ETHICS & HUMAN VALUES   HS-1002

UNIT 2: Reading Material

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Engineering ethics is defined by the codes and standards of conduct endorsed by engineering (professional) societies with respect to the particular set of beliefs, attitudes and habits displayed by the individual or group. Another important goal of engineering ethics is the discovery of the set of justified moral principles of obligation, rights and ideals that ought to be endorsed by the engineers and apply them to concrete situations. Engineering is the largest profession and the decisions and actions of engineers affect all of us in almost all areas of our lives, namely public safety, health, and welfare. There are conventionally two approaches in the study of ethics:

- ✓ Micro-ethics which deals with decisions and problems of individuals, professionals, and companies.
- ✓ Macro-ethics which deals with the societal problems on a regional/national level. For example, global issues, collective responsibilities of groups such as professional societies and consumer groups.

SENSES OF ENGINEERING ETHICS

There are two different senses (meanings) of engineering ethics, namely the Normative and the Descriptive senses. The descriptive sense refers to what specific individual or group of engineers believe and act, without justifying their beliefs or actions. The normative sense include:

- ✓ Knowing moral values, finding accurate solutions to moral problems and justifying moral judgments in engineering practices,
- ✓ Study of decisions, policies, and values that are morally desirable in the engineering practice and research, and
- ✓ Using codes of ethics and standards and applying them in their transactions by engineers.

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:

✓ 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.

✓ Opportunity:

- Double standards or behaviour of the employers towards the employees and the public. The unethical behaviors of leaders in companies such as KINGFISHER, ICICI ETC.
- 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,
- Emphasis on results and gains at the expense of the employees, and
- Management by objectives (MBO), 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.

✓ Attitude: Poor attitude of the employees set in due to
- Low morale of the employees because of dissatisfaction and downsizing,
- Absence of grievance redressal mechanism,
- Lack of promotion or career development policies or denied promotions,
- Lack of transparency,
- Absence of recognition and reward system, and
- 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.

The three types of inquiries, in solving ethical problems are: normative inquiry, conceptual inquiry, and factual or descriptive inquiry.

- ✓ *Normative Inquiry:* It seeks to identify and justify the morally-desirable norms or standards that should guide individuals and groups. It also has the theoretical goal of justifying particular moral judgments. Normative questions are about what ought to be and what is good, based on moral values. For example:

- How far does the obligation of engineers to protect public safety extend in any given situation? When, if ever, should engineers be expected to blow whistle on dangerous practices of their Employers? Whose values ought to be primary in making judgment about acceptable risks in design for a public transport system or a nuclear plant? Is it of management, senior engineers, government, voters or all of them? When and why is the government justified in interfering with the organisations? What are the reasons on which the engineers show their obligations to their employees or clients or the public?

- ✓ Conceptual Inquiry: It is directed to clarify the meaning of concepts or ideas or principles that are expressed by words or by questions and statements. For example, what is meant by safety? How is it related to risk? What is a bribe? What is a profession?

When moral concepts are discussed, normative and conceptual issues are closely interconnected.

- ✓ Factual or Descriptive Inquiry: It is aimed to obtain facts needed for understanding and resolving value issues. Researchers conduct factual inquiries using mathematical or statistical techniques. The inquiry provide important information on business realities, engineering practice, and the effectiveness of professional societies in fostering moral conduct, the procedures used in risk assessment, and psychological profiles of engineers. The facts provide not only the reasons for moral problems but also enable us to develop alternative ways of resolving moral problems. For example, How were the benefits assessed? What are procedures followed in risk assessment? What are short-term and long-term effects of drinking water being polluted? And Who conducted the tests on materials?

MORAL DILEMMA

Dilemmas are situations in which moral reasons come into conflict, or in which the application of moral values are problems, and one is not clear of the immediate choice or solution of the problems. Moral reasons could be rights, duties, goods or obligations. These situations do not mean that things had gone wrong, but they only indicate the presence of moral complexity. This makes the decision making complex. For example, a person promised to meet a friend and dine, but he has to help his uncle who is involved in an accident, one has to fix the priority.

