MORAL AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION (MCED 1011)

Chapter One: Understanding Civics and Ethics

- A Seed will only become a flower if it gets sun and water.
  - Louis Gottschalk.

- Since human being is a social animal and couldn't live alone, he/she has to respect certain fundamental principles and values to live together with his/her fellow beings and consequently build peaceful society and lead prosperous life.
- As Johan Stuart Mill (1972)
- described it, progressive and peaceful setting subsists in a given society as far as that society develops the qualities of its members and generates good citizens.
- Aristotle (1955) also added that citizens of a State should always be educated to suit the constitution of a State. Accordingly, creating a good citizen has been the prior concern of many States, including Ethiopia. This is because good citizens are made not born.

- Though the most cited definition of civic education is an education that studies about the rights and responsibilities of citizens

- For instance, Patrick (1986) defines civic education
  as the knowledge of the constitutions, the principles, values, history and application to contemporary life.

- Citizenship education can be understood as the knowledge, means, and activities designed to encourage students to participate actively in democratic life,

- United Nations Development Program (UNDP, 2004)
  defines civic education as a way of learning for effective participation in a democratic and development process.

- Still the subject matter can be also defined as the process of helping young people acquire and learn to use the skills, knowledge, and attitudes that will prepare them to be competent and responsible citizens throughout their lives

The Definition and Nature of Ethics and Morality

What Ethics is?

- Ethics is

a branch of philosophy that attempts to understand people's moral beliefs and actions

- 'ethics' described the process of thinking about people's morality).

- Ethics, or moral philosophy, considers theories about

what human beings are capable of doing, alongside accounts of what they ought to do if they are to live an ethically good life.

- Ethics also explores the meaning and the ranking of different ethical values,

such as - honesty, - autonomy,

- equality and justice, and it considers ethical quandaries

- Ethics may share common ground with

the law, religious belief
popular opinion, professional codes and the dictates of authority figures,

- Invariably all ethical questions involve a decision about what one *should do* in a specific instance.

- Ethical questions are not concerned with what one would do (an essentially psychological concern) but what one *ought to* do. Judgments about such decisions are generally expressed with words like right and wrong, should and ought, or obligation and duty

- Occasionally the term ethics is used interchangeably with morals.

- Business or medical ethics, for example, is generally synonymous with morals. Although this is acceptable, a precise usage would apply the term's morals and moral to the conduct itself, while the terms ethics and ethical would refer to the study of moral conduct or to the code that one follows.

- Thus, the specific act of telling the caller you were home could be described as moral or immoral. But what makes any act moral or immoral, right or wrong fall within the province of ethics.

- Ethicists often disagree about the nature of those standards and desirable qualities and follow different paths in establishing standards and discovering which qualities are desirable. For purposes of understanding, though, we can view ethics as divided into two fields;

- normative ethics and non-normative ethics.

- **Generally, Ethics is:**
  - The critical examination and evaluation of what is good, evil, right and wrong in human conduct (Guy, 2001).
  - A specific set of principles, values and guidelines for a particular group or organization (Guy, 2001).

Ethics

- is the study of goodness, right action and moral responsibility, it asks what choices and ends we ought to pursue and what moral principles should govern our pursuits and choices (Madden, 2000).

What is Morality?

- morality is a complex concept.
- Though it is one of most frequently used terms, it can mean different things to different people.

- Morality is a commonly used word in most cultures. Some Scholars argued that if we do not know what morality is we cannot teach it.

- In crucial ways we do not know what morality is. Yet we must teach it because it is of prime importance and must be learned.

- Moreover, teaching must not be brainwashing; it must be moral. So, in order to understand Moral and Civics Education, the term "moral" needs to be understood
- Morality can be viewed from different perspectives and let us start with the simple definition of the word itself. Morality from a dictionary definition (from Latin *moralitas* "manner, character, prope

- behavior") refers to the concept of human action which pertains to matters of right and wrong – also referred to as "good and evil".

- Morality has been a topic of discussion for a very long time. According to Socrates “We are discussing no small matter, but how we ought to live” when issues of morality are discussed.
- Morality is,

  at the very least, the effort to guide one’s conduct by reason that is, to do what there are the best reasons for doing while giving equal weight to the interest of each individual who will be affected by one’s conduct. It is important that in a countries like Ethiopia, morality is shared as a common goal to ensure harmony and integrity.

- Terms such as morality and ethics are often used interchangeably in everyday speech as referring to justified or proper conduct. But ethics is usually associated with a certain conduct within a profession,
- for example, the code of ethics for the teaching profession.
- Morality is a more general term referring to the character of individuals and community.
- In other words, Morality is used to refer to what we would call moral conduct while ethics is used to refer to the formal study of moral conduct.

- Those principles and values that actually guide, for better or worse, an individual's personal conduct (Guy, 2001)
- Morality is

- the informal system of rational beings by which they govern their behavior in order to lesson harm or evil and do good,

- this system, although informal, enjoys amazing agreement across time and cultures concerning moral rules, moral ideas and moral virtues (Madden, 2000)

Ethics

- Is philosophical study of the code, standards or norm of human conduct and it is more theoretical and general one.

- Ethics establish the standards, norms, or codes to be followed by human beings are the study of morality, moral principles, and moral decision making.
- Is the development of reasonable standards and procedures for ethical decision-making?

- Is a set of normative rules of conduct, a code, a standards that govern what one ought to do when the well-being, or duties to oneself, others or institutions is at stake.

