

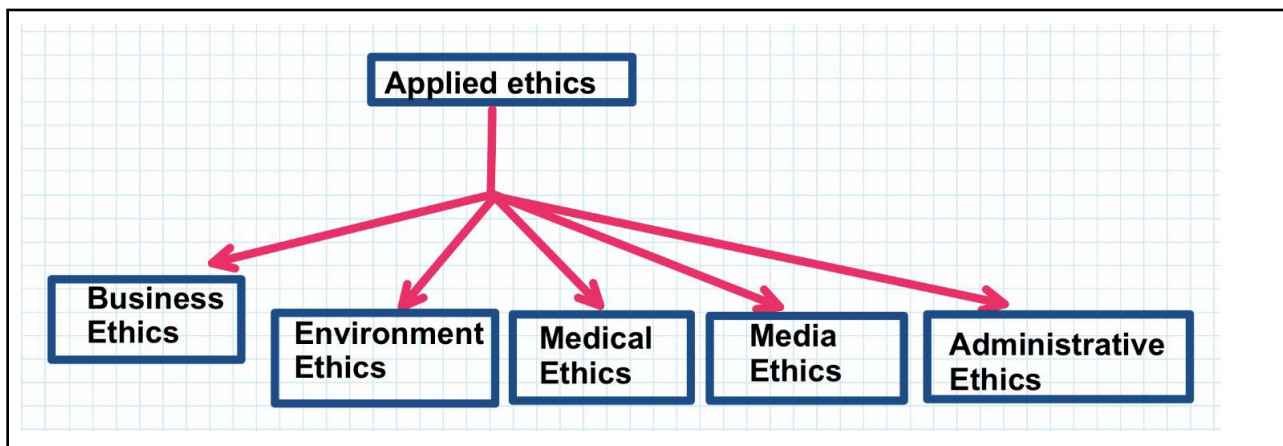
# Applied Ethics

- **Applied ethics**, also called **practical ethics**, is the application of ethics to **real-world problems**.
- It attempts to answer the question of how people should act in specific situations.

## Examples

- Applied ethics deals with the moral issues like – Abortion, pre-marital sex, euthanasia, death penalty, LGBTQ rights, war tactics, censorship, etc.

## Dimensions of Applied Ethics



## Significance of Applied Ethics

- It **addresses the moral permissibility** of specific actions and practices.
- It deals with **difficult and controversial moral issues** that people actually face in their day to day lives.
- Applied ethics is **more specific than normative ethics**, (i.e. how people should behave)
- It is also **different from metaethics**, (a branch of philosophy that asks questions about the nature of ethics such as, “what is morality?”)
- With a practical approach to ethics, people don’t need to agree on a moral theory. Instead, they can **agree to solutions to ethical dilemmas** by reviewing the facts and related harms of a specific situation. This is one of the key strengths of applied ethics.
- Applied ethics thus helps make the decision-making process easier, quick and ethical particularly in the tricky situations of day-to-day life.

## Bioethics

- Bioethics is a field within applied ethics that focuses on **ethical issues that relate to biology and biological systems**.

### Scope of Bioethics

It addresses moral issues pertaining to -

- **beginning of life issues** such as abortion and surrogacy;
- **end of life issues** such as euthanasia; and
- **medical research** such as clinical trials

Some of the important bioethical issues have been covered in detail as described below :

### 1. Abortion: Right or Wrong?

- So long as a foetus is a person (or counts morally), it would be morally wrong to abort it. However, another argument is that - even with a **foetus being a person, with all of the rights** we would confer to any other person, it would still be permissible to abort, under certain conditions.
- For example, it's permissible for a pregnant woman to abort a foetus under the circumstances that she was raped, even with the granting that the aborted foetus is a full-fledged person.
- In India, under the new rules, **seven specific categories** will be eligible for termination of pregnancy up to 24 weeks:
  - survivors of sexual assault or rape or incest;
  - minors;
  - change of marital status during the ongoing pregnancy (widowhood and divorce);
  - women with physical disabilities;
  - mentally ill women;
  - foetal malformation that has a substantial risk of being incompatible with life or if the child is born, he/ she may suffer from serious physical or mental abnormalities;
  - women with pregnancy in humanitarian settings or disaster or emergency situations.