The three complex situations leading to moral dilemmas are:

- The problem of vagueness: One is unable to distinguish between good and bad (right or wrong) principle. Good means an action that is obligatory. For example, code of ethics specifies that one should obey the laws and follow standards. Refuse bribe or accept the gift, and maintain confidentiality.

- The problem of conflicting reasons: One is unable to choose between two good moral solutions. One has to fix priority, through knowledge or value system.

- The problem of disagreement: There may be two or more solutions and none of them mandatory. These solutions may be better or worse in some respects but not in all aspects. One has to interpret, apply different morally reasons, and analyse and rank the decisions. Select the best suitable, under the existing and the most probable conditions.

Steps to Solve Moral Dilemma: The logical steps in confronting moral dilemma are:

- Identification of the moral factors and reasons.

- Collection of all information, data, and facts (factual inquiry) relevant to the situation.

- Rank the moral options i.e., priority in application through value system, and also as obligatory, all right, acceptable, not acceptable, damaging, and most damaging etc. For example, in fulfilling responsibility, the codes give prime importance to public safety and protection of the environment, as compared to the individuals or the employers (conceptual inquiry).

- Generate alternate courses of action to resolve the dilemma. Write down the main options and sub-options as a matrix or decision tree to ensure that all options are included.

- Discuss with colleagues and obtain their perspectives, priorities, and suggestions on various alternatives.

- Decide upon a final course of action, based on priority fixed or assumed. If there is no ideal solution, we arrive at a partially satisfactory or 'satisficing' solution.

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 engineering 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 engineers on moral issues. If management views profitability is more important than consistent quality and retention of the customers that discourage the moral autonomy, engineers 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 engineering skills related to moral autonomy are listed as follows:

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

✓ Maintaining moral integrity.

MORAL DEVELOPMENT (THEORIES)

1. *Kohlberg Theory*

Moral development in human being occurs overage and experience. Kohlberg suggested there are three levels of moral development, namely pre-conventional, conventional, and post-conventional, based on the type of reasoning and motivation of the individuals in response to moral questions.

- In the pre-conventional level, right conduct for an individual is regarded as whatever directly benefits oneself. At this level, individuals are motivated by obedience or the desire to avoid punishment or to satisfy their own needs or by the influence by power on them. All young children exhibit this tendency.
- At the conventional level, people respect the law and authority. Rules and norms of one's family or group or society is accepted, as the standard of morality. Individuals in this level want to please or satisfy, and get approval by others and to meet the expectations of the society, rather than their self-interest (e.g., good boy, good girl). Loyalty is regarded as most important. Many adults do not go beyond this level.
- At the post-conventional level, people are called autonomous. They think originally and want to live by universally good principles and welfare of others. They have no self-interest. They live by principled conscience. They follow the golden rule, 'Do unto others as you would have them do unto you'. They maintain moral integrity, self-respect and respect for others.

Kohlberg believed that individuals could only progress through these stages, one stage at a time. He believed that most of the moral development occurs through social interactions.

2. *Gilligan's Theory*

Carol Gilligan found that Kohlberg's theory had a strong male bias. According to Gilligan's studies, men had a tendency to solve problems by applying abstract moral principles. Men were found to resolve moral dilemma by choosing the most important moral rule, overriding other rules. In contrast, women gave importance to preserve personal relationships with all the people involved. The context oriented emphasis on maintaining personal relationships was called the ethics of care, in contrast with the ethics of rules and rights adopted by men. Gilligan revised the three levels of moral development of Kohlberg, as stages of growth towards ethics of caring.

The pre-conventional level, which is same as that of Kohlberg's first one, right conduct, is viewed in a selfish manner solely as what is good for oneself. The second level called conventional level, the importance is on not hurting others, and willing to sacrifice one's own interest and help others. This is the characteristic feature of women. At the post-conventional level, a reasoned balance is found between caring about others and pursuing the self-interest. The balance one's own need and the needs of others, is aimed while maintaining relationship based on mutual caring. This is achieved by context-oriented reasoning, rather than by hierarchy of rules.

The theories of moral development by Kohlberg and Gilligan differ in the following respects.