Morality

- refers to the code of conduct one follows while ethics is the study of moral conduct or the study of the code that one follows
- is the conformity of human behavior to the established code of conduct .If an action conform to the established code, it is called moral ,if not immoral
- refers to the effort to guide one's conduct by reason while giving equal weight to the interests of each individual who will be affected by one's conduct
- Has to do with what one should do, all things considered, not what, in fact, any of us *will* so in a particular instance

Ethics and Law

- laws are norms, formally approved by state, power or national or international political bodies. Many laws are instituted in order to promote well-being, resolve conflicts of interest, and promote social harmony. However, there are several reasons why ethics is
- not law. First, some actions that are illegal may not be unethical. Speeding is illegal, but one might have an ethical obligation to break the speed limit in order to transport someone to a hospital in an emergency. Second, some actions that are unethical may not be illegal. Most people would agree that lying is unethical but lying is only illegal under certain conditions,

- e.g. lying on an income tax return, lying when giving sworn testimony, etc. Third, laws can be unethical or immoral. The United States had laws permitting slavery in the 1800s but most people today would say that those laws were unethical or immoral. Although we have moral and ethical obligations to obey the law, civil disobedience can be justified when immoral or unethical laws exist.

The Importance/Goal of Moral and Civic Education

- Civic education is a discipline that deals with virtue traits rooted in values of respect and culture of tolerance to make individuals responsible and efficient member of their community.

- It teaches the values and sense of commitment that define an active and principled citizen, how to make responsible decisions, solve problems, care about others, contribute to society, and be tolerant and respectful of diversity.

- In higher educational institutions of Ethiopia,

  civics and ethics/moral education is given with the aim of educating students about democratic culture, ethical values and principles, supremacy of constitution, the rule of law, rights and duties of citizens.

The need to instill citizens about their rights and duties

- the State has the obligation to provide health care services because citizens have the right to access.
- Similarly, the state will be unable to meet the needs of children, the elderly or the disabled

- the state cannot protect the environment if citizens are unwilling to reduce, reuse, and recycle waste byproducts in their own homes; and attempts to create a fairer society will flounder if citizens are chronically intolerant of difference and generally lacking in what Rawls (1971) calls a sense of justice.
- In short, we need a fuller, richer and yet more subtle understanding and practice of citizenship, because what the ideal society needs and wants to be cannot be secured by coercion, but only through its members (citizens) who have a balanced understanding of rights and duties.

- Third, one should exercise his rights for the promotion of social good.
- Any such action by the State is justified. Fourth, the State being a nucleus organ needs to take care of the egal interests of all its individuals. For this reason, civics and ethics course provides to citizens to ensure that each individual become an informed citizen capable of thinking effectively as well as responsibly in carrying out their duties and observing rights.

The Need for Participant Political Culture

- According to the International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences (1961)
- political culture is the set of attitudes, beliefs, and sentiments which give order and meaning to a political process and which provide the underlying assumptions and rules that govern behavior in the political system.
- Taylor (1999) describes political culture as the norms of conduct both of and between the various political actors operating in society, together with the concomitant expectations and understandings of the rights and responsibilities of citizens, representatives,
- public servants and so on. Political culture shapes what people expect of their political system, what they see as possibilities for their own action, and what rights and responsibilities the various actors are perceived to have.
- Generally, political culture defines the roles which an individual may play in the political process.
- Almond and Verba (1963) construct three political cultures: parochial cultures, subject cultures, and participant cultures.
- In parochial cultures citizens have low cognitive, affective, and evaluative orientation regarding the political systems, government powers and functions and even their privileges and duties

The Need for Relevant Knowledge, Skills and Positive Attitudes

- Relevant knowledge is a type of knowledge which is useful in dealing with a particular problem at a period of time.

- However, knowledge would remain inert knowledge unless it is functional or put into practice to achieve a certain goal.

- Still knowledge would remain infirm if the person is not equipped with right attitudes and requisite skills which are basic to enable him/her perform his/her role as a credible member of a society.

- Hence, the State in question will do better in its bid for development if most of her citizens are skillful in one field or the other and also demonstrate positive attitudes at the work place. Right attitudes are very essential ingredients needed to ensure harmony and peaceful co-existence among people.
- It is reasonable to claim that skillful manpower is a pre-requisite for every nation

The issue of fostering intercultural societies:

- civics and ethics education could move a step forward by appealing to the notion of inter-culturalism, which explicitly asserts the need for relationship, dialogue, reciprocity and interdependence.

- Beyond differences of semantics, civics and ethics education is a useful instrument not only towards tolerating or celebrating each other, but also about nurturing dynamic exchanges based on interaction, openness and effective solidarity.

- The subject helps to integrate the best traditions of multicultural and intercultural education to develop political and pedagogical strategies that contribute to overcome discrimination and to nurture genuine, inclusive dialogue among cultural groups.

The issue of inclusiveness:

- By framing a universal concept of citizenship constructed on the attributes/identities and practices of male subjects, gendered relations and the private sphere have been neglected.

- Civics and ethics as a subject is thought to nurture new and inclusive relations and practices in both public and private spaces that recognize gender differences while ensuring inclusiveness and equity.
- It should also go beyond the idea of quotas for women in formal politics, or strategies to empower women to play male politics. Hence, promoting democracy and inclusiveness in public spaces as well as in families, workplaces, unions, and other institutions become the area of focus of civics and ethics.

