Introduction to Ethics

**“Ethics Is True Identification of Professionalism”**

**Definition of Ethics:-**

Ethics or Moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that identifies systematizing, defending, and recommending concepts of right and wrong behaving pattern". The field of ethics, related to matters of moral values, and deals with the branch of philosophy called “Axiology.” Axiology is the philosophy branch which study of [value](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Value_(ethics)) as like ethics or aesthetics.

Ethics deals with questions of human morality by defining concepts such as good versus evil, right versus wrong, virtue versus vice, justice versus crime. Ethics, also known as Moral Philosophy. Study of Ethichs helps to understand what right conduct is and when conducts of profession makes it wrong. Ethics is vaster than morality. When morality ends with moral codes and the practice of specific actions, then Ethics not only identifies all moral behaviors and theories, but also reveals “philosophy of life”. Ethics seeks identification of questions such as how a person should act, what one should think is right direction, how any person is expected to use and practice one’s moral knowledge, by identifying meaning of “right.”  
  
 Morality is a biased concept as such, as it keep changing according to norms, cultural believes & passage of time. But in case of Ethics, it is dependant and developed on universally accepted ideas and values, which can be exercised all over the place in all times under all circumstances.  
 **Ethics can be categorized into 4 types as follows**

**Types of Ethics**

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| **Meta Ethics** |
| **Normative Ethics** |
| **Descriptive Ethics** |
| **Applied Ethics** |

**Meta Ethics**

Meta ethics is the concluding abstract and exists at philosophical level. It verifies ethical judgments and tries to understand claims, actions, attitudes, judgments, and ethical properties of any idea. Meta-ethics is not merely related to evaluation of whether or not a specific choice is good or bad, rather, it verifies the nature and meaning of the issue under study.  
 In more simple words , Meta Ethics deals with following basic questions, such as ,-

* What does it mean when one is claiming something as “good” or “right”?
* What is moral value, and from where does it coming into existence /scenario?
* Is morality objective and universal, or Is it relative to specific individuals or circumstances?

Do moral facts truly exist or morality is based on mere belief system?  
  
  
What is Ethics and why one needs to be Ethical or to be right for particular matter or circumstance?   
  
Such type of Meta ethical questions that are important which can outline all dimensions of ethics.   
  
**Philosophically, Meta Ethics can be categorized into 2 types,   
  
1.Congnitivist View  
2. Non Congnitivist View  
  
Further with idea of Realism and Non Realism , Meta Ethics can be divided into 3 types**

1. (i)Moral Realism/ Congitivist View (Ethical Naturalism, Utilitarianism, Neo-Aristotelianism, Intuitionism )
2. (i) Moral Antirealism /Cognitivism (Cultural Relativism, Subjectivism, Constructivism, Ideal Observer Theory, Divine Command Theory)

(ii)Moral Antirealism/Non-cognitivism (Radical Emotivism, Expressivism, Prescriptivism**,** Ethical Non-Naturalism)

**1.Moral Realism/ Congitivist View**  
 Moral realism is the assumption , where objective moral values of any matter is decided .Therefore, according to this meta-ethical viewpoint, all evaluative statements/claims are basically factual claims which needed proofs or well established facts. Though feelings and beliefs are not issues to ascertain those facts on individual basis, as they are related to cognitive faculty of human mind. Hence Moral Relaism is also generally known as a cognitivist view, where valid propositions can be proven substantially for all time , and then final conclusions are conveyed as ethical sentences/ideas ,which can either be true or false.  
Examples of moral realism include:  
 Suppose one is relating the ethical terms to the "Will of God", to undertake necessary action -then it is example of Ethical naturalism , where "Ethical Values"are reduced to one's needs /wants/pleasures in the name of God, which is acceptable to human conscience. Now under Moral realism , factuality of this idea of “Will of God” will be decided by running meticulous observations and discussion.  
  
 (Nota Belle :- Ethical naturalism, the belief that we have empirical knowledge of objective moral properties ,However, these can then be reduced to non-ethical properties such as needs, wants or pleasures.)  
  
Theories behind development of Moral Realism/Cognitivistic view   
  
1. Utilitarianism-it is developed by J S Mill, and it deals with a naturalistic view of ethics that equalize morality with facts and t promotes interests of concepts under study.   
  
2. Neo-Aristotelianism –it is developed by [G. E. M. Anscombe](http://www.amazon.com/G.E.M.-Anscombe/e/B001I9QGQ4/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445134068&sr=1-1&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=H3TQIBU2JN4FEQ4L), and it deals with a naturalistic view of ethics that merge facts about human nature and evaluates living things as subjects of their kind. In this theory the idea of good is related to those dimensions which contribute to the survival and effective functioning of the species.  
  
3. Intuitionism –it is a non-naturalistic view of ethics which deals with moral qualities and obligations as part of the fabric of the universe, which can be perceived by human physical senses. Under this theory , moral qualities and obligations are perceived or apprehended by a special moral sense.and this is developed by M Huemer.

