

THE STUDY AND IMPORTANCE OF MEDIA ETHICS

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Abstract

Media is acting as a bridge between the state and public. It plays a role of informer, motivator or leader for healthy democracy at all levels. Ethics are the inner superintendent decent moralities, ideals and opinions that people use to analyses or interpret a situation and then decide what is the right way to behave. It is free to discharge their duties in the society but media needs to follow ethics in collecting and disseminating the news by ensuring objectivity and fairness in reporting of information to society.

Media Ethics is concerned with how a moral media person should behave. The media ethics are values like trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, truth and self-restraint to be practiced by the media people voluntarily, to preserve and promote the trust of the people and to maintain their own credibility and not betray the faith and confidence of the people. This study is descriptive in nature. The paper focuses on study of Media Ethics and its Importance. The secondary data is collected for this study from books, journals, websites, research papers. Media ethics are important for proper broadcasting, avoiding misrepresentation of information, to avoid conflict of interest. It is important to promote universal values, truthfulness, accountability and rule of law of equality. Maturity in ethics progresses by identifying values, topics and judging several advices and enduring the other viewpoints on them (Alia 2004) "A person does not one day just become ethical". Individual grow ethically just as they grow physically and intellectually (Merrill 2011 p.30). A further study is needed and a proper rules and legislations should be framed for media ethics at universal level to protect the interest of individual and society.

Keywords: *Media, media ethics, news, freedom of press, social responsibility.*

I. Introduction:

Information is vital for the functioning of a true democracy. People have to be kept informed about current affairs and broad issues related to country. The media, fourth estate of providing valuable information for growth and rights of people. While playing the role of informer, the media also takes the outline as persuader and a leader. The Press Council of India formulated guidelines to achieve a balance between the right to privacy of the public persons and the right of the

press to have access to information of public interest and importance. In India Article 19(1) (a) guarantees freedom of speech and expression to individual press and media.

Objective of Study:

1. To know the concept of Media and Ethics.
2. To understand Theories of Ethics and Code of Ethics.
3. To explore knowledge about Media Ethics and its Importance.
4. To study approaches of Media Ethics.

Methodology:

The descriptive methodology is used for this study. The secondary data is collected from books, journals, websites, research papers and articles.

Literature Review:

According to Nahida Begum N (2014), Media acts as a disseminator of information and a channel of communication between people and the government. Media educates people by providing wealth of information related to socio-cultural and politico-economic aspects of the society. The rising demand for media ethics, stimulated many media organizations to frame certain code of ethics to regulate employee's performance and to protect themselves against government rules and regulation.

Matthias Rath (2003), described relationship between empiricism and ethics. Media ethics need empiricism. For him "empiricism" means methodical research striving to describe a directly or indirectly perceptible reality, which sees itself as a foundation of all models that try to explain this reality. Ethics belongs to discipline. Ethics are dependent on empirical research referring to the respective field of actions, in order to be able to utter reasonable statements which cover the legitimacy of the field of activities.

According to Oso (2012, p.271), The mass media in many countries have been liberalized, privatized and commercialized with the hope of deepening their democratic role as the main institution of the public sphere. It is now generally assumed that the mass media are essential in the process of building a democratic policy.

Voltmer (2013, pp. 129-130) noted, that "media organizations incorporate a variety of often contradictory norms, operational modes and regulatory policies that exist in parallel and are sometimes almost impossible to reconcile.

McQuail (2005) states that Media should give priority in news and information to link with other developing countries which are close geographically, culturally or politically.

Jhumur Ghosh (2014) his paper “Ethics of Indian News Media Aberrations And Future Challenges” is related with Indian news media ethics. The author explained the cases in which how traditional mass media, press and television overlooked the recognized ethical principles and journalistic norms practiced by the Indian news media.

According to Julie (2012) every media association has the indulgence to set the ethical values of its coverage. For example, one of the leading newspapers of the world (published from United States) ‘The New York Times’ continue to print on its front page the claim, ‘All the News That’s Fit to Print’, patented in 1896. Without going much into the debate about how far the newspaper has been successful towards following its principle rather it signifies that each media organization has the authority to set their own ethical standards to guide journalists/editors in their works.