- Moral and Civics Education is based on and seeks to promote in students core moral, ethical, democratic, and educational values, such as:
  - Respect for life
  - Respect for reasoning
  - Fairness
  - Concern for the welfare of others
  - Respect for diversity
- Peaceful resolution of conflict

Chapter Summary

- Different authors define civic education in different ways. But

the most cited definition of civic education is

an education that studies about the rights and responsibilities of citizens of a politically organized group of people.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the rightness and wrongness of human actions. In this regard,

Ethics is the study of morality. Whereas morality is defined as a set of personal and social values, rules, beliefs, laws, emotions, and ideologies collectively governing and arbitrating the rightness and wrongness of human actions. In higher institutions of Ethiopia,

civics and ethics is given with the aim of educating students about democratic culture, ethical values and principles, supremacy of constitution, the rule of law, rights and duties of citizens. The major goal of civics and ethics is producing good citizens, citizens who obey the law; respect the authority; contribute to society; love their country; believe in doing what is right; stand up for the right of others; tries to serve the interest of others before oneself. It is also aimed at creating a generation who has the capability to shoulder family and national responsibility.

- Thus, in conclusion, it is important to state that the normative value of ethics in life explores what is our origin as human beings.

- It takes into consideration the fact 'the unexamined life is not worth living;' to quote the ancient sage, Socrates. Without the fundamental factors of self-critique, of the ethical questioning and practical engagement, of the fundamental factors of tradition – something lived out in the present that proposes and gives its reasons – the youth would remain fragile, doubtful and sceptical. Exposure to life's experiences which is achieved beyond the classroom is risky.

- But it helps the student to become authentic, standing on one's own feet and daring the current. This is not the domain of Ethics in Higher education but the normative value of ethics and life. It is confrontation with man's real identity and the questions of contradictions of life, yet tackled beyond doubt.

- The context of a new vision for education which calls for mindset shift from reading and writing to skills acquisition with relevance for daily life and society becomes imperative.

- Ethics education is opportunity for a new value orientation. Such education ensures the training of both the teacher and the student, develops new technologies and conclusively allows a new vision, a new policy, a new market, new resources and a new system.

- The normative value of this kind of education is the emergence of a new humanity of responsible leaders driven by values and virtues and knowledgeable enough to transform their environment and serve entire humanity in a new society yearning for ethical and fair minded leaders.

Chapter Two:
Approaches to Ethics

Normative Ethics

- normative ethics, starting with the theory of obligation and then going on to the theory of moral value and, finally, to the theory of nonmoral value.
- The ultimate concern of the normative theory of obligation is to guide us in the making of decisions and judgments about actions in particular situations.
- A main concern, of course, is to guide us in our capacity as agents trying to decide what we should do in this case and in that. But we want to know more than just what we should do in situations before us.
- We are not just agents in morality; we are also spectators, advisers, instructors, judges, and critics. Still, in all of these capacities our primary question is this:
- how may or should we decide or determine what is morally right for a certain agent (oneself or another, possibly a group or a whole society) to do, or what he morally ought to do, in a certain situation?

Normative ethics;

- Offers theories or accounts of the best way to live. These theories evaluate actions in a systematic way, i.e., they may focus on outcomes or duties or motivation as a means of justifying human conduct.

- Includes ethical theories or approaches such as utilitarianism, deontology, virtue ethics, principlism, narrative ethics and feminist ethics.
- Normative ethics poses questions of the following kind:

- Are there general principles or rules that we could follow which distinguish between right and wrong? Or:

- Are there virtues and/or relationships that we can nurture, in order to behave well?

Teleological Ethics (Consequentialist)

- It is referred as "the end justifies the means". It believes in purpose, ends or goals of an action,
- it stress that the consequences of an action determines the morality or immorality of a given action.
- Which means an action is judged as right or wrong, moral or immoral depending on what happens because of it.
- One may have the best intention or follow the highest moral principles but if the result, moral act is harmful, or bad it must be judged as morally or ethically wrong act.

- Teleologists have often been hedonists, identifying the good with pleasure and evil with pain, and concluding

  that the right course or rule of action is that which produces at least as great a balance of pleasure over pain as any alternative would. But they may be and have sometimes been non-hedonists, identifying the good with power, knowledge, self-realization, perfection

- Deontological theories deny what teleological theories affirm. They deny that the right, the obligatory, and the morally good are wholly, whether directly or indirectly, a function of what is nonmorally good or of what promotes the greatest balance of good over evil for self, one's society, or the world as a whole.

- They assert that there are other considerations that may make an action or rule right or obligatory besides the goodness or badness of its consequences -- certain features of the act itself other than the *value* it brings into existence, for example, the fact that it keeps a promise, is just, or is commanded by God or by the state.

- Teleologists believe that there is one and only one basic or ultimate right-making characteristic, namely, the comparative value (nonmoral) of what is, probably will be, or is intended to be brought into being.
- Deontologists either deny that this characteristic is right-making at all or they insist that there are other basic or ultimate right-making characteristics as well. For them the principle of maximizing the balance of good over evil, no matter for whom, is either not a moral criterion or standard at all, or, at least, it is not the only basic or ultimate one.

- Teleologists differ on the question of whose good it is that one ought to try to promote.

- *Ethical egoism* holds that one is always to do what will promote his own greatest good -- that

  an act or rule of action is right if and only if it promotes at least as great a balance of good over evil for him in the long run as any alternative would, and wrong if it does not.

- This view was held by Epicurus, Hobbes, and Nietzsche, among others.

- *Ethical universalism*, or what is usually called *utilitarianism*, takes the position that the ultimate end is the greatest general good -- that an act or rule of action is right if and only if it is, or probably is, conducive to at least as great a balance of good over evil in the universe as a whole as

  any alternative would be, wrong if it is not, and obligatory if it is or probably is conducive to the greatest possible balance of good over evil in the universe. The so-called utilitarian's

Egoism: Ethical and psychological Egoism

- **Ethical Egoism**

We usually assume that moral behavior, or being ethical, has to do with not being overly concerned with oneself .In other words, selfishness is assumed to be unacceptable attitude.