4. Rationalism – this theory is developed by M. Huemer and I Kant and it deals with a non-naturalistic view of ethics which postulates that universalized moral rules can be deduced by reasoning alone, such as 'Do not commit suicide', which is applicable ly to everyone everywhere and would be self-contradictory if denied any where for any time..

**2.(i) Moral Antirealism /CognitiviticView**

Moral Anti Realism is in fact, indefinable as it deals with such subject/ideas/circumstances where, it cannot be defined in any other terms, due to biased or different understanding and perception level of individuals. According to Moral Anti Realism, there are no such thing or subject exists which can be called "as objective moral value".

Theories behind development of Moral Antirealism/Cognitivistic view:  
  
1.Cultural Relativism – This theory is developed mainly by F. Boas,  
G. Harman, and it deals with moral judgments and understand them as the speaker's ideas for identifying their accepted norms of behavior for their societies . For example if some person –X claims that -, 'Euthanasia is morally permissible in his country ', then it means 'he belongs to such culture to where euthanasia is permitted by society '.

2. Subjectivism –This theory developed by mainly [D. Hume](http://www.amazon.com/David-Hume/e/B000AQ3Q8W/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445134617&sr=1-2-ent&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=77SB6BADU6PVOHXJ) and it deals with ethics in which moral judgments are understood as the speaker's idea about his/her psychological state for approving or preferring any claim. For example if some person –X claims that “Euthanasia is morally permissible” then this shows that Person –X is acceptable to idea of “Euthanasia”

3. Constructivism- This Theory is developed by D. Copp, and it deals with moral principles which are determined through an idealized and deliberated agreement reached through rational process for example, if “ possession of private property is permitted' by common consensus by some constitutional committee members , explains what the society members are thinking for “private property of a person”   
  
4.Ideal Observer Theory –This is developed by [R. B. Brandt](http://www.amazon.com/Richard-B.-Brandt/e/B001HMLPPY/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445134678&sr=1-5&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=BABBPITYCJROUPIC), and as name suggests it deals with ethics in which the standard for morality is equated with what an impartial, bias and prejudice free - ideal observer with perfect knowledge, would prefer

5.Divine Command Theory – This theory is developed by R. M. Adams, and deals with ethics in where what is good is equated with what God or Higher Powers has approves as “Commanding statements” .for example 10 commandments declared by Prophet Mosses for Jews ,for inventing better society  
  
**2.(ii) Moral Antirealism/Non-cognitivism:**  
  
 Moral Anti Realism or Ethical Non-Naturalism can be defined as the belief that ethical statements represent "a proposition" that is impossible to deduce into Non Ethical statements.  
 It is related with such conditions & circumstances where it is not possible to define "good" or “bad” or “right” or “wrong” , for example, in terms of one or more natural properties (e.g. "pleasant", "more evolved", "desired", "bliss full").   
 For example , the meaning of sentences containing the word "good" cannot be explained entirely in terms of sentences where the word "good" is not mentioned.  
Theories behind development of Moral Antirealism/Non Cognitivistic view**:**

1. Radical Emotivism – This theory is developed by [A. J. Ayer](http://www.amazon.com/A.-J.-Ayer/e/B001HPXQOO/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445135346&sr=1-3&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=N3E6HJL7ETYHQJ2G), and it deals a naturalistic view of ethics that explains moral utterances/claims as expressions of emotions, attitudes or preferences and devoid of descriptive meaning. On this view, for example, 'Killing is wrong' means 'Killing is prohibited or sinful!'

2. Expressivism –This theory is developed by [S. Blackburn](http://www.amazon.com/Simon-Blackburn/e/B000APFM0S/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445135556&sr=1-6&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=AD4ZM4JARGXADC6M), and it deals with a naturalistic view of ethics that explains moral judgments as central expressions of attitudes, opinions, but allows for some descriptive content for it as reason. On this view, for example, 'Killing is wrong, as it is inhumane ' ,which means killing is here associated with personal or social opinion as reason to prohibit killing.

3. Prescriptivism- This theory is developed by [R. Carnap](http://www.amazon.com/Rudolf-Carnap/e/B001HCU3KC/ref=as_li_ss_tl?_encoding=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&linkCode=ur2&qid=1445135678&sr=1-1&tag=web1-ess-20&linkId=V3MSEFSQF5CW3JZV), and it deals with a naturalistic view of ethics that interprets moral judgments as universal imperatives as commands. For examples “'Killing is wrong as it is punishable offense”

**Normative Ethics/Prescriptive Ethics**  
 Normative Ethics/Prescriptive Ethics tries to understand "ethical action" by creating a set of rules / norms that governs the action and the human conduct. It identifies that how things should be? Or, how one should value things? Or what actions are right? And opposite to this question, what actions are wrong? Or, and which things are good? Which things are bad?  
 Normative Ethics deals with “norms” or "sets of considerations how one should act". In all , it’s a study of “ethical action*”* and tries to identify rightness or wrongness of the actions.  
 It is also called prescriptive ethics because it is based on the principles which determine whether an action is right or wrong. The Golden rule of normative ethics is “do the same to others, as you want them to do to you“. Normative ethics also provides justification and explanation for punishing a person who disturbs social and moral order.  
  