Kohlberg's Theory (Basic Aspects)	Carol Gilligan's Theory (Basic Aspects)
1. Is based on the study on men.	1. Is based on the study on men and women
2. Men give importance to moral rule.	2. Women always want to keep up the personal relationships with all the persons involved in the situations.
3. Ethics of rules and rights.	3. Women give attention to circumstances leading to critical situations rather than rules:(context-oriented and ethics of care)
Kohlberg's Theory (Characteristic Features)	**Carol Gilligan's Theory (Characteristic Features)**
✓ Justice ✓ Factual ✓ Right or wrong ✓ Logic only ✓ Logic and rule-based ✓ Less of caring ✓ Matter of fact ✓ Present focus ✓ Strict rules ✓ Independence ✓ Rigid ✓ Taking a commanding role ✓ Transactional approach	✓ Reason ✓ Emotional ✓ Impact on relationships ✓ Compassion too ✓ Caring and concern ✓ More of caring ✓ Abstract ✓ Future focus ✓ Making exceptions ✓ Dependence ✓ Human-oriented ✓ Shying away from decision-making ✓ Transformational approach

The difference in these two theories is explained through the well-known example, Heinz's Dilemma. Heinz being poor and a debtor could not buy the costly medicine for his sick wife, at ten times the normal cost. Initially he begged the Pharmacist to sell at half the price or allow him to pay for it later. Pharmacist refused to oblige him either way. Finally he forcibly entered the Pharmacy and stole the drug. According to Kohlberg study, men observed that the theft was morally 'wrong' at the conventional level, because the property right was violated. But men at the post-conventional level, concluded that the theft was 'right', as the life of the human being was in danger. But women observed that Heinz was wrong. They observed that instead of stealing he could have tried other solutions (threatening or payment in instalments?) to convince the Pharmacist.

Gilligan however attributed the decision by women as context-oriented and not on the basis of rules ranked in the order of priority.

CONSENSUS AND CONTROVERSY

Consensus means agreement and controversy means disagreement. The consensus and the controversies are playing the vital roles while considering the moral autonomy. When an individual exercises the moral autonomy, he cannot get the same results as others get in applying moral autonomy. Surely there must be some moral differences i.e. the results or verdicts will be of controversy. This kind of disagreements is unavoidable. These disagreements require some tolerances among individuals those who are autonomous, reasonable and responsible.

As per the principle of tolerance, the goal of teaching engineering ethics is not merely producing an agreed conformity on applying moral principles among engineers but also to reveal the ways of promoting tolerances to apply moral autonomy.

 For example, in the class room, the teachers are having the authority over students and in the work place, the managers are having the authority over engineers.

There are two general points regarding the relationship between autonomy and authority with reference to the class room:

1) Moral autonomy and respect for the authority cannot be differentiated or separated from each other. Moral autonomy is exercised on the basis of moral concern for other people and also recognition of good moral reasons. Authority provides for the framework in which

learning can take place. It is based on the acceptance of authority by both the students and the professors. Without this acceptance, the classes cannot be conducted in a smooth way. On the other hand, cheating will be encouraged and the trust between faculty and the students may be reduced to some extent. These kind of deviations are due to the absence of moral views and respect for authority. They must be coincide with each other.

2) Generally a tension may arise among the individuals regarding the need for consensus about authority and need for autonomy. This tension can be reduced by discussing openly regarding a moral issue between students and faculty with the help of the authority.

MODELS OF PROFESSIONAL ROLES

The main aim of the profession of engineering is to improve the public safety, health and welfare. In order to perform these functions, the engineer has to play various models to channelize his attitudes towards the achievements of objectives. They are as follows:

- *Savior*: The engineers are responsible for creating an utopian society in which everything is possible and can be achieved without much effort – This can only be achieved through technological developments made by the engineers for safe-guarding the society from poverty, inefficiency, waste and manual labour.

- *Guardian*: Engineers only know the directions through which technology will be developed. So, they should be given position of high authority based on their expertise skills in determining what is in the best interests of the society. They should act as guardians to the technological improvements.

- *Bureaucratic Servant*: Engineer's role in the management is to be the servant who receives and translates the directive of management into better achievements. They have to solve the problems given by the management, within the limits set by the management.

- *Social Servant*: The role of engineers is not only providing service to others but also their responsibility to the society. The interests of the society can be expressed to the engineers either directly or indirectly. So, the engineers, with the co-operation of the management have the work of receiving society's directives and satisfying the desires of the society.