Even among scholars, there is disagreement about what constitutes ethical behavior. Since very early in western intellectual history,

the view point that *humans are not built to look out for other people's interests* has surfaced regularly. Some scholars even hold that proper moral conduct consist of "*looking out for number one*," period. These viewpoints are known as psychological egoism and ethical egoism respectively.

- **You should look after yourself**

  Ethical egoist insisted that if you don't take advantage of a situation,

  you are foolish. The claim that it makes good sense to look after yourself, and morality is a result of that self –interest.

If I mistreat others, they mistreat me, so I resolve to behave myself.

version of the Golden Rule (Do un to others as you would have them do unto you).

More formally the argument is this:

1 We all always seek to maximize our own self-interest (definition of psychological egoism).

2 If one cannot do an act, one has no obligation to do that act (ought to implies can).

3 Altruistic acts involve putting other people's interests ahead of our own (definition of altruism).

4 But, altruism contradicts psychological egoism and so is impossible (by premises 1 and 3).

5 altruistic acts are never morally obligatory

- The following are some method to apply the principle of ethical egoism to a particular situation.
- List the possible acts
- For each act, see how much net good it would do for you.
- Identify the act that does the most net good for you
- **Some important things to notice about ethical egoism:**

Some important things to notice about ethical egoism:

- It does not just say that, from the moral point of view, one's own welfare counts as well as that of others. Rather, it says that, from the moral point of view,
- only one's own welfare counts, and others' does not, when one is making a moral decision about how to act.

- Ethical egoism does not forbid one to help others, or require one to harm others. It just says that whatever moral reason you have to help others, or not harm them, must ultimately stem for the way in which helping them or not harming them helps you.

- Ethical egoism does not say that one ought always to do what is most pleasurable, or enjoyable. It acknowledges that one's own self–interest may occasionally require pain or sacrifice.

Psychological Egoism

an argument from human nature

. We are all so constituted, it is said, that one always seeks one's own advantage or welfare, or always does what he thinks will give him the greatest balance of good over evil.

"self-love" is the only basic "principle" in human nature

in one set of contemporary terms, it means that "ego-satisfaction" is the final aim of all activity or that "the pleasure principle" is the basic "drive" in every individual.

- In dealing with this ethical theory;
  - That the desire for one's own good presupposes or builds upon the existence of more basic desires for food, fame, sex, etc.
  - It follows, that the object of these basic desires is not one's own welfare; it is food, fame, sex, etc., as the case may be. One's own good is not the object of all of one's desires but only of one of them, self- love.
  - in some cases the object of a basic desire is something for oneself, for example, food or the eating of food. But there is no necessity about this; the object may be something for someone else, for example, enjoying the sight of the ocean
  - As a matter of fact, there are such altruistic interests in the welfare of others (sheer malevolence, if it exists, is a desire that another experience pain for its own sake), as well as a desire to do the right as such.

Utilitarianism: Producing the best consequences

- Consider some traditional moral principles and see if they help us come to a decision. One principle often given to guide action is "Let your conscience be your guide." Suppose your conscience tells you to give the money to the Ethiopian Coffee Club and my conscience tells me to give the money to the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS). How can we even discuss the matter? If conscience is the end of it, we're left mute

- Another principle urged on us is "Do whatever is most loving";

- when there is a conflict of interest? "Love is blind," it has been said, "but reason, like marriage, is an eye-opener." Whom should I love in the case of the disbursement of the millionaire's money—the millionaire or the starving people?
- It's not clear how love alone will settle anything. In fact, it is not obvious that we must always do what is most loving.

- Should we always treat our enemies in loving ways? Or is it morally permissible to feel hate for those who have purposely and unjustly harmed us, our loved ones, or other innocent people? Should the survivors of Auschwitz love Adolph Hitler? Love alone does not solve difficult moral issues.

Classic Utilitarianism

- The classical expressions of utilitarianism, though, appear in the writings of two English philosophers and social reformers Jeremy Bentham (1748–1832) and John Stuart Mill (1806–1873).
- They were the nonreligious ancestors of the twentieth-century secular humanists, optimistic about human nature and our ability to solve our problems without recourse to God.

- Engaged in a struggle for legal as well as moral reform, they were impatient with the rule-bound character of law

Jeremy Bentham: Quantity over Quality

- There are two main features of utilitarianism, both of which Bentham articulated:
- ***The consequentialist principle (or its teleological aspect):*** states that the rightness or wrongness of an act is determined by It is the end, not the means that counts; then the goodness or badness of the results that flow from it.
- ***The utility principle (or its hedonic aspect):*** states that the only thing that is good in itself is some specific type of state (for example, pleasure, happiness, welfare).

- Hedonistic utilitarianism views pleasure as the sole good and pain as the only evil.

- An act is right if it either brings about more pleasure than pain or prevents pain, and an act is wrong if it either brings about more pain than pleasure

- There is something appealing about Bentham's utilitarianism. It is simple in that there is only one principle to apply: Maximize pleasure and minimize suffering.

John Stuart Mill: Quality over Quantity

John Stuart Mill, sought to distinguish happiness from mere sensual pleasure. His version of the theory is often called eudaimonistic utilitarianism (from the Greek eudaimonia, meaning "happiness"). He defines happiness in terms of certain types of higher-

- Mill argued that the higher, or more refined, pleasures are superior to the lower ones: "
- It is better to be a human being dissatisfied than a pig satisfied; better to be Socrates dissatisfied than a fool satisfied." Humans are the kind of creatures who require more to be truly happy. They want the lower pleasures, but they also want deep friendship, intellectual ability, culture, the ability to create and appreciate art, knowledge, and wisdom.
- Mill is clearly pushing the boundaries of the concept of "pleasure" by emphasizing higher qualities such as knowledge, intelligence, freedom, friendship, love, and health.
- In fact, one might even say that his litmus test for happiness really has little to do with actual pleasure and more to do with a non-hedonic cultivated state of mind.