### Arguments in support

1. **Right to Privacy:** It is broad enough to encompass a woman's decision whether to terminate her pregnancy.
2. **Right to Equality:** Reproductive choice empowers women by giving them control over their own bodies. The choice over when and whether to have children is central to a woman's independence and ability to determine her future. The ability of women to participate equally in the economic and social life of the Nation has been facilitated by their ability to control their reproductive lives. Undue restrictions on abortion infringe upon **“a woman's autonomy to determine her life's course, and thus to enjoy equal citizenship stature.**

3. **Rational Argument:** Personhood begins after a foetus becomes “viable” (able to survive outside the womb) or after birth, not at conception. Embryos and fetuses are not independent, self-determining beings, and abortion is the termination of a pregnancy, not a baby. A person’s age is calculated from birth date, not conception.
4. **Foetuses are incapable of feeling pain when most abortions are performed:** The cortex does not become functional until at least the 26th week of a fetus’ development, long after most abortions are performed. Modern abortion procedures are safe and do not cause lasting health issues such as cancer and infertility.
5. **Legal Permission:** Access to legal, professionally performed abortions reduces maternal injury and death caused by unsafe, illegal abortions. The Medical Termination of Pregnancy (MTP) Act, 2021 provides the legal framework for making comprehensive abortion care services available in India.
6. **Availability of new technologies:** Modern abortion procedures are safe and do not cause lasting health issues such as cancer and infertility.
7. **Mental Health Perspective:** Women who receive abortions are less likely to suffer mental health problems than women denied abortions. Abortion gives pregnant women the option to choose not to bring foetuses with profound abnormalities to full term.
8. **Unemployment and Domestic violence:** Women who are denied abortions are more likely to become unemployed, to be on public welfare, to be below the poverty line, and to become victims of domestic violence.
9. **Future wellbeing of the baby:** A baby should not come into the world unwanted. Having a child is an important decision that requires consideration, preparation, and planning. The unintended pregnancies are associated with birth defects, low birth weight, maternal depression, increased risk of child abuse, lower educational attainment, delayed entry into prenatal care, a high risk of physical violence during pregnancy, and reduced rates of breastfeeding.
10. **Abortion reduces crime:** legalised abortion has contributed significantly to recent crime reductions. Women who have abortions are those most at risk to give birth to children who would engage in criminal activity,” and women who had control over the timing of childbearing were more likely to raise children in optimal environments, crime is reduced when there is access to legal abortion.
11. **Supreme Court of India’s Judgment:** A bench headed by Justice J.S. Khehar said: “In view of the clear findings of the medical board whose examination showed that contained pregnancy could endanger the petitioner’s life, we are satisfied that it may be permissible to terminate pregnancy.”

### Arguments against

1. **Abortion is Immoral:** The killing of an innocent human being is wrong, even if that human being has yet to be born. It is immoral to kill an unborn child for convenience.
2. **Right to Life:** Life begins at conception, so unborn babies are human beings with a right to life.
3. **Against the Will of God:** Abortion is the killing of a human being, which defies the word of God. Traditional Buddhism rejects abortion because it involves the deliberate destroying of a

life. The Bible does not draw a distinction between fetuses and babies: the Greek word *brephos* is used in the Bible to refer to both an unborn child and an infant.

4. **Abortions cause psychological damage:** The women who underwent an abortion had “significantly higher” anxiety scores on the Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale up to five years after the pregnancy termination.
5. **Abortions reduce the number of adoptable babies:** Instead of having the option to abort, women should give their unwanted babies to people who cannot conceive.
6. **Overt discrimination:** Physical limitations don’t make those with disabilities less than human.
7. **Doctor’s Oath:** The original text of the Hippocratic Oath, traditionally taken by doctors when swearing to practise medicine ethically, forbids abortion.
8. **Social Perspective:** Abortion eliminates the potential societal contributions of a future human being and promotes a culture in which human life is disposable.
9. **Health complications:** Abortion may lead to future medical problems for the mother.
10. **Increase in female-foeticide:** the demand of baby boys led to an increase in female-foeticide. This in-turn affects the sex ratio.