- *Social Enabler and Catalyst*: The engineer has to play a role of creating a better society and should be the cause of making social changes. Service given by the engineers to the society includes carrying out the social directives. Engineers are needed to help the

management and the society to understand their needs and to create decisions about technological development.

➢ *Game Player*: He is neither a servant nor master. An engineer is an assertive player, not a passive player who may carry out his master's voice. He plays a unique role successfully within the organization, enjoying the excitement of the profession and having the satisfaction of surging ahead in a competitive world. For example, Narayanamurthy, Infosys and Dr. Kasthurirangan, ISRO.

THEORIES OF RIGHT ACTION

Several ethical theories have been developed over different times, each of them stressing certain ethical principles or features. Each stresses a view and many a times, we find that these theories converge and reinforce the ethics, in deciding upon the actions and justifying the results.

1. *Utilitarian Theory*

The term Utilitarianism was conceived in the 19th century by Jeremy Bentham and John Stuart Mill to help legislators determine which laws were morally best. They suggested that the standard of right conduct is maximization of good consequences. Good consequences mean either 'utilities' or the 'balance of good over evil'. This approach weighs the costs and benefits. Right actions are the ones that produce the greatest satisfaction of the preferences of the affected persons. In analyzing an issue in this approach, we have to:

✓ Identify the various courses of action available to us.
✓ Ask who will be affected by each action and what benefits or harms will be derived from each.
✓ Choose the action that will produce the greatest benefits and the least harm. The ethical action is the one that provides the greatest good for the greatest number.

2. *Duty Ethics*

The duty ethics theory, proposed by Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) states, that actions are consequences of performance of one's duties such as, 'being honest', 'not cause suffering of others', 'being fair to others including the meek and week', 'being grateful', 'keeping promises' etc. The stress is on the universal principle of respect for autonomy i.e., respect and rationality of persons. As per Kant we have duties to ourselves, as we are rational and autonomous beings. We have a duty not to commit suicide; a duty to develop our talents and a

duty to avoid harmful drugs. Kant insisted that moral duties are categorical imperatives. They are commands that we impose on ourselves as well as other rational beings. For example, we should be honest because honesty is required by duty. A businessman is to be honest because honesty pays, in terms of profits from customers and from avoiding jail for dishonesty.

On the other hand, the DUTY ethics theory, as enunciated by John Rawl, gave importance to the actions that would be voluntarily agreed upon by all persons concerned, assuming impartiality. His view emphasized the autonomy each person exercises in forming agreements with other rational people. Rawl proposed two basic moral principles; (1) each person is entitled to the most extensive amount of liberty compatible with an equal amount for others, and (2) differences in social power and economic benefits are justified only when they are likely to benefit everyone, including members of the most disadvantaged groups.

3. *Rights Theory*

Rights are entitlement to act or to have another individual act in a certain way. Minimally, rights serve as a protective barrier, shielding individuals from unjustified infringement of their moral agency by others. For every right, we have a corresponding duty of non-interference.

A. The RIGHTS approach to ethics has its roots in the 18th century philosopher *Immanuel Kant*, who focused on the individual's right to choose for oneself. Other rights he advocated are:

- ✓ The right to access the truth: We have a right to be told the truth and to be informed about matters that significantly affect our choices.
- ✓ The right of privacy: We have the right to do, believe, and say whatever we choose in our personal lives so long as we do not violate the rights of others.
- ✓ The right not to be injured: We have the right not to be harmed or injured unless we freely and knowingly do something to deserve punishment or we freely and knowingly choose to risk such injuries.
- ✓ The right to what is agreed: We have a right to what has been promised by those with whom we have freely entered into a contract or agreement.

B. In deciding whether an action is moral or immoral, we must ask, does the action respect the moral rights of everyone? Actions are wrong to the extent that they violate the rights of individuals; the more serious is the violation, the more wrongful is the action. The RIGHTS theory as promoted by John Locke states that the actions are right, if they respect human rights

of every one affected. He proposed the three basic human rights, namely life, liberty, and property.