Act- And Rule-Utilitarianism

- There are two classical types of utilitarianism:
- act- and rule-utilitarianism.
- act-utilitarians, such as Bentham, say that ideally we ought to apply the principle to all of the alternatives open to us at any given moment.

- Act-utilitarianism argues that an act is right if and only if it results in as much good as any available alternative.
- The alternative to act-utlitarianism is a view called rule-utilitarianism—elements of which we find in Mill's theory. :

Rule-utilitarianism

- An act is right if and only if it is required by a rule that is itself a member of a set of rules whose acceptance would lead to greater utility for society than any available alternative.

- Human beings are rule-following creatures. We learn by adhering to the rules of a given subject, whether it is speaking a language, driving a car, dancing, writing an essay, rock climbing, or cooking.

- We want to have a set of actionguiding rules by which to live. The act-utilitarian rule, to do the act that maximizes utility, is too general for most purposes. Often, we don't have time to decide whether lying will produce more utility than truth telling, so we need a more specific rule prescribing truthfulness that passes the test of rational scrutiny.

The Comparative Consequences Objection

- Another crucial problem with utilitarianism is that it seems to require a superhuman ability to look into the future and survey a mind-boggling array of consequences of actions. Of course, we normally do not know the long-term consequences of our actions because life is too complex and the consequences go on into the indefinite future.

The Consistency Objection to Rule-Utilitarianism

- An often-debated question about rule-utilitarianism is whether, when pushed to its logical limits, it must either become a deontological system or transform itself into act-utilitarianism. As such, it is an inconsistent theory that offers no truly independent standard for making moral judgments.

- We could always find a case where breaking the general rule would result in additional hedons without decreasing the sum of the whole.

The No-Rest Objection

- According to utilitarianism, one should always do that act that promises to promote the most utility. But there is usually an infinite set of possible acts to choose from, and even if I can be excused from considering all of them,

- I can be fairly sure that there is often a preferable act that I could be doing. For example, when I am about to go to the cinema with a friend, I should ask myself if helping the homeless in my community wouldn't promote more utility.

- When I am about to go to sleep, I should ask myself whether I could at that moment be doing something to help save the ozone layer. And, why not simply give all my assets (beyond what is absolutely necessary to keep me alive) to the poor to promote utility?
- Following utilitarianism, I should get little or no rest, and, certainly, I have no right to enjoy life when by sacrificing I can make others happier. Peter

The Publicity Objection

- It is usually thought that moral principles must be known to all so that all may freely obey the principles

The Relativism Objection

- Sometimes people accuse rule-utilitarianism of being relativistic because it seems to endorse different rules in different societies.
- In one society, it may uphold polygamy, whereas in our society it defends monogamy.
- In a desert society, it upholds a rule "Don't waste water," whereas in a community where water is plentiful no such rule exists. But this is not really conventional relativism because the rule is not made valid by the community's choosing it but by the actual situation.

The Justice Objection

- The utilitarian response was that we should reconsider whether truth telling and personal integrity are values that should never be compromised.
- The situation is intensified, though, when we consider standards of justice that most of us think should never be dispensed with. Let's look at two examples, each of which highlights a different aspect of justice.
- First, imagine that a rape and murder is committed in a racially volatile community. As the sheriff of the town, you have spent a lifetime working for racial harmony. Now, just when your goal is being realized, this incident occurs.
- The crime is thought to be racially motivated, and a riot is about to break out that will very likely result in the death of several people and create long-lasting racial antagonism.

- As a second illustration, imagine that you are a utilitarian physician who has five patients under your care. One needs a heart transplant, one needs two lungs, one needs a liver, and the last two each need a kidney. Now into your office comes a healthy bachelor needing an immunization. You judge that he would make a perfect sacrifice for your five patients. Through a utility-calculus, you determine that, without a doubt, you could do the most good by injecting the healthy man with a fatal drug and then using his organs to save your five other patients.

- ***Three-Step Action Formula:***
- Utilitarianism might be construed as offering a three-step action formula for action:
- On the basis of what I know, I must project the consequences of each alternative option open to me (e.g., taking different kinds of actions or taking no action).
- Calculate how much happiness, or balance of happiness over unhappiness, is likely to be produced by anticipated consequences of each action or none.
- Select that action which, on balance, will produce the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people affected

The principle of utility

- The morally right action is the one that produces the best overall consequences with regard to the utility or welfare of all the affected parties.

- Jeremy Bentham's slogan: The right act or policy is the one that causes 'the greatest happiness of the greatest number' – that is, maximize the total utility or welfare of the majority of all the affected parties.

Altruism

- In altruism an action is right if the consequences of that action are favorable to all except the actor. Butler argued that we have an inherent psychological capacity to show benevolence to others. This view is called *psychological altruism* and maintains that at least some of our actions are motivated by instinctive benevolence

- We can differentiate egoistic and altruistic desires in the following way: One's desire is *egoistic* if (and only if) it concerns (what one perceives to be) the benefit of oneself and not anyone else. In the contrary, one's desire is *altruistic* if (and only if) it concerns (what one perceives to be)

Deontological Ethics (Non- Consequentialist)

- What makes a 'right' act right? The utilitarian or consequentialist answer to this question is
- that it is the good outcome of an act which makes it right.
- Moral rightness or wrongness is calculated by determining the extent to which the action promotes values such as pleasure, well-being, happiness, etc. To this extent, the end justifies the means. In many respects, deontological moral theory is diametrically the opposite of utilitarianism
- It is referred as "the means justifies the end". It is coined as "**deontics**". This is a theory that the rightness or wrongness of moral action is determined, at least partly with reference to formal rules of conduct rather than consequences or result of an action.