### **The Horrific story of remote village on the border of Punjab and Haryana about female-foeticide:**

- Dr Harshindar Kaur was on her way to a remote village on the border of Punjab and Haryana. The villagers in this area were deprived of even basic medical facilities and Dr Kaur, a child specialist, along with her medical specialist husband, Dr Gurpal Singh, volunteered to serve in a camp.
- The village was just minutes away when the couple heard strange shrieks coming from an area reserved for the carcasses of animals. Curious about the source of the noise, Kaur and Singh changed directions and headed towards the dumping ground. What they witnessed was nothing short of horrific.
- They saw a few stray dogs tearing apart some living thing, and the shrieks were coming from there. On further investigation, we beheld a shocking site. There, atop a heap of bones, lay a newborn girl who was then dead. The scavenging dogs had torn her apart.
- Shaken at that gory scene, the couple approached the villagers, questioning as to how this could happen.
- It was even more shocking for them when one of the villagers indifferently told them that the baby might have belonged to a poor family who probably did not want a daughter.
- Although the Pre-Conception and Pre-Natal Diagnostic Techniques Act (PCPNDT) had been passed in 1994, thousands of female foeticide cases were recorded in the two states every year. Between 1996 and 1998, 51,000 sex-selective abortions were recorded in Punjab and 62,000 in Haryana.

## **2. Surrogacy**

Surrogacy is an arrangement, often supported by a legal agreement, whereby a **woman agrees to bear a child for another person** or persons, who will become the child's parent after birth.

## Arguments in support

1. **An act of Compassion:** Surrogate mothers are usually women who are caring and compassionate with a strong urge to help those in need. Making it possible for those who struggle with infertility to have a baby and complete their family can be a life changing experience, resulting in happiness and satisfaction for everyone involved.
2. **Surrogacy completes families:** For those who have struggled with infertility, LGBT couples, and those with medical conditions that make pregnancy unsafe, surrogacy is often the answer to years of unsuccessful attempts to create a family. (However, with respect to India, it can be availed only by married couples who have proven infertility and divorced/widow of certain age)
3. **Feeling of joy or happiness:** Most women who chose to become a surrogate mother truly enjoy being pregnant. One requirement for surrogates is to already be a mother. By choosing to carry for someone else, you can enjoy the experience of being pregnant once more without the duty of having to raise the child yourself.
4. **Emotional Bonding:** Gestational surrogacy often enables one or both parents to maintain a biological relationship with their child.
5. **Legal Protection:** A legally binding contract outlining everyone's expectations will be negotiated and signed prior to the embryo transfer, so everyone will know exactly what to expect during the surrogacy process. A court order is obtained prior to birth of the child, confirming the intended parents' legal rights.

## Arguments against

1. **Physically and emotionally demanding:** Choosing to be a surrogate is an emotional challenge. Carrying a baby for someone else is a big responsibility and most surrogates will experience ups and downs throughout their journey. In addition to the typical physical challenges of pregnancy, you will need to undergo additional screenings, appointments, fertility treatments, and more.
2. **Life at Stake:** Just as any other pregnancy, there is always a risk involved in carrying a child. You might not get pregnant on the first transfer and there's a chance of pregnancy complications that could have a negative effect on your health.
3. **Stigmatization:** Although attitudes of most people are becoming more positive towards surrogacy, there are still those who hold negative thoughts towards the idea of surrogate mothers. A lack of information, misconceptions and social stigma can result in some people close to you not giving you the support you were hoping for.
4. **Feminist concerns:** Ethics also come into play when thinking about the gendered nature of surrogacy and intended parenting. Biologically, the surrogate must be someone with the capacity to gestate and give birth – usually a woman. As gendered labour, surrogacy triggers important feminist concerns, such as about **bodily autonomy, vulnerability, inequality, and rights**.
5. **Altruistic Surrogacy:** Feminist have criticised the new surrogacy law for romanticising altruism and denying women the right to livelihood.
6. **Exploitation:** The UK, Ukraine, US, Australia and India have different regulations about surrogacy. Some countries see the surrogate, while others the intended mother, as the

legitimate mother. Some favour altruistic forms of surrogacy, while others allow commercial forms. Some countries give parental rights to intended parents before or at the birth of the child, while others only after six weeks. In particular, the country-specific approach opens up the potential to exploit legal loopholes, intended parents, and, ultimately those doing the majority of the labour – surrogates.