Lasson (2009) expressed that Independence is very important for media ethics. United States and United Kingdom contributed ‘objectivity’ as a substantial principle in relation to professional journalism. To maintain objectivity reporter or journalists needs to depend on certain norms which are eyewitness accounts of events, confirmation of facts with multiple sources and tries to present all important aspects of a story.

Plaisance (2009) , described Idealism and Relativism as important principles of ethics in media . Idealism means the feeling of search of philanthropical goals and Relativism is the trust of deciding what is right and what is wrong .It is relying on own skills and internal right .

According to Ralph. E Hanson (2015) media ethics are related to values, rules, regulations, which is applicable to all types of medias. Ethics are of various kinds, media ethics is one of it which is not simple to understand as it is related to special or professional organizations.

Esan (2016, p.8) suggests that Media are influential so they abound and circulate particular knowledges and viewpoints. Whether in cities or remote villages, even when people do not actively seek them out, they are approached by different forms of communications. Media are universal, more readily retrieved via a variability of platforms. Current democratization of media means people other than professional media operatives are actively involved in content creation and distribution.

Concept of Media:

Media: is a channel of communication networks, broadcasting and narrowcasting medium through which news, entertainment, education, mail, government, legal and other various information are circulated among people. It provides knowledge and makes society aware of various legal, political, social, economic, educational activities happening around the world.

Media is a backbone of society. The media serve as bringers of cultural heritage and social values, allowing the large community to recognize what are well-thought-out adequate systems of behavior. Dan Laughey (2008) defined Media as technologies that spread the messages to masses in different parts of a region, country and the world.

Media is a channel of communication networks, broadcasting and narrowcasting medium through which news, entertainment, education, mail, government, legal and other various information are circulated among people. It provides knowledge and makes society aware of various legal, political, social, economic, educational activities happening around the world.

New Media: The Media which uses digital technology and the internet is termed as New Media. Traditional media incorporates all the means of communication that existed before the Internet and new media technology, which includes books, magazines, newspapers, (printed materials) and (broadcast communications) television, radio, film, and music. New media include all forms of communication in the digital world, including electronic video games, the Internet, and social media. They are more instant, free, and can reach a large number of people. The term new media particularly relates to digital media which includes Social media sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Internet, video and audio files, Computers, mobiles.

Internet: Internet has added a whole new autonomous measurement to communication. It is much used as a means of private communication by e-mail, as a means of transferring documents, as an interactive service facility for banking, shopping, etc., advertising and entertainment. Despite this, however, for regulatory purposes it is treated primarily under the common carrier model and is subject to no particular regulatory regime of its own.

Social Media: Social Media is the digital media used for social interaction with internet. social media include blogs, social networking sites, wikis, and video-sharing websites, anyone can underwrite concepts on the web. The immediate dispersal of news, a variety of different perceptions on a single event, and the ability to communicate with people all over the globe are advantages of Social media. There are also virtual communities. The advantage of new media is immediate, empowering consumers to find out the latest news, weather report, or stock prices at the touch of a button. The key features of this new media: Convergence: One device can be used to contact a extensive diversity of media. New media facilitate more interaction. Accessibility new media is free media. Examples of New Media • websites and blogs. • streaming audio and video. • chat rooms. • email. • online communities. • social media and sharing platforms. • mobile apps. • Web advertising.

According to Andreas Kaplan and Michael Haenlein social media is a collection of Internet-based claims that figure on the philosophical and technological basics of Web 2.0, and that allow the formation and argument of user-generated content. A digital media is a procedure of electronic media where data is stored and broadcast in digital way.

Concept of Ethics:

Ethics are the inner superintendent decent moralities, ideals and opinions that people use to analyses or interpret a situation and then decide what is the right way to behave.

According to Macquarie Dictionary of Australian English, ethics is a system of decent ideologies by which individual movements and suggestions may be mediated right or wrong.” Jay- black and Chris Robert in their book “Doing Ethics in Media, states that Ethics comes from many words one of them is Greek “Ethos” means character or what does to have a good character. The news is very important in media. News, data, material also referred as information ethics which is the branch of morals that concentrations on the association between the construction, organization, broadcasting, use of information, the moral values and ethical codes leading human conduct in society. It delivers a critical agenda for considering ethical issues regarding news privacy, moral agency, new conservation issues, problems arising from the life-cycle of information.