- **Performance of One's own Duty**

- The 17th century German philosopher Samuel Pufendorf, who classified dozens of duties under three headings:
  duties to God,
  duties to oneself and duties to others!
- **duties towards God**
  (1) a theoretical duty to know the existence and nature of God, and
  (2) a practical duty to both inwardly and outwardly worship God.
- ***duties towards oneself***;
  (1) duties of the soul
  (2) duties of the body
- ***duties towards others.***
  between absolute duties, which are universally binding on people, and conditional duties.
- ***Absolute duties are of three sorts***: (1) avoid wronging others; (2) treat people as equals, and (3) promote the good of others.
- ***Conditional duties*** involve various types of agreements, the principal one of which is the duty is to keep one's promises.

The Divine Command Theory

- According to one view, called the divine command theory (DCT), ethical principles are simply the commands of God.
- They derive their validity from God's commanding them, and they mean "commanded by God." Without God,

  there would be no universally valid morality. We can analyze the DCT into three separate theses:
- Morality (that is, rightness and wrongness) originates with God.
- Moral rightness simply means "willed by God," and moral wrongness means "being against the will of God."
- Because morality essentially is based on divine will, not on independently existing reasons for action, no further reasons for action are necessary.

- **Problems with the Divine Command Theory**

- There are two problems with the DCT that need to be faced by those who hold it.
- DCT would seem to make the attribution of "goodness" to God redundant.

- When we say "God is good," we think we are ascribing a property to God;
- Our statement "God is good" merely means "God does whatever he wills to do" or "God practices what he preaches," and the statement "God commands us to do what is good" merely is the logically empty statement "God commands us to do what God commands us to do."
- DCT is that it seems to make morality into some-thing arbitrary.

  If God's decree is the sole arbiter of right and wrong, it would seem to be logically possible for such heinous acts as rape, killing of the innocent for the fun of it, and gratuitous cruelty to become morally good actions—if God suddenly decided to command us to do these things

Rights Theory

- A second duty-based approach to ethics is ***rights theory***.

- Most generally, a "right" is a justified claim against another person's behavior - such as my right to not be harmed by you. Rights and duties are related in such a way that the rights of one person imply the duties of another person.

  For example, if I have a right to payment of $10 by Smith, then Smith has a duty to pay me $10. This is called the correlativity of rights and duties.

The most influential early account of rights theory is that of 17th century British philosopher John Locke, who argued that the laws of nature mandate that we should not harm anyone's life, health, liberty or possessions.

For Locke, these are our natural rights, given to us by God. Following Locke, the United States Declaration of Independence authored by Thomas Jefferson recognizes three foundational rights:

life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

Jefferson and others rights theorists maintained that we deduce other more specific rights from these, including the rights of property, movement, speech, and religious expression.

- There are four features traditionally associated with moral rights.
- First, rights are *natural* insofar as they are not invented or created by governments.
- Second, they are *universal* insofar as they do not change from country to country.
- Third, they are *equal* in the sense that rights are the same for all people, irrespective of gender, race, or handicap.
- Fourth, they are *inalienable* which means that I cannot hand over my rights to another person, such as by selling myself into slavery.

Kant's Categorical Imperative

- A Kant's duty-based theory is emphasizes a single principle of duty.

  Kant agreed that we have moral duties to oneself and others, such as developing one's talents, and keeping our promises to others.."

- A ***categorical imperative***,

  he argued, is fundamentally different from *hypothetical imperatives* that hinge on some personal desire that we have.

For example, "If you want to get a good job, then you ought to go to college." By contrast, a categorical imperative simply mandates an action, irrespective of one's personal desires, such as "You ought to do X."

The Principle of Universality

- The **first maxim**

  states that we should choose our 'codes of conduct' only if they serve perfect / imperfect duty and are good for all.

  "*Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law without contradiction.*"

- **The Principle of Humanity as an End, Never as Merely a Means**
- The **second maxim**

  states that we should not use humanity of ourselves or others as a means to an end. "Act in such a way that you treat humanity, whether in your own person or in the person of any other, never merely as a means to an end, but always at the same time as an end."

The Principle of Autonomy

- The ***third maxim*** states that we should consider ourselves to be members in the universal realm of ends. Therefore, ***every rational being must so act as if he were through his maxim always a legislating member in the universal kingdom of ends***.
- or they would not be universalizable, and hence they would not be laws of conduct at all. Thus Kant presents the notion of the hypothetical *Kingdom of Ends* of which he suggests all people should consider themselves both means and ends. We should consider our actions to be of consequence to everyone else in that our actions affect not only ourselves but that of others. Everything we do should not only be of benefit to ourselves, but benefit each other universally

Ross's Prima Facie Duties or Moral Guidelines

- A ***fourth*** and more recent duty-based theory is that by British philosopher W.D. Ross, which emphasizes *prima facie* duties. Sir William David Ross (15 April 1877 – 5 May 1971), usually cited as W. D. Ross, was a Scottish philosopher, known for work in ethics. The term *prima facie* means "at a first sight" or "on the surface." By prima facie duties, Ross means duties that dictate what we should do when other moral factors are not considered. Stated another way, prima facie duties are duties that generally obligate us; that is, they ordinarily impose a moral obligation but may not in a particular case because of circumstances. An **actual duty** is the action that one ought to perform after considering and weighing all the prima facie duties involved.

