CHAPTER VII

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Ethics in public service has become a central issue in recent times in India. Many scandals involving huge amounts of money in the form of kickbacks and so on at high places are widely discussed issues in media (print and electronic), fora (parliament, state legislatures and various party organisations) and elections. Many Surveys pointed out that for every third Indian, corruption is a major problem. Even India is rated as ninth most corrupt country in the world (Transparency International). The number of highest public officials (including former Prime Ministers and leaders of political parties) involved in scandals is increasing. Same is the case with the members of superior civil services such as Indian Administrative Service (IAS), Indian Police Service (IPS) and so on. Many instances of scandals, fraud, crime and corruption involving them have come to light. Even some of them have either been prosecuted or punished under various charges of corruption. Recently a few of them have even been jailed for having been found guilty of unethical actions. Besides administrators are often criticized for their indifferent attitude and non-responsive behaviour. In recent times, insensitivity, arrogance, unprofessionalism, non-responsiveness, inaccessibility, manipulation, indifference, low commitment levels are often attributed to them (Chaturvedi: 1985, Dubhashi:1994, Singh & Bhandarkar: 1994). This is partly responsible for the rise of parallel economies and governments as well as low levels of sustainable development (slow growth and high incidence of poverty, illiteracy and ill-health). Many people are
losing faith in the governance and restoring the violent means.

Keeping this in view, this study sought to analyse ethics in superior civil services in the context of a developing country like India. Superior civil services were chosen for the study as they have profound influence (as their members play the dual role of policy advisors and implementors) in the governance of the country and socio-economic transformation of society.

Review of Literature

In order to have conceptual clarity, understand relations between variables and find out research gaps and issues, we have reviewed available literature under three groups. They are - Conceptual, theoretical and empirical studies. The studies on conceptual issues are mainly philosophical. They emphasise on ‘what ought to be done and `what should guide human action’. These questions are viewed from deontological (emphasising on universal rules) and teleological (emphasising on consequences) perspectives. In other words, they emphasise on rightness and goodness of conduct. In its application to the discipline and practice of public administration also, the studies revolve around standards of right and wrong conduct. While service to public, commitment to goals of organizations and constitution are seen as fundamental ethical obligations of administrators, unwillingness to assume responsibility, inaction, inability to deal with people, failure to use institutional resources effectively, failure to anticipate
bureaucratic problems along with bribery, nepotism, self-interest, misuse of authority, violations of law are viewed as unethical behaviour of administrators.

Studies on theoretical issues attribute ethical behaviour to individual and environmental factors. Individual profiles such as family, religious and educational background will help determine "what is right" and "what is wrong". However, the determination of right and wrong is also greatly influenced by environmental factors like social, political and organizational cultural, economic and legal environment.

The empirical studies on ethics in public service are very few. Most of the available studies view ethics from negative connotation and associate it with bribery, fraud, nepotism, conflicts of interests, anti-corruption institutions and codes of conduct to prevent unethical practices. The studies on corruption concentrate on its causes and remedies without analysing the influence of individual aspects and environmental factors. And most studies on anti-corruption institutions emphasise on their structures and functions and evaluate their performance without looking into their effectiveness in minimising corruption in public life.
Research Issues

Important research issues raised on the basis of review are:

1. What are the perceptions of the administrators towards ethics? Whether they are familiar with relevant ethical standards? And whether they possess adequate skills and commitment to identify and apply appropriate standards?

2. Whether recruitment and training systems facilitate the selection of candidates with competence and commitment? Whether the training programmes socialize them in ethics and inculcate ethical reasoning, skills and moral development?

3. Whether the existing organizational and political structure and culture would encourage or discourage ethics among the administrators? Whether the existing external control mechanisms (ethics codes, laws and institutions) would facilitate to maintain high ethical values?

Objectives of the Study

- The study examined the administrators perception towards ethics and their abilities and commitment to identify and apply appropriate ethical standards with a view to find out strengths and weaknesses of recruitment and training practices;
• The study examined ethical behaviour of the administrators with a view
to understand the influence of political and organisational factors and also
the effectiveness of external control mechanisms (ethics codes, laws and
institutions) in maintaining high public service ethics; and

• The study also examined whether the perceptions developed in the study
could provide policy prescriptions for maintaining high public service
ethics in the superior civil services.