Significance of Ethics:

Ethics are very important in every province of lifetime. It is observed that the graph of culture, tradition, values and beliefs is at weakening slope. The significance of ethics includes:

1. With knowledge of Ethics individual is in a position to understand, analyze and can achieve the final goal of life with proper decisions.
2. The study of ethics help individual for thoughtful consideration of ethical ideas.
It supports individual in understanding of certain fundamental principles of logical and moral.
3. For proper and peaceful life the society is framed by authorities, values, culture and beliefs
The Ethics are pioneers of the rules and regulations in human society.

Classification of Ethical Theories:

Ethical theories can be divided into three main classifications:

- I. Teleological /Consequential
- II. Deontological /Non-Consequential.
- III. Virtue Ethics

I. Teleological or consequential:

As per Sir David Ross in a classical work Foundations of Ethics, two classification to ethics are deontological and teleological ethics. This is concerned with the result of the action. An action is considered as good if it produces good results. They are interested in providing the greatest good for the large number of people.

The Consequential Ethics includes i.Utilitarianism, ii.Egoism and iii.Pragmatism.

i. Utilitarianism means doing ethical things which produces the extreme amount of upright for the greatest number of people. The ethical utilitarian's believe that people should act in the best interest of everyone concerned. Their overriding desire is the good for mass and not for the interest of a single individual This may appear all right on the surface. But, according to Pasqua et. al., (1990: 259), the problem may rise as to the suitable valuation of what establishes the greatest number.

ii. Egoism: means act of selfishness. The ethical egoists believe that individual should work for their own self interest. Even among ethical egoists, there are two subgroups, the universal egoists and the personal egoists. The universal egoists expect that every person should act for own benefit and interest. the personal egoists believe that every individual should speak for himself as to what he desires.

iii.Pragmatism: Means, of any kind of work. It is quantitative in nature. Ethical Pragmatism is the third subgroup under the teleological school. It insists that that which works in real life is the right thing to do.

2. Deontological or non-consequential:

The British moralist, Jeremy Bentham (1748-1832), invented the word 'deontological' ethics. In Greek language "Deon", is understood as obligatory. Deontological ethics views the morally good in terms of doing one's duty. In Non-Consequential Ethics, the foundation of principles come from law, rules and regulations, moral law, responsibility. Non-consequential ethics says morality is determined by higher authority, some sense of duty, the nature of the thing, love, benefit involved, the right thing to do, or perception. The source of principles comes before the act is done.

The Consequential Ethics includes i. Divine Command ii. Kant's Duty Ethics iii. Natural Law Theory iv. Intuitionism

i.Divine Command: This theory maintains that whatever God commands is right, since God is infinitely good and infallible. Conversely, whatever God forbids is wrong. This way of reasoning is all right with those who believe in God. Not to the unbelievers. To the unbelievers, this is a very subjective way of reasoning and they ask the following question: is something right or wrong because it is God's command, or does God only command or forbid it because it is already right or wrong.

ii. Kant's Duty Ethics: An advocate of deontological ethics, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804), formulated the duty ethics, now named after him. According to Kant a good man is one who habitually acts rightly, and that a right action is that which is done from a sense of duty. In other sense duty ethics demands that people to act from a sense of responsibility. And this commitment coils from reason rather than experience. Thus a moral principle will not depend on empirical data and will be binding on everyone. This is what Kant calls the Categorical Imperative.

A good action, according to Kant, is not good because it produces result, but rather because it is a moral action done from a sense of duty to the moral law.

iii. Natural Law Theory: Natural law ethical theory derives from the dictates of reason. Its adherents do not have to believe in God, but believers and unbelievers alike can converge on an ethical middle ground based of reason. According to Pasqua et. al. (ibid: 261), most great national and international documents of the 20th Century, such as the United Nations charter, are based on natural law ethical theory.

iv. Intuitionism- Intuition means an in-built sense of right/wrong, a gut feeling, a hunch, and impulse. The intuition is different from person to person. It assumes that every individual is independent in making decisions.