- The term "duty" in "prima facie duty" is slightly misleading. The prima facie duties are understood as ***guidelines***, not rules without exception. If an action does not correspond to a specific guideline, one is not necessarily violating a rule that one ought to follow. However, not following the rule one ought to follow in a particular case is failing to do one's (actual) duty. In such cases it makes sense to talk about violating a rule. The rule might be the same in words as a prima facie duty (minus the phrase "unless other moral considerations override"), but it would no longer be merely a guideline because it describes what one concretely should do.

Ross's list the following categories of prima facie duties is much shorter, which he believes reflects our actual moral convictions:

- ***Duties of Fidelity***: the duty to keep promises and the obligation not to lie. Duties of fidelity are duties to keep one's promises and contracts and not to engage in deception.
- ***Duties of Reparation*****:** This is a duty to make up for the injuries one has done to others. Ross describes this duty as "resting on a previous wrongful act". It is the duty to compensate others when we harm them. If, for example, I damage something that belongs to someone else, I have an obligation to make restitution.
- ***Duties of Gratitude*****:** the duty to thank those who help us. Suppose, for example, an especially good friend is suddenly in need of assistance, I am duty bound to do all I can help this individual, who in the past had acted so selflessly toward me.

- ***Duties of Justice***: The duty of justice requires that one act in such a way that one distributes benefits and burdens fairly. Ross himself emphasizes the negative aspect of this duty: he says that this type of duty "rests on the fact or possibility of a distribution of pleasure or happiness (or the means thereto) that is not in accord with the merit of the persons concerned; in such cases there arises a duty to upset or prevent such a distribution". Thus the duty of justice includes the duty, insofar as possible, to prevent an unjust distribution of benefits or burdens.
- ***Duties of Beneficence***: the duty to improve the conditions of others. The duty to do good to others: to foster their health, security, wisdom, moral goodness, or happiness. This duty, says Ross, "rests upon the fact that there are other beings in the world whose condition we can make better in respect of virtue, or of intelligence, or of pleasure."
- ***Duties of Self-improvement***: The duty of self-improvement is to act so as to promote one's own good, i.e., one's own health, security, wisdom, moral goodness, virtue, intelligence and happiness.
- ***Duties of Non-maleficence*****:** The duty of non-injury (also known as non-maleficence) is the duty not to harm others physically or psychologically: to avoid harming their health, security, intelligence, character, or happiness. We are obliged to avoid hurting others physically, emotionally and psychologically.

Virtue Ethics

- **Virtue Ethics: Challenging the adequacy of rule-based theories**

Virtue ethics"

is a technical term in contemporary Western analytical moral philosophy, used to distinguish a normative ethical theory focused on the virtues, or moral character, from others such as deontology (or contractarianism) and consequentialism.

Imagine a case in which it is agreed by every sort of theorist that I should, say, help someone in need. A deontologist will emphasize the fact that in offering help, I will be acting in accordance with a moral rule or principle such as "Do unto others as you would be done by"; a consequentialist will point out that the consequences of helping will maximize well-being; and a virtue ethicist will emphasize the fact that providing help would be charitable or benevolent – charity and benevolence being virtues

- **TheGoodCharacter**

People have a natural capacity for good character, and it is developed through practice. The capacity does not come first--it's developed through practice.

Virtue, *arete*, or excellence is defined as a mean between two extremes of excess and defect in regard to a feeling or action as the practically wise person would determine it. The mean cannot be calculated *a priori*

- **Pleasure**

  is the natural accompaniment of unimpeded activity. Pleasure, as such, is neither good nor bad.
- Even so, pleasure is something positive and its effect is to perfect the exercise of activity. Everything from playing chess to making love is improved with skill.
- Pleasure cannot be directly sought--it is the side-product of activity. It is only an element of happiness.
- The good person, the one who has attained *eudaemonia*, is the standard as to what is truly pleasant or unpleasant.

Non-Normative Ethics/Meta-ethics

- **Meta-ethics tries to answer question, such as:**
  - What does "good," "right," or "justice" mean?
  - What makes something good or right?
  - Is moral realism true?
  - Is morality irreducible, cognitive, or overriding?
- Do intrinsic values exist

- Meta-ethics, rather, concerned with questions about the following:
- ***Meaning:*** what is the *semantic function* of moral discourse? Is the function of moral discourse to state *facts,* or does it have some other non-fact-stating role?
- ***Metaphysics****:* do moral facts (or properties) exist? If so, what are they like? Are they identical or reducible to some other type of fact (or property) or are they irreducible and *sui generis?*
- ***Epistemology* and *justification****:* is there such a thing as moral knowledge? How can we know whether our moral judgements are true or false? How can we ever justify our claims to moral knowledge?
- ***Phenomenology****:* how are moral qualities represented in the experience of an agent making a moral judgement? Do they appear to be 'out there' in the world?
- ***Moral psychology****:* what can we say about the motivational state of someone making a moral judgement? What sort of connection is there between making a moral judgement and being motivated to act as that judgement prescribes?
- ***Objectivity****:* can moral judgements really be correct or incorrect? Can we work towards finding out the moral truth?

Cognitivism and Non-Cognitivism

- Consider a particular moral judgment, such as the judgments that murder is wrong. What sort of psychological state does this express? Some philosophers, called cognitivists

- think that a moral judgment such as this expresses a belief. Beliefs can be true or false: they are truth-apt, or apt to be assessed in terms of truth and falsity. So cognitivists think that moral judgments are capable of being true or false.

- On the other hand, non-cognitivists think that moral judgments express non-cognitive states such as emotions or desires. Desires and emotions are not truth-apt. So moral judgements are not capable of being true or false.