C. As per A.I. Melden's theory based on rights, nature mandates that we should not harm others' life, health, liberty or property. Melden allowed welfare rights also for living a decent human life. He highlighted that the rights should be based on the social welfare system.

D. Human rights: Human rights are explained in two forms, namely liberty rights and welfare rights. Liberty rights are rights to exercise one's liberty and stresses duties on other people not to interfere with one's freedom. The four features of liberty rights (also called moral rights), which lay the base for Government Administration, are:

- ✓ Rights are natural in so far as they are not invented or created by government.
- ✓ They are universal, as they do not change from country to country.
- ✓ They are equal since the rights are the same for all people, irrespective of caste, race, creed or sex.
- ✓ They are inalienable i.e., one cannot hand over his rights to another person such as selling oneself to slavery.

The Welfare Rights are the rights to benefit the needy for a decent human life, when one cannot earn those benefits and when those benefits are available in the society.

E. Economic rights: In the free-market economy, the very purpose of the existence of the manufacturer, the sellers and the service providers is to serve the consumer. The consumer is eligible to exercise some rights. The consumers' six basic rights are: Right to Information, Right to Safety, Right to Choice, Right to be Heard, Right to Redressal, and Right to Consumer Education.

4. *The Virtue Theory*: This emphasizes on the character rather than the rights or duties. The character is the pattern of virtues (morally-desirable features). The theory advocated by Aristotle, stressed on the tendency to act at proper balance between extremes of conduct, emotion, desire, attitudes to find the golden mean between the extremes of 'excess' or 'deficiency'. The examples shown below illustrate the theory:

VIRTUE	EXCESS	GOLDEN MEAN	DEFICIENT
Truthfulness (governs communication)	Revealing all in violation of tact and confidentiality	Necessary and sufficient, to proper person	Secretive
Green Environment	Exploitation	Protection	Neglect
Work and Earn	Tiresome work (strained)	Balance of work and leisure	Lazy (no work) and more pay
Friendliness (Governs Relationship)	Without anger, effusive	Within decent limits	Bad Tempered

5. *Self-realisation Ethics*: Right action consists in seeking self-fulfilment. In one version of this theory, the self to be realized is defined by caring relationships with other individuals and society. In another version called ethical egoism, the right action consists in always promoting what is good for oneself. No caring and society relationships are assumed.

6. *Justice (Fairness) Theory:* The justice or fairness approach to ethics has its roots in the teachings of the ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle, who said that "equals should be treated equally and unequal's unequally." The basic moral question in this approach is: How fair is an action? Does it treat everyone in the same way, or does it show favouritism and discrimination?

SELF-CONTROL

It is a virtue of maintaining personal discipline. It means a strong will and motivation and avoidance of fear, hatred, lack of efforts, temptation, self-deception, and emotional response. It encompasses courage and good judgment also. Self-respect promotes self-control.

SELF-INTEREST

Self-interest is being good and acceptable to oneself. It is pursuing what is good for oneself. It is very ethical to possess self-interest. As per utilitarian theory, this interest should provide for the respect of others also. Duty ethics recognizes this aspect as duties to ourselves. Then only one can help others. Right ethicist stresses our rights to pursue our own good. Virtue ethics also accepts the importance of self-respect as link to social practices.

In Ethical Egoism, the self is conceived in a highly individualistic manner. It says that every one of us should always and only promote one's own interest. The ethical egoists do not accept

the wellbeing of the community or caring for others. However this self-interest should not degenerate into egoism or selfishness, i.e., maximizing only own good in the pursuit of self-interest. The ethical egoists hold that the society benefits to maximum when

 (a) The individuals pursue their personal good and

(b) The individual organizations pursue maximum profit in a competitive enterprise. This is claimed to improve the economy of the country as a whole, besides the individuals.

In such pursuits, both individuals and organizations should realize that independence is not the only important value. We are also interdependent, as much as independent. Each of us is vulnerable in the society. Self-respect includes recognition of our vulnerabilities and interdependencies. Hence, it is compatible with caring for ourselves as well as others. Self-interest is necessary initially to begin with. But it should be one of the prime motives for action; the other motive is to show concern for others, in the family as well as society. One's self-interest should not harm others. The principles of 'Live and let (others) live', and 'reasonably fair competition' are recommended to professionals by the ethicists.