III. Virtue Ethics: Virtue means character or personality. Virtue ethics is related with achieving temperaments of charisma, which an individual reflects to be good. Aristotle promoted the Golden Mean. He whispered that self-control in life as well as in Media and Ethics. The ethical virtue is concerned with mean of too much or too little emotions and activities.

There are various approaches of ethics: a. The Descriptive Approach and the Meta-ethics are part of Non-Normative approach. The checking of principles without the anxieties for making judgements is termed as Non-Normative approach. The emphasis of Meta Ethics approach is on right perceptive and conclusion. b. Normative Approach make judgements as to what is morally right or wrong. The normative ethics is sometimes called prescriptive science as, it investigates how one should act.

Applied Ethics is related to application of realistic situation to ethical theory. It is about achieving significances results in specific conditions. The bioethics, human ethics, legal ethics, and business ethics are components of applied ethics. c. The Descriptive Ethical Approach explain about values, beliefs, culture of societies. It is also known as comparative ethics. It is related to people's values, ethics, beliefs about society and culture.

d. Absolute Ethics & Relative Ethics: Absolute ethics guides the individual behavior by providing

code of conduct to be in society properly. e. Deductive method is related to acquisition of information and knowledge independently through pure rational thinking. f. Earning knowledge through experience is called Inductive method.

Approaches of Ethics:

There are various approaches of ethics:

a. The Non-Normative approach includes the Descriptive Approach and the Meta-ethics: The Non-Normative approach inspects the principles without the anxieties for making judgements. The Meta Ethics approach focuses on the concepts and terms of ethical reasoning and decision making. It explains meanings of various terms of ethics.

b. Normative Approach make judgements as to what is morally right or wrong. The normative ethics is sometimes called prescriptive science as, it investigates how one should act. Applied Ethics is about how honest consequences can be achieved in specific conditions. It tries to apply the ethical theory to real-life situations. It includes bioethics, human ethics, legal ethics, and business ethics.

c. The Descriptive Ethics Approach related to belief , values , attitudes of individual and group of people. The media collects information and tries to find right and wrong actions.

d. Absolute Ethics & Relative Ethics: Absolute ethics is an ideal code of conduct expressing the behavior of the completely altered human person in the completely evolved society.

e. Deductive Method : The media collect information and comes to specific object on the basis of logical conclusion. Deductive reasoning begins with a universal truth and leads towards the knowledge of a particular thing

f. Inductive Method is the process of moving from specific explanations to broader generalizations and theories. In this method media collect information and draw conclusions from their observation.

Media Ethics:

Media ethics is the subdivision of real-world actions and their moral consideration in the area of public, private and professional life, health, law, technology and leadership dealing with morals and media standards.

It is also known as Journalism Ethics. Ethical communication helps people to grow to their fullest potential, by emphasizing value of the other individual. Both parties in the communication exchange are reliable, appreciated and valued to have a positive communication. One cannot imagine a life without rules, values and ethics. The laws and ethics are for everyone which includes individual, business, society, journalists and media. The power and deceptive inspiration of the media was long realized. The media organizations and journalists are providing and circulating information for the

welfare of public. Shiela Reaves (1989) in her article, "Digital Alteration of Photographs in Magazines: An Examination of the Ethics" addressed Media ethical issues in photography. The enhancement in Photographic systems permitting media to show images that reproduced an improved image of genuineness to its readers through newspapers and magazines. As Reaves stated, new computer technology of photographs allows editors to change the content of photographic images, colors, and objects or people can be removed from or added to pictures. The negatives can also be produced from an altered image to make proof that the photograph is real. This raise the ethical question how far can photo editors take the alteration process while still purporting to present to readers a genuine image? The journalistic codes of ethics are based on the premise that the news media exists to provide citizens with the information they need to function in a free and democratic society. The Ethical responsibilities of Journalist or media reporter is providing the information by satisfying the need of people. A fair and current issues should be delivered to society in accurate manner, collecting and presenting new ,stories as per their complexity, Present diverse perspectives, Monitor government and corporations. The responsible reporting of media includes :Ensures accuracy (even if it means causing delays), Reports the truth, Stays loyal to citizens by putting the public interest above all else, Media should carry proper observation and disagreement related to collected information. Media should collect information with clear objective and in unbiased way. According to Stephen J.A. Ward , Digital media ethics transacts with the different ethical issues and rules of digital news media. It consists of online journalism, blogging, digital photojournalism, citizen journalism and social media.