- For Eg. in Chennai, a single mother of two decided to become a surrogate mother in the hope that the payment would help her start a shop near her house. She delivered a healthy child, but her troubles bore little fruit for herself. She received only about Rs 75,000, which comprised only 50% of the total sum. An auto-rickshaw driver, who served as a middleman, took the rest of the money. Hence, Surrogacy act is passed recently.

### 3. Clinical Trials

The **potential benefits** of participating in a clinical trial may include the following:

1. **Access to promising new treatments** often not available outside the clinical-trial setting
2. Treatment that may be **more effective** than the standard approach
3. **Close monitoring, advice, care, and support** by a research team of doctors and other health care professionals who understand your disease or condition
4. The opportunity to be the **first to benefit** from a new method under study
5. The chance to play an **active role in your own health care** and gain a greater understanding of your disease or condition
6. The chance to help society by **contributing to medical research**. Even if you don't directly benefit from the results of the clinical trial you take part in, the information gathered can help others and adds to scientific knowledge.
7. People who take part in clinical trials are vital to the **process of improving medical care**.

The **potential risks** of participating in a clinical trial may include the following:

1. The clinical trial may **require more time** than a non-clinical trial treatment such as more visits to the clinical trial site, more treatments, hospital stays, etc.
2. There may be **unpleasant, serious, or life-threatening side effects** to experimental treatments.

#### Role of ethics in clinical trials:

- Ethical considerations have a multiplicity of roles during the conduct of clinical trials. These roles span a broad range—from matters **related to the design of a study, to the conduct** and even **to the reporting of the results obtained**.
- **Philosophical, legal, and even religious and moral beliefs** have a direct influence on the ethical approach to clinical trials. Customs and morals that reflect on disclosure of the subject's disease or state thereof, have, in the past, heavily influenced all ethical considerations when treating subjects and when approaching them to be included into clinical trials.

- A large number and a significant variety of issues come to the fore when preparing to conduct a clinical trial. Many of them are easier to pinpoint and deal with by means of precise rules. These include **the issues of conflicts of interest such as the one already noted above on the potential conflict of the role of the clinician as an investigator**. Others are more subtle such as the **vested interest of the investigator to publish, to gain prestige, to yield to commercial pressures and interest**.
- Another important point is that the lives of participants in clinical trials are at stake. For eg. **Six people died during trials of the coronavirus vaccine produced by the American pharmaceutical company “Pfizer” and the German “BioNTech” company**.

#### 4. Euthanasia and Physician-Assisted Suicide

Euthanasia can be termed as the intentional killing of another person, where the intention is to benefit that person by ending their life, and that it, in fact, does benefit their life.

Types of euthanasia -

- **Voluntary euthanasia** is where the person killed consents to it.
- **Involuntary euthanasia** is where the person actively expresses that they do not give their consent, or where consent was possible but where they were not asked.
- **Non-voluntary euthanasia** is where consent is not possible – for example, the person is in a vegetative state.
- **Active euthanasia** involves doing something to the person which then ends their life, for example, shooting them, or injecting them with a lethal dose.
- **Passive euthanasia** involves denying assistance or treatment to the person that they would need to otherwise live.

**E.g.** Smothering a person with a pillow **would be active**, even if it technically denies them something they need to live – that is, oxygen. Refusing to continue a breathing device, by unplugging the person from the device, **would be passive**.

#### Arguments For

1. **Matter of Right:** The right to die should be a matter of personal choice.
2. **Doctor’s Perspective:** When healing is no longer possible, when death is imminent and patients find their suffering unbearable, then the physician’s role should shift from healing to relieving suffering in accord with the patient’s wishes.
3. **Voluntary death from the historical and philosophical perspective:-** Hinduism allow **prayopaveshan** since it is a non-violent, calm and much time taking way of ending life and it occurs by starving oneself to death at the right time, i.e. – when the person has achieved his aims in life and finished performing all the duties and responsibilities that were assigned to him and his body becomes a burden. Similar practice in Jainism is k/a Santhara.
4. **Active euthanasia is more humane than passive:** For E.g., if the only way to end the life of a terminally ill person is by denying them life-supporting measures, perhaps by unplugging them from a feeding tube, where it will take weeks, if not months for them to die, then this

seems less humane, and perhaps outright cruel, in comparison to just injecting them with a lethal dose.

