ethical norms regarding what should be our appropriate behavioural patterns with others. Mahatma Gandhi defined “the culture is foundation, the primary thing. It should show itself in the smallest detail of your conduct and personal behaviour.”[3] It prescribes certain rules and regulation for effective control and order. Being cultured means educated and educated means being ethically equipped. Ethics and morals are the concepts which originally have its roots in the culture. To learn about the culture is to mean to learn about the moral principles and virtues, which enable us to deal with the problems of decision making. Ottoway states that “the culture of society means the total way of life of society.” [3] Therefore, the ways by which human beings should act, react, interact and communicate with other member of the society is the primary focus of culture.

As the culture is manmade hence, it is the sum total of human experiences which are manifested in the social circumstances. It is dynamic and has a greater impact on one’s psycho-physical and socio- spiritual development. A cultured man always respects other’s culture. He seeks to preserves and transmits it to the next generation and continuously seeks to remove cultural lag. Person with rich cultural background have a strong sense of morality, dignity and self esteem. They cannot tolerate unethical activities like bribes, corruption and illegal acts. They show honesty, truthfulness and genuineness in all the affairs of life and society. Hence, if we think about ethics we can’t ignore the cultural aspect of society. However the ethical responsibility of individual towards culture can be summarised as follows-

- To act as an instrument of preserving and transmitting culture for the sake of next generation.
- To develop and improve culture by keeping in view the scientific attitude and removing the unscientific traditions, superstitions prejudices and blind beliefs.
- He should have respect for culture of other community and society.

#### *F. Ethics and Law*

Law is the essential part of society which is defined as the set of rules and guidelines imposed upon a particular society in order to establish order and control so that the number of

crimes can be minimised. It refers to an art and science of justice to regulate human behaviour in order to organise, stabilize and systematise the society [8]. However, the terms ethics and law are synonymously used to represent guiding principles and moral code of conduct. But, these two have also some differences. Ethics is subjective and a personal matter. It is not imposed on society and it develops from the consequences of our own actions and behaviour. While laws are very concrete rules and regulations which have legal bindings [5] i.e. if someone does not comply with the laws, he may incur punishments from the authority. Violation of ethics may not bring punishments. But, here it is important to mention that ethics and law both have one similar objective i.e. to protect human from unjust, impurity and wrongful acts. Both help us to understand the distinction between ‘good and bad’, ‘moral and immoral act’, ‘just and unjust’, and ‘right and wrong’. Therefore, ethics and laws closely connected to each other, despite they follow different path to make people understand about moral sense. If a person morally and ethically strong then it may obvious to say that he is a law abiding person. Both are essential for promoting peace, security and justice.

#### *G. The Impact of Ethics on Economy, Health and Environment*

Economy is the important factor of national development. It covers two important aspects i.e. production and consumption of goods and services. Economic development very much depends on the appropriate utilization of human as well as natural resources of a country. Hence, government should focus on training to produce skilled man power and build employment opportunities. But many cases were reported on the grounds of corruption to get government services in India. According to the survey report of Times of India (October, 2019) 62% of respondents paid bribe to get government work done in Tamil Nadu, compared to 52% last year[6]. Moreover, many people do not regularly pay their taxes which leads to production of black money and this will have major impact on inflation and quality of life. So government should take step for resolution of these problems. Right from primary level attempt should be made to develop morality, sense of ethics and human values among children. The teacher should make the students aware about how nation’s economy grow or fall. If everyone comes forward to play their role appropriately then it will incur national upbringing.

In terms of health sector, doctors should perform their duty to protect the life of patients. Securing patient from diseases should be their first dharma to the humanity. Similarly we also have duties towards our mother nature who gives us everything necessary for our survival. We should care of our environment; protect it from degradation by combating with pollution. Again due to rapid industrialization and population explosion, deforestation and global warming becomes the burning problem nowadays. If we do not stop now then earth may lose its ability to live. Therefore, effort should be made to develop knowledge, skill and attitude among the students for the conservation and protection of environment. For this purpose knowledge of ethics is very much necessary.

### **3. CONCLUSION**

From the above discussion it is clear that ethics has a great influence upon the different elements of the society. Bringing social and national welfare can only be possible through shouldering our responsibility ethically and morally. Otherwise there will be disharmony and disorganisation. Ethics can guide every individual to make positive influence through their actions. A person who behaves ethically, generally calm, contented and happier which enable him to make right decision at the right time. It can be concluded from the above

discussion that the role of ethics is very much important in the all-round development of a society. Therefore, it is very much indispensable to encourage everyone to make ethical choices by which they can apply ethics in every dimension of life.

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