Code of Ethics for Media:

Media is the accelerator of providing valuable information for the development of society and people but sometime media for its personal gain or benefit defame or blame persons/institutions by writings against individuals/ institutions in news. Code of ethics are important to follow to control bribery, defame, cheating, blackmailing, personal gain etc. Media ethics is the subdivision of real-world activities, principles and moral consideration in the area of public, private and professional life, health, law, technology and leadership. ` The course of action of a person is depends on availability of moral information. Milan Kundera (1984) states that Media is so powerful that they force and make people to listen them .Melisande (2009) expressed that Media ethics efforts to avoid any domination over material circulation; multiplicity, dissimilarity in media content, focused on objectivity by considering all aspects of an issue, which increases levels of truthfulness in reporting. According to Article 3 in The Code of Ethics for Electronic Media, journalists must evade stereotypes and prejudices when reporting about a society. They should oppose the interlocutors who express stereotypes and

prejudices in interviews and discussions.

I. By Hutchins Commission (1947): As per Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport (pg 477), Hutchins Commission expressed code for media ethics as follows: Media person is only one who is responsible and liable for providing news.

- a) Media people, journalists must provide evocative information which should be precise and detached from judgement.
- b) Assist as an opportunity for the argument of remark and reproach to assorted points of view.
- c) Create a representative image of the basic sets in civilization by adding all levels of people.
- d) Clarify the goals and values of society; implicit was an appeal to avoid pandering to the lowest common denominator.
- e) Give broad coverage of what was known about society.

II. The Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ): According to the SPJ's code of ethics journalists should

- a) To Report actual and correct information: Media should collect actual, real and true information and report the same without fabricating to public.
- b) To Curtail damage: The sources, topics, generations, information and public representative should be given due respect and damage to image should be avoided.
- c) Act independently: It is basic and highest priority of media to work for benefit of society by acting independently and fairly.
- d) Be accountable: journalist is responsible for providing accurate reports and information to public.

(Source: Straubhaar, LaRose & Davenport, Pg 478)

Importance of Media Ethics:

It is main duty of media to supply accurate and fair news, data, entertainment, discussion on legal, political, economic information to peoples in society.

1.Responsibility: It is responsibility of media to provide accurate and fair information for public welfare. A reporter who misuse media power for any selfish reason is not trustworthy and held responsible.

2.Freedom of the Press: Media is having freedom of collecting information, asking questions on related matters, conducting survey and discussion etc. Media ethics carries a legal framework for the protection of the right to freedom of expression.

3.Independence: Media should be free to express their views. Media should be independent but

- should be loyal to country and country people.
4. The media ethics reflects Sincerity, Truthfulness, Accuracy by connecting with people through efficient and effective information delivery.
 5. Impartiality: Media people should be impartial about news, and expression of opinion of any kind.
 6. Fairplay: Media ethics guides about fair play. The matter related to religion, public and private rights should be handled fairly by media.
 7. Protect cultural heritage and social values: It is important for media to preserve and promote our cultural heritage and social values.
 8. Social approval: For Social approval and respect media ethics are important.
 9. Minimizing harm and maximizing benefits for social welfare and public.

Media Ethics in India:

Ethics is a speculative science. The tradition, religious beliefs and social customs are pillars of ethical codes. The Indian ethics are built on certain religious principles, values and traditions of India. The Indian Ethics are based on culture, families, traditions, worships, rules and regulations for individual in society for wellbeing of people and society. The word 'dharma', means to clutch together. Dharma is derived from 'dhr'. As per Indian context 'dharma' means ethical values. For the growth and peace of society dharma is very important.

Code of Ethics in India:

In India, the Press Council of India has been given the authority to draft a code of conduct for newspapers, news agencies and journalists in accordance with high profession standards. In 1968, The All India Newspapers Editors Conference (AINEC) adopted a code of ethics. In 1976 the Parliamentary Code was. and Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) approved a Code of Self Regulations in 1985. In 1995, A Guide to Journalistic Ethics brought out by Press Council of India.