### Arguments Against

1. **Hippocratic Oath:** It clearly states: 'I will neither give a deadly drug to anybody if asked for it, nor will I make a suggestion to this effect.'
2. **A terminal diagnosis is rarely predicted:** The Mayo Clinic discovered that only one of every five patients received a correct number during a 2005 analysis of terminal disease diagnoses. 17 percent of people in this situation live for much longer than the doctor initially recommends. That is why, even though legal definitions allow for its use, euthanasia is met with such resistance. What else is possible if one in every five people overcomes their diagnosis?
3. **Loss of Dignity:** Most patients request the lethal drugs not due to pain (or even fear of future pain), but due to concerns like 'loss of dignity' and 'becoming a burden on others' – attitudes that these laws encourage.
4. **Responsibility of killing an individual:** Euthanasia could readily be extended to incompetent patients and other vulnerable populations. The involvement of physicians in euthanasia heightens the significance of its ethical prohibition. The physician who performs euthanasia assumes unique responsibility for the act of ending the patient's life."
5. **Threat to the lives of the vulnerable:** Legalizing euthanasia would have a wide range of profoundly detrimental effects. It would diminish the protection offered to the lives of all. It would allow the killing of people who do not genuinely volunteer to be killed, and any safeguards, although initially observed, would inevitably weaken over time.

### Following points should be kept in mind while allowing euthanasia:

1. The request for euthanasia must come only from the patient and must be entirely **free and voluntary**.
2. The patient's request must be well **considered, durable and persistent**.
3. The patient must be experiencing **intolerable (not necessarily physical) suffering**, with no prospect of improvement.
4. Euthanasia must be the last resort. Other alternatives to alleviate the patient's situation must be considered and found wanting.
5. Euthanasia must be performed by a physician.
6. The physician must consult with an independent physician colleague who has experience in this field.

### Euthanasia and Dignity in Kantian Perspectives:

- Immanuel Kant, German philosopher, argued that human beings are rational, so we have a choice to do things not 'just do things' but do the maxim. (Do the good)
- Kant's maxim means individual intentional action. It is our personal choice to do our maxim. His major metaphor is categorical imperative which means unconditional command.
- It mainly focuses on an individual's duty. The doctor's duty is to save the patient at any cost.



### **Aruna Shanbaug case:**

- Aruna Shanbaug was a nurse working at the King Edward Memorial Hospital, Parel, Mumbai. On 27 November 1973 she was strangled and sodomized by Sohanlal Walmiki, a sweeper.
- During the attack she was strangled with a chain, and the deprivation of oxygen has left her in a vegetative state ever since. She has been treated at KEM since the incident and is kept alive by feeding tube.
- On behalf of Aruna, her friend Pinki Virani, a social activist, filed a petition in the Supreme Court arguing that the "continued existence of Aruna is in violation of her right to live in dignity".
- The Supreme Court made its decision on 7 March 2011. **The court rejected the plea to discontinue Aruna's life support but issued a set of broad guidelines legalising passive euthanasia in India.**

### **Medical Ethics**

- It deals with the **right choices of conduct in the field of human health.**
- It is an applied branch of ethics
- Describes the **moral principles governing the conduct of the medical practitioner.**