CUSTOMS

Ethical Pluralism: Various cultures in our pluralistic society lead to tolerance for various customs, beliefs, and outlooks. Accordingly ethical pluralism also exists. Although many moral attitudes appear to be reasonable, the rational and morally concerned people cannot fully accept any one of the moral perspectives. There are many varied moral values, which allow variation in the understanding and application of values by the individuals or groups in their everyday transactions. It means that even reasonable people will not agree on all moral issues and professional ethics.

Ethical Relativism: According to this principle, actions are considered morally right when approved by law or custom, and wrong when they violate the laws or customs. The deciding factor is the law or the customs of the society. Should we accept the principle of relativism or not? A few reasons to accept this are explained in the following paragraphs:

- ✓ Laws appear to be objective ways for judging values. The laws and customs tend to be definite, clear and real, but not always. Further moral reasons allow objective criticism of laws, as being morally lacking. For example, the Apartheid laws of South Africa violated the human rights of the native Africans. No legal protection was available for native citizens for a long time. Now, of course, these laws have been repealed.

- ✓ Ethical relativism assumes that the values are subjective at the cultural level. Moral standards also vary from culture to culture. The objectivity is supported by the existing laws of that society. The relative morality accepted, supports the virtue of tolerance of differences among societies. This argument is also not fully acceptable. As per ethical relativism, the actions and laws of the Nazis and Hitler who vowed on Anti-Semitism and killed several million Jews would be accepted as right.

- ✓ Moral relationalism or moral contextualism: According to this, the moral judgments must be made in relation to certain factors, which may vary from case to case. The morally important factors for making judgments include the customs and laws. The virtue ethicists hold that the practical wisdom should prevail upon assessing the facts and in the judgment.

This principle was accepted by the early anthropologists because they had a specific tendency to over-stress the scope of moral difference between cultures. The human sacrifices and cannibalism were accepted. But the modern anthropologists insist that all cultures shall exhibit the virtue of social welfare and safety against needless death or physical or mental harm. Moral differences were based on the circumstances and facts and not on the difference in moral attitudes. For example, the pharaohs buried the live attendants along with their dead king with the belief that they would continue to serve the king in his afterlife.

RELIGION

Religions have played major roles in shaping moral views over geographical regions. Christianity has influenced the Western countries, Islam in the Middle-East countries, Buddhism and Hinduism in Asia, and Confucianism in China. Further, there is a strong psychological link between the moral and religious beliefs of people following various religions and faiths. Religions support moral responsibility. They have set high moral standards. Faith in the religions provides trust and this trust inspires people to be moral. The religions insist on tolerance and moral concern for others. Many professionals who possess religious beliefs are motivated to be morally responsible.

Each religion lays stress on certain high moral standards. For example, Hinduism holds polytheistic (many gods) view, and virtues of devotion and surrender to high order. Christianity believes in one deity and emphasizes on virtues of Love, Faith, and Hope. Buddhism is non-theistic and focuses on compassion and Islam on one deity and adherence of ishan (piety or pursuit of excellence) and prayer.

Judaism stresses the virtue of 'tsedakah' (righteousness). But many religious sects have adopted poor moral standards, e.g., many religious sects do not recognize equal rights for women. The right to worship is denied for some people. People are killed in the name of or to promote religion. Thus, conflicts exist between the 'secular' and religious people and between one religion and another. Hence, religious views have to be morally scrutinized.

USES OF ETHICAL THEORIES

- ✓ Ethical theories aid in identifying the moral considerations or reasons that constitute a dilemma.
- ✓ They provide a precise sense of what kinds of information are relevant to solving moral development.
- ✓ They sometimes, offer ways to rank the relevant moral considerations in order of importance and provide a rough guidance in solving moral problems.
- ✓ The theories help us identify the full moral ramifications of alternative courses of action, urging a wide perspective on the moral implications of the options and providing a systematic framework of comparing alternatives.
- ✓ The theories augment the precision with which we use moral terms and they provide frame works for moral reasoning when discussing moral issues with colleagues.
- ✓ By providing frame works for development of moral arguments, the theories strengthen our ability to reach balanced and insightful judgments