Code of Ethics adopted by The All India Newspapers Editors Conference (AINEC) 1968:

- a) It is the duty of press to create public opinion, journalist or media should consider their profession as a faith, truth and oblige public interests.
- b) Media should give importance to social and human rights and have justice and equality in news reporting.
- c) In the situation of tensions which are supposed to lead civil disorder journalists should
- d) observe restraint in their reports and comments. Journalists should avoid identifying

- e) communities because it may lead to chain reactions. Media should try to promote national unity, pride in the country, its citizens, its achievements and its forte in diversity. Comments should be avoided which give support to the advocates of such ideas and further their interests.
- f) Evidences shall not be destroyed and omitted by media o journalist. Fake information shall not be published.
- g) Journalists should accept responsibility for all information and comments published by them.
- h) Professional secrecy must be preserved and confidence shall always be respected.
- i) Rectification of errors in reports should be done by media.
- j) Journalists are not allowed to use their status for non-journalistic purposes.
- k) Professional conduct of journalists shall not be influenced by their personal interests.

Advertising Standards Council of India (1985), enumerated a code of ethics. It pursues to confirm truthfulness, honesty of representations and claims made in ads and to safeguard against misleading advertisements. It also ensures that the general accepted standards of public decency are not violated by advertisements. Furthermore, it safeguards against the indiscriminate use of ads for the promotion of hazardous products. However, the codes ethics for advertisement includes general rules of conduct, instructs to refrain from vulgarity and indecency and use of National Emblems. Some excerpts from the code of ethics for advertising are given below.

1. Advertisement should be designed in such a manner that it should conform to the law as well as to moral, aesthetic and religious sentiments of the country.
2. Advertisement supposed to bring contempt or disrepute should not be permitted. No advantage of the superstition or ignorance of the general public should be taken by advertisements.
3. Advertisements of image, charms and character reading from photos or posters as will skill on the fantasy of the overall shall not be allowed.
4. Advertisements should avoid distorting facts and misleading the general masses by means of implications and omissions. Advertisements should be truthful. For example, advertising mislead the public by false statements as to: a) the character of the merchandise i.e. its utility, materials, ingredients, origin, etc. b) the services accompanying purchase, including delivery, exchange, return, upkeep etc. c) personal recommendations of the article or service. Testimonials which are fictions and/or fraudulent or the originals of which cannot be produced must not be used. e) the

quality of the value of competing goods or the trustworthiness of statements made by others.

5. Advertisement having exaggerated claim should not be permitted, since it may inevitably lead to disappointment in the minds of the general public.

Codes of Ethics formulated by the Press Council of India Press Council of India (1995):

fetches out a code of conduct named as A Guide to Journalistic Ethics in 1995. However, these codes of conduct are not statutory rules but general principles to help journalists to self-regulate in their profession. Some of the important norms of journalistic ethics adopted in A Guide to Journalistic/Media Ethics are given below.

1. Fair and accurate information: It is the basic and main objective of media to oblige the society with news, information on things related to social welfare and public related in fair, accurate and unbiased way.
2. Media should avoid defamatory and libelous writing against individual and organization.
3. Privacy: Intrusion or invasion of the privacy of individuals is not permissible unless outweighed by genuine public interest. Discussion about any one's personal life is not allowed unless there is true evidence with media.
4. Victims of sex crimes—Caution against publication of names or pictures: While reporting crimes like rape, kidnaping, sexual assault on children, photos should not be published. While such publication serves no legitimate public purpose, it may bring social opprobrium to the victims.
5. Freedom of speech: Information which will harm reputation, interest of the state and society, individual rights, rules and regulation of freedom of speech and expression under Article 19, clause (2) of constitution of India should be followed by media.
6. Covering communal disputes/clashes: Publication of News, views or comments relating to communal, disputes only after proper evidence and verification of real facts. The presentation of news by proper care which is conducive to the creation of an atmosphere congenial to communal harmony, amity and peace.