### **Quotes**

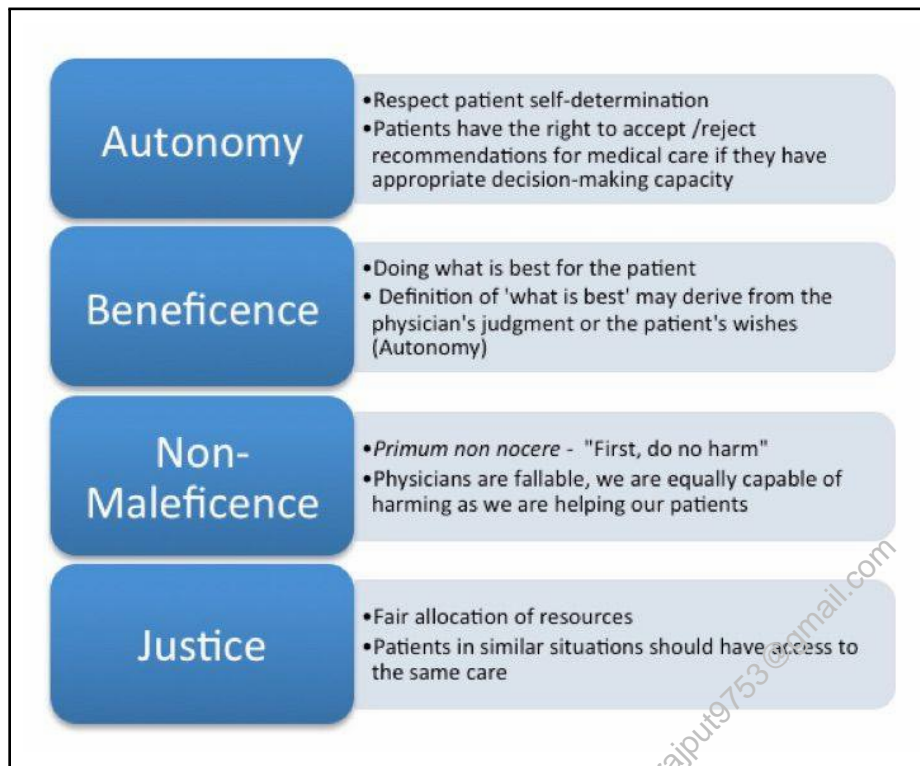
- "A life saved is a family saved."
- "MEDICINE means Mercy – Empathy – Dare – Integrity – Care – Ingenuity – and Ethics."
- 'Wherever the art of Medicine is loved, there is also a love of Humanity' – Hippocrates

### **Examples**

- **Example 1 : Dr Govind Nandakumar was on his way to perform an emergency laparoscopic gallbladder surgery when he got stuck in a nasty traffic jam in the city. He chose to run for 3 km to reach the hospital in time to carry out a crucial life-saving surgery.**
- **Example 2 : The Federation of All India Medical Association (FAIMA) demand of withdrawing a SOP for special medical care arrangements of sitting Members of Parliament. The association stated that through such SOPs, VIP culture is being promoted in the country.**
- **Example 3 : Dr. Arvind Goyal has donated his property worth Rs 600 crore to the Uttar Pradesh government to help the poor people of the country. During the COVID-19**

**pandemic too, Dr. Goyal provided free medical services to 50 villages around Moradabad. Dr. Goyal has been honoured by the President four times.**

### Pillars of Medical ethics



**Charaka** also outlined four ethical principles of a doctor :

1. *Friendship towards the sick;*
2. *Sympathy towards the sick;*
3. *Interest in cases according to one's capabilities; and*
4. *No attachment with the patient after his recovery.*

### Significance of Medical Ethics

1. **health is the necessary aspects of human life** is hence medical practitioners are duty bound to take care for the health needs of the populace.
2. Medical practitioners face various challenges in the course of their work
3. **Medical ethics guides in the decision-making process, medical practices, medical education, and research in medicine.**
4. It promotes **health and wellbeing, dignity, justice, and accountability** in the medical profession.

5. Realising its importance, the World Health Organization (WHO) in 2002 established an ethics team known as the global Health Ethics Unit.