(Note that, although it may be true that I have a desire for a pint of beer and false that I have a desire to see Ethiopia win the World Cup, this does not imply that desires themselves can be true or false.)

Strong Cognitivism: Naturalism

A *strong cognitivist* theory is one which holds that moral judgements

(a) are apt for evaluation in terms of truth and falsity, and

(b) can be the upshot of cognitively accessing the facts which render them true. Strong cognitivist theories can be either *naturalist* or *non-naturalist.*

According to a naturalist, a moral judgement is rendered true or false by a natural state of affairs, and it is this natural state of affairs to which a true moral judgement affords us access. But what is a natural state of affairs? G. E. Moore's characterization: *"By 'nature', then, I do mean and have meant that which is the subject matter of the natural sciences and also of psychology."*

Strong Cognitivism: Non-Naturalism

- Non-naturalists think that moral properties are not identical to or reducible to natural properties.
- They are irreducible and *sui generis.* We will look at two types of strong cognitivist non-naturalism: Moore's ethical non-naturalism, as developed in his *Principia Ethica* (first published in 1903),
- according to which the property of moral goodness is non-natural, simple, and unanalysable; and the contemporary version of non-naturalism that has been developed by John McDowell and David Wiggins (roughly from the 1970s to the present day).
- Again, both types of non-naturalist are moral realists: they think that there really are moral facts and moral properties, and that the existence of these moral facts and instantiation of these moral properties is constitutively independent of human opinion.

Strong Cognitivism without Moral Realism: Mackie's 'Error-Theory'

- John Mackie

  has argued that although moral judgements are apt to be true or false, and that moral judgements, if true, would afford us cognitive access to moral facts, moral judgements are in fact always *false*. This is because there simply are no moral facts or properties in the world of the sort required to render our moral judgements true: we have no plausible epistemological account of how we could access such facts and properties, and, moreover, such properties and facts would be *metaphysically queer,* unlike anything else in the universe as we know it. A moral property would have
- to be such that the mere apprehension of it by a moral agent would be sufficient to motivate that agent to act. Mackie finds this idea utterly problematic. He concludes that there are no moral properties or moral facts, so that (positive, atomic) moral judgements are uniformly false: our moral thinking involves us in a radical *error.* Because Mackie denies that there are moral facts or properties, he is not a moral realist, but a *moral antirealist*

Weak Cognitivism about Morals without Moral Realism: 'Best Opinion' Theories

- A *weak cognitivist* theory is one which holds that moral judgements
- are apt for evaluation in terms of truth and falsity, but
- cannot be the upshot of cognitive access to moral properties and states of affairs.
- Weak cognitivism thus agrees with strong cognitivism on
- (a), but disagrees on
- (b). An example of a weak cognitivist theory would be one which held that our best judgements about morals *determine* the extensions of moral predicates, rather than being based upon some faculty which *tracks, detects* or *cognitively accesses* facts about the instantiation of moral properties. (The extension of a predicate is the class of things, events or objects to which that predicate may correctly be applied.)

Non-Cognitivism

- *Non-cognitivists* deny that moral judgements are even apt to be true or false. Non-cognitivists thus disagree with both weak and strong cognitivism. We shall look at a number of arguments which the non-cognitivist uses against cognitivism. An example of such an argument is the *argument from moral psychology.*
- We shall look at three versions of non-cognitivism which give different answers to this question:
- J. Ayer's ***emotivism*** (1936), according to which moral judgements express emotions, or sentiments of approval or disapproval;
- Simon Blackburn's ***quasi-realism*** (1984), according to which moral judgements express our dispositions to form sentiments of approval or disapproval; and
- Allan Gibbard's ***norm-expressivism*** (1990), according to which our moral judgements express our acceptance of norms

- **Generally, Meta-ethics:**
- Examines the meaning of moral terms and concepts and the relationships between these concepts.
- Explores where moral values, such as 'personhood' and 'autonomy', come from.
- Considers the difference between moral values and other kinds of values.

- Examines the way in which moral claims are justified

Meta-ethics also poses questions of the following kind:

- What do we mean by the claim, 'life is sacred'?
- Are moral claims a matter of personal view, religious belief or social standard, or, are they objective in some sense?
- If they are objective, what make them so

Chapter Summary

- Ethics is one of the most important disciplines that need to be thought to the students to adopt ethical behavior with respect to good life. It promotes healthy society and fulfilling experience for individual. In the globalized era, we find that "Ethics will be one of the enablers of competitiveness." Stressing the centrality of ethics in the human experience can be a greater favor to humankind in general, and to our society in particular, to be growing and prosper by qualities that are essentially and absolutely ethical.

- Morality Concerned about habits, customs, ways of life, especially when these are assessed as good or bad, right or wrong. Moral values help to regulate the behavior as a standard. Such values help to maintain the society and act uniformly. They bring about peace and stability. So individuals have a moral responsibility to respect and maintain the value of their society and refrain from committing things that disturb its stability and peace.

- While utilitarianism, deontology, and virtue theory have been in place in the canon of moral philosophy for centuries, they have not remained fixed and static as theories. Volumes have been written which critique elements of these theories, sharpening them for greater clarity and, attuning them more to the fullness of human living. In addition, insights into moral living come in fresh forms, breathing new life into the traditional moral canon. This is the case with contemporary ethical theories such as principlism,
- narrative ethics and feminist ethics. In these we find new insights that attempt a number of tasks: to offer developments of, and improvements on, essential features of traditional theories, to fill in the dimensions of human living that were often omitted or understated in traditional theorizing and to acknowledge that the challenges of moral development require that we move from a realm of moral abstractions to concrete situations. This allows us to see whether or how much the resources of moral theory help to guide our decision-making and moral judgments.