P.B. Sawant 22,2, Chairman, Former Press Council of India expressed that at universal level the code of ethics for media accentuates the following:

- (a) Trustworthiness and fairness, (b) critical view analysis, (c) objectivity reporting, (d) prevention to receive favors, (e) respect for privacy, (f) separation between fact and opinion, (g) not to inflame

hatred, (h) avoid deceitful means to collect information, and (i) general standards of politeness and sensitivity.

Sonnenberg, U (2004), described a study done in thirty one countries on the ethical code, and result showed that media or journalist followed fifty seven principles and morals out of which ten principles :truth, honesty, precision of information, rectification of mistakes, exclusion of discrimination on the basis of race/ society/ religion etc., respect for privacy, prevention to accept bribes or freebies, accurate and fair means in information collection, avoid outsiders influence on the media or journalist work, prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex/class etc., freedom of speech, expression, comment, criticism, professional secrecy.

Ethical Issue in Indian Media:

The main structure of media writing is truth, correctness, exactness, neutrality, objectivity and civic liability. The news organizations and the reporters and broadcasters overlook and sometimes disregard the “code of ethics” in the acquisition of newsworthy information and its subsequent dissemination to the public. This can be because of a variety of reasons like arousing sensationalism, increasing readership and viewership, pressure from proprietors, coercion from powerful and useful news sources and selective diffusion and retention of news items by media themselves due to one or several of the previously stated reasons.

According to Belsey & Chadwick, 1992, There has been always a danger of violation of ethical principles which also entangled with comprising on investigative reporting. For example, journalist’s foremost principle is to maintain honesty in investigation as well as in reporting, however, if public corruption can be investigated only under cover and a journalist requires to hide his/her identity. Is it not a violation of ethical principle? There are many more critical situations, which arises when a journalist has to face an ethical dilemma how to proceed. Does a code of conduct require a reasoned basis in ethical theory, but the bonus of offering such a basis is that it can throw light on some of the other issues raised such as where to draw the line.

Let us consider the factual examples of violations of media ethics by media:

a. Aarushi Talwar murder case:

The press code of ethics consists of principles of ‘no harm or minimize harm’. This includes non - disclosure of some important details in new reports like name of minor child, crime victims, place etc. The disclosure of such important details might harm someone’s reputation or life or impede the function of the administration. A teenager girl named Aarushi Talwar was murdered along with a domestic servant of her house in a posh Delhi locality in 2008. The murder case leaves a media

turmoil. The murder of two results in intense media analysis with debates, discussion, opinions which marked blame and virtue without proper coordination and permission of proper authorities. Media's constant pressure forced the investigating agency (the CBI) to take the help of the Supreme Court which passed a restraining order barring the media from any scandalous or sensational reporting on the case. For press the need to sensationalize the news emerged from the need to remain relevant and crucial in the public domain as it was on internet and television also. The ethical norms and legal standards make clear distinction between "in public interest" and "interest to the public". The news items which belong to the second category should be carefully chosen and judiciously presented so that it does not intrude upon the privacy of subjects or impair their reputation.

b. The news channels planned their telecast in sensational live coverage of a rescue mission of 26/11. Neelamalar, Chitra and Darwin (2009) expressed that the newspaper's coverage of the 26/11 terror attacks was more balanced and ethical than that of electronic media. But this can be credited to the nature of the print media which had time to verify and extant the appropriate facts not like the television channels which need to prepare their reports in fast way and had to always concentrate on giving news first by being in the race. Neelamalar, Chitra and Darwin (2009)9 stated that there was strong opposition to the way the electronic media sensationalized the attacks and a necessity to regulate media content during emergencies was felt. The Indian government chose to respect press freedom and abstained from regulatory measure but the News Broadcasters' Association (NBA) of India developed a code to be adhered to in the time of emergencies. This example clearly shows violation of ethical norms by media. The television channels can claim that the live feeds were available in the social networking sites and the internet but there is no doubt that the television was a more prominent presence and the pictures telecast by the TV cameras were uploaded by the social networking sites. The commercial viability of the transmission in terms of popularity and advertisement sponsorship muted ethical principles. It would be an interesting study to make a quantitative analysis of the advertisement revenues for the national channels at the time of the live telecast.