### Ethical issues

1. **Malpractices:** There are several cases of lack of ethical standards in behaviour of hospitals and doctors, prescription of unnecessary tests, violation of ethics in clinical trials, etc.
  - **For eg: involvement of senior doctors of Apollo hospitals in organ trade racket**
2. **Resource Scarcity:** Doctors in public hospitals are overburdened and work in stressful conditions. Also, it is the doctors who often face public anger in case of any mishappening.
  - For eg: During Covid Wave due to scarcity of resources, doctors faced public backlash.
3. **Euthanasia:** The Hippocratic Oath states: 'I will give no deadly medicine to anyone if asked, nor suggest any such counsel'. This has been ordained to maintain sanctity and dignity of life so that doctors' professional capabilities are not abused.
  - Nevertheless, during a terminal illness and in the care of patients with irreversible life-threatening disease, a time comes when it is appropriate for the doctor to stop further attempts to prolong misery and allow death with dignity.
  - In this light, the Supreme Court of India allowed passive euthanasia in **Aruna Shanbaug case 2011** and recently, it also allowed 'advance directive' or 'living will' for terminally ill patients.
4. **Incentives to Doctors:** Doctors should not indulge in giving any gifts, bonuses, or 'kickbacks' for referring patients for consultation and investigations. Also, it is unethical for them to receive favours and gifts from manufacturers or suppliers of equipment and pharmaceuticals.
  - For eg : recent Dolo scandal where allegations of unethical" benefits, including gifts and entertainment, sponsored international travel, hospitality, and other benefits, were provided to doctors for promoting and prescribing the drug.
5. **Research:** Fraud in research by plagiarizing should be condemned and adequately punished.
6. **Violence committed by the patient's family:** Many cases of assault on doctors after loss of lives by the deceased family is making doctors reluctant to serve in public hospitals.
  - For eg : recent instance of death of a family member in Kolkata ,led family members attack doctors on duty and further vandalise the hospitals .
7. **Informed Consent:** Patients should be provided complete information about the procedure they are about to undergo, and consent should follow based on true and complete information.
  - For eg : removing kidneys from patients without their consent is blatantly unethical.
8. **Prescription:** Doctors must ensure that they prescribe the most available, accessible, affordable, and effective medicines to the patients, basically generic drugs instead of expensive patented drugs. The purpose is to help the needy and ensure public health.
  - For eg : the Government of India runs the Jan Aushadhi Yojana to increase supply of generic medicines.
9. **Rising commercialization:** This results in loss of trust between doctor and patients.
  - For ex: Doctor of Government hospitals doing private practice and charging patients hefty fees.

### Steps to be taken to improve the condition

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1. **Strict Implementation of regulations:** The Indian Medical Council (Professional Conduct, Etiquette and Ethics) Regulations, 2002 prescribes -
    - Physicians are to prescribe drugs with generic names as far as possible.
    - The prescription and use of pharmaceutical drugs should be rational.
    - It prohibits disbursement of gifts.
  2. **Regular training and support** should be given to imbibe the feeling of sympathy and compassion among doctors.
  3. **Focus on Emergency Medicine (EM):** sensitization of workforce to ensure better handling of emergency rooms for eg: breaking the bad news or handling agitated relatives
  4. **Confidence building measures with the doctors** by assuring their safety and security.
  5. **Learning from the roots:** The Charaka Samhita has extensively emphasised the values that are central to the nobility of this profession thus, 'Those who trade their medical skills for personal livelihood can be considered as collecting a pile of dust, leaving aside the heap of real gold'.

Rapid privatization and commercialisation of the health-care system have strained the age-old good relations between the patient and the doctors. Thus, there is a need to uphold the legal, ethical, and moral liabilities for both the doctors and the patients. Few of **Gandhi's Seven Sins** – '**commerce without morality**' and '**science without humanity**' highlight the need for reviving the spirit of medical ethics in India.

## Media Ethics

- Media acts as a **watchdog and a fourth pillar** in a democracy.
- It plays an important role in upholding spirit of democracy both in letter and spirit
- It provides the platform to voice the concerns of all the stakeholders
- It serves as an agency to create active and informed citizenry

**Media ethics** is a branch of ethics that **addresses moral issues arising in connection with the acquisition, presentation, dissemination, and reception of information** through the means of mass media.

It includes **ethical values** of impartiality, objectivity, balance, privacy, and the public interest.