 For example : Normative Ethics identifies that -Since we don’t want our neighbors to throw stones through our glass window, then it will not be wise to first throw stone through a neighbor’s window. Based on this reasoning, anything such as harassing, victimizing, abusing or assaulting someone is wrong.  
  
  
**Normative Ethics is classified further into 3 types ,based on underlying Ethical Theories**  
**1.Consequentialism  
2.Deontology  
3.Virtue Ethics**  
  
**1.Consequentialism:**  
 It deals with consequence of actions. As "Morality of an action" is based on the results or outcome of the action. Then, if there is a good outcome, then an action is considered morally right. But if there is a bad outcome, then an action is considered morally wrong. In Consequentialism, philosophers examine about -what makes a consequence a good consequence & how one is expected to judge a consequence & who should be the judge, & who is gaining the most benefit or effect from a moral action.  
 Consequentialism also includes Theories of Hedonism, Utilitarianism, and Egoism.  
  
**2.Deontology:**  
 Rather looking at the consequences of actions, Deontology examines that   
how the actions themselves can be right and wrong. Deontology claim that one should consider factors such as the rights of others and one’s own duty while making decisions. Deontology includes further theories to study & identify Ethical Values  
 **3.Virtue Ethics**  
 In virtue ethics, philosophers focus at the inherent character or nature of an  
person. Virtue ethics look out for virtues. Virtues are basically the behavior pattern and habits that allow one to have a good life or a ability to reach to a state of well-being. It provides opportunity to satisfy the conflicts between virtues and also claims for "ensuring good life , by supporting practice of these virtues for one’s entire life"  
 For example:Aristotle under concept of "Eudaimonia" stating that an action is considered “right” when it leads to well-being and can be attained through the daily practice of virtues; **Descriptive Ethics/comparative Ethics**

Descriptive Ethics/Comparative is a the empirical (observational/postpriori) study of the moral belief system and practices of different peoples and cultures in various places and times. It not only to explains such beliefs and practices but also aims to understand those beliefs and practices in relation to concerned social, economic, and geographic circumstances, which are under study .  
  
 Descriptive ethics, is the proper subject matter of the social sciences where anthropology, history, sociology, and psychology are all studied together to reidentify "Ethical Values " and "mind set behind moral values " of any personalities or communities under study. **Brief Idea Of Descrptive Ethics**

**Applied Ethics**

Applied Ethics is concerned to the practical application of moral considerations/Ethics identified, in all above mentioned Ethical studies. It is a branch of ethics which deals with real-world actions and their moral consequences in the dimensions of private and public life, the professions, health, technology, law, and leadership. Applied Ethics is seen a sub discipline/branch of moral philosophy. Since 1970's time, Applied Ethics has expanded the study of ethics beyond the realms of academic philosophical discourse and brought it into real world to implement it into day to day life of society and professionals from all sectors and dimensions of life.  
  
 Applied Ethics, as it appears today, emerged from debate surrounding rapid medical and technological advances in the early 1970s. Now in 21st century it is, by its very nature, a multi-professional subject because it requires specialist understanding of the potential ethical issues in fields like medicine, business or information technology. Ethical codes of conduct exist in almost every profession and they are studied and identified under "Applied Ethics"  
  
 For example: Bio-ethics community is concerned with identifying the correct approach to moral issues in the life sciences, such as euthanasia, the allocation of scarce health resources, or the use of human embryos in research.  
 Environmental-ethics is concerned with ecological issues such as the responsibility of government and corporations to clean up pollution. Business -ethics considers issue regarding the duties of 'whistle-blowers' to the general public or their loyalty to their employers.

Applied Ethics approach to the examination of moral dilemmas of professions and interpersonal conflict in work culture, which can take many different forms. Most notably ,in the field of Applied Ethics, Tom Beauchamp and James Childress has specially developed 4 principle approach in Bio-Ethics and Medical Profession .1   
 This 4 -principle approach, commonly termed principlism, entails consideration and application of four prima facie ethical principles of -  
1st -autonomy,   
2nd -non-maleficence,   
3rd - beneficence,   
4th -justice. **Benefit Of Studying And Following Ethics**

By studying and taking deep dive into sea of ethics, one can deepen owns reflection on the ultimate questions of life. It helps a person to understand at his ones and other life critically. This further helps a person to evaluate one’s actions or choices or decisions or ideas or wishes. It aids a person to knowing what one really is and what is best for him/her and what he/she has to do in order to attain it.

With understanding Ethics, one can think better about morality. This further helps oneself to make more appropriate judgments from time to time.  
  
 Ethics turns inevitable as by nature human being is a ‘social’ being, and to sustain society, "Ethical Values" are needed to be followed by its words and spirits , otherwise degradation and devolution of society is destined.  
 Fellowship of Ethics - acts as best protective shield against any immorality and moral conflicts in any unseen future , for its follow ,  
  
 **"Be Ethical and Be Fearless In life "**  
 **Reference :**  
1.Beauchamp, T. L. and Childress, J. F. (1994) Principles of medical ethics, New York: Oxford University Press.

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