c. Case of "Operation West End" or "Tehelka" disclosures in 2001. In this a weekly newspaper released sensational video film of top officials and politicians receiving bribes. A sting operation was conducted to exposed corruption at the peak order. The procedures like women, liquor and bribing unsuspecting victims used by the Tehelka reporters and irreverent their rights in the process found little approval of the public. The disclosures created quite a mixture regarding the ethical issues linked with the exposure. The Tehelka journalists were involved in untruthful impressions, paid bribes to the

victims on false cause and were guilty of other ethical misbehaviors too.

d. Paid news: Paneerselvan, readers' editor of *The Hindu*, dashes the origins of the unethical practice of paid news back to the liberalization of the Indian economy in 1991. The media people are paid for writing partial truth of companies listed in stock exchanges for public investment.

e. Blatant blackmail:

In 2012 senior editors of the television channel Zee News were arrested for allegedly demanding Rs 100 crore from Jindal Power and Steel Ltd. In return for this pay-off they offered to dilute their network's campaign against the company in the coal scam. The blackmail was exposed when JSPL chairman and Congress MP Naveen Jindal conducted a reverse sting on the network's executives.

f) Widening legal regulatory gap

The Press Council of India has dragged its feet on addressing paid news and other unethical practices, according to the EJNI report. Instead of investigating the matter, the Council merely asked media companies to consider how their credibility is affected, and issued guidelines they should follow to distinguish news from advertisements.

g) Radia-tapes in Media Case:

In 2010, Ratan Tata filed an appeal before the Supreme Court of India claiming violation of his right to privacy by Directorate-General of Income Tax by unauthorized publication of his private conversations with Nira Radia. The case filed by the Ratan Tata did not challenge the action of the Directorate-General of Income Tax to record the private conversations for the purpose of investigations. Instead, it had been challenging the publication of the private conversations that happened between the industrialist and Nira Radia by the media. Whether the general publication of these private conversations was within the interest of the public has been widely debated. What the Tata episode brought into focus was the necessity for a law protecting the proper to privacy in India. To a particular degree the publication of Tata–Radia conversations did violate Tata's privacy. "Media must question itself before printing on how the knowledge is of public interest.

Challenges for Media Ethics:

The drastic development in media information technology generates lots of hurdles in the standard ethical practices at all levels. Political issues, variations in laws from time to time, Priority to personal advantage, safety are some of the challenges exists in ensuing media ethics. The media can also be a source of conflict through the harm they cause to society by working unprofessionally. The digital and advance technology creates challenges for traditional media. Government interference in

professional work of media also creates challenge to work ethically for media. The ethical challenge is to articulate rules for dealing with gossips and rectifications in an online world that are reliable with the moralities of accuracy, verification, and transparency. The improper use of digital and other new media are devices of dishonesty and the invasion of privacy of people. favoritism toward any organization, political group, ideology, or other agenda creates challenges for media ethics. Finding the balance between safety of journalist and providing true and accurate information to public is challenge for media ethics.

Deviation of media practitioners from accepted ethical norms and existing traditions of the society have invited anger of the critics, protests and attacks on media organizations by general public, and gave rise to many other issues of debate and discussion. The issues of invasion of privacy, censorship, pornography, media violence, confidentiality, objectivity, television and children, advertising, propaganda, etc are all outcome of violations of established codes of ethics of media and prevalent traditions of the society in some way or other.

Conclusion:

Media works as a mirror by showing bare truth and harsh realities of life. Media's role in the public sphere in molding public opinion, structuring public debate and making the government answerable to the people is commendable. It provides a communication link between individuals and groups. All media are respect for the state's reputation and inhabitants' interests. Media must always give correct and sufficient information to other authorities, groups, companies, organizations or inhabitant. Media role main value is in interpreting basic societal standards of right and wrong for the milieu of work in the civil service. The role of media makes perfect sense by following media ethics, work within the framework of law, values, belief and also charged with reaching effective and efficient results to balance utility, rights, justice and self-interest. Media's focus on high profit margins, sensationalism, high level of inaccuracies in providing information to public, mistakes left uncorrected, poor coverage of important issues are some of the current problems in media which raises ethical issues. The ethical way of achieving responsibilities is harder, but all media people should be ready to test such a challenge if they want to protect the purity of their media. A universal code of ethics should be followed without culture and economic differences in various media traditions.

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