### Quotes

- *Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a Government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter." -Thomas Jefferson*
- *The sole aim of journalism should be service. The newspaper is a great power, but just as an unchained torrent of water submerges the whole countryside and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy." -Mahatma Gandhi.*

- **Journalism is what maintains democracy. It's the force for progressive social change.** – Andrew Vachss

### Ethical Principles of Journalism

1. Journalists should convey the **news without any prejudice**, and it should not reflect opinion.
2. They should be answerable to the public and **should not indulge in lobbying with the corporates and politicians.**
3. **Veracity is indispensable**
4. **Independence is the** cornerstone of true Journalism
5. One should not **trivialize** the significant content neither should **sensationalize** the information
6. Information should be completely and accurately shared with the public and No sort of information shall be withheld even if it goes against the interest of the media outlet itself.
7. Media ownership should be as publicly distributed as possible to reduce the possibility of **murdochisation of media**. For instance, **BBC** is a public corporation of the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport.
8. Right means should be used to obtain information and the privacy, dignity, trust etc. should be maintained. Methods like **sting operations** should be only used when they are found clearly in larger public interest and there should be clear guidelines for the matter.

The case of '**Pentagon Papers**', a major investigative story, is a great example of the need for journalism ethics.

- The stories were published in 1971 and based on classified documents leaked by military whistle-blower Daniel Ellsberg.
- The documents showed that the U.S. government had escalated the Vietnam War and kept information about its true aims and actions hidden from the public.
- On one hand, journalists had a duty to reveal the truth, as it was in the public interest. On the other hand, they also had a duty to protect the people named in the classified documents.
- In this case, the two newspapers were guided by public interest. They decided Americans' need to know about the government's deceit outweighed the risks of revealing certain information.

### Need of media ethics

1. **Objective journalism is the need of the hour**
  - For e.g. - Cambridge Analytica case, the biased news coverage on social media platforms affected the Presidential elections in the U.S.
2. **Sensationalism and higher TRP rating should not form the basis of journalism**
  - For e.g. - coverage of 26/11 terrorist attacks in India risked the internal security of the nation.
  - Many times, the sensationalism-driven reporting has compromised the identities of rape victims and survivors despite Supreme court guidelines.
3. **Trial by media**

4. With the proliferation of technology, the impact of media on life of people has significantly increased as there has been a famous statement “one who controls the media controls the mind” **(As said by Jim Morrison)**

### Ethical issues in Indian Journalism

1. **Paid news and fake news:**
  - For instance, fearmongering through the media has led to mob lynching, attacks on the migrant population.
2. **Opaque private treaties with corporates** and political parties which ensures favourable coverage for them.
3. In the name of **investigative journalism** often media houses resort to **blackmailing and extortion** which defeats the purpose of journalism
4. **Lack of laws and regulations**
5. **Lack of objectivity**
  - For example, recently Qatari government-owned news channel Al-Jazeera was restricted from operating in Jammu and Kashmir by the Government of India for its biased coverage.
6. **TRP Manipulation:** Recently, various claims have been made about the manipulation of TRPs (Target Rating Points) by some TV channels by rigging the devices used by the Broadcast Audience Research Council (BARC) India.
7. **Trial by Media** - Engaging in one-sided media trials as done in the Arushi Talwar case

### Measures to be adopted to reform Indian media

1. **Journalistic oath** in the same manner as the Hippocratic Oath in medicine.
2. **Ensure Transparency, Accountability, and responsibility in the functioning of media**
  - Eg - recent imposition of fine of Rs 50,000 on news channel for debating on hijab issue on communal basis is a right step in this direction.
3. Creating a **conducive environment** where a journalist understands their professional responsibility and can ensure ethical standards in their reporting and observe sensitive, restrained, and responsible journalism

### Reforms in US

- **Earlier due to yellow journalism**, newspapers in the USA were riddled with sensational crime stories with exaggerated headlines, pictures, and sketches. There was cutthroat competition and a mad rush to attract more readers and maximize the profits for newspapers' owners.
- **Canons of journalism:** In the US, in 1922, the American Society of Newspaper Editors (ASNE) adopted a set of ethical principles titled "Canons of Journalism", which was later revised and renamed 'Statement of Principles' in 1975.
- Key principles: The ASNE proposed six key principles: **Responsibility, Freedom of the Press, Independence, Truth and Accuracy, Impartiality and Fair Play.**

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