Analytical Framework

The objectives of the study were analysed with the help of an analytical
framework. The framework was developed on the assumption that the
ethical behaviour is the function of internal and external controls. Internal
controls such as administrators’ familiarity with ethical standards and their
ability and commitment to identify and implement the most appropriate
standards decide the ethical behaviour. Similarly external controls such as
incentive and disincentive patterns which emanate from political and
organisational structures as well as ethics codes, laws and machinery also
influence ethical behaviour. For instance when political system encourages
independent and impartial functioning of administration for the welfare of
larger sections of society, administrators tend to be more ethical in their
actions. On the other hand when administrators are harassed for their
objectivity and independence, they get discouraged and tend to grow
indifferent, non-innovative, non-responsive and in some cases even work in 'tandem' with the political leaders for personal and partisan interests. Correspondingly organisational culture including the attitude of the superiors and peers also influences ethical behaviour in organisation. Similarly, ethics codes, laws and machinery also act as deterrents of ethical behaviour. In other words, the effective enforceable ethics laws can provide dis-incentives for unethical behaviour.

Key Concepts

Ethics: Ethics, for the purpose of this study, is operationalised as reflecting both moral and immoral dimensions. This is based on the use of public office for public interest (moral) or personal interest (immoral) purpose. To explain it - immorality or unethical behaviour refers to personal interest while ignoring the public duty. It mainly concentrates on narrow self-interests. It includes (a) illegal behaviour like bribery, dishonesty, fraud and nepotism and (b) unwillingness to accept responsibility, failure to anticipate bureaucratic problems, ineffective use of institutional resources as explained by Appleby. On the other hand, morality or ethical behaviour refers to Public interest. It manifests in (a) public service motive of the administrators (b) familiarity with ethical principles, standards and values. (C) Ability and skill to identify relevant standards (d) Moral strengths to apply the standards. The equivalence of which can be found in mental attitudes (moral ambiguity, and conflicting and competing claims resulting in moral dilemmas, recognition of
contextual forces and paradox of procedures) and moral qualities (optimism, courage and fairness tempered with charity) as specified by Bailey. Ethical behaviour is taken as dependent variable. Recruitment and training patterns along with organisational and political culture are taken as independent variables.

Methodology

Scope of the Study: The study is carried out in Karnataka state which represents a typical Indian state in terms of socio-political and economic indicators. Besides, it is considered as one of the well-administered states with moderate levels of corruption. Many innovative administrative reforms have been introduced. Establishment of anti-corruption and decentralized institutions with enormous powers can be mentioned in this regard.

Sources of data: Both primary and secondary data have been used for the study. Secondary data were collected from government documents, biographies and autobiographies of civil servants. Primary data were collected with the help of a structured schedule.

Sample for the Study: Altogether 60 IAS and IPS officers, including 8 retired, were selected out of 390 officers working in Karnataka. It represents about 13 per cent of the total strength of the all-India service personnel. Sample also includes women officers. Their total strength in Karnataka in
both IAS and IPS was considered to select the sample. Factors like age and educational background were taken into consideration while selecting the sample.

*Tools for data collection:* The primary data were collected from a structured interview schedule. It consisted of three types of questions (i) hypothetical; (ii) opinion seeking and; (iii) assessing self-behaviour and self-role in administration.

*Analysis of primary data:* Qualitative data were analysed with the help of well founded theories in the field. Whenever necessary cases were used to supplement quantitative data.

**Summary and Findings**

Administrators ability to conceptualise and operationalise ethics and various standards which constitute it forms the first step in the process of ethical administration. It enhances administrators ethical reasoning and assists them in the discussions and deliberations of issues from ethics angle. On the contrary its absence would reduce capacity for deliberations of ethical issues involved and therefore reduce the ability to employ high ethical standards. With this background we asked our respondents as to what is ethics in administration in their view?
It is interesting to note that a majority of the administrators (67%) interpreted ethics negatively associating it with bribery, fraud, nepotism, improper use of power and authority (use of office for personal interest purpose) rather than positively (use of office for public interest). In other words, in their view being ethical in action is "staying out of illegal activities". Three broad 'influences' have popularised negative interpretation. They are: frequent occurrence of scams and scandals at high places; average citizens encounters with administrative corruption in pursuit of his daily needs; and 'insider' perception of corruption based on observation.

As for positive interpretation of ethics there is ambiguity in understanding and interpretation of ethical values. In this regard, our respondents interpretation of ethical values can be placed in three categories. They are: 'means' aspect where ethics is identified with reaching organisational norms of efficiency and economy; 'ends' aspect where emphasis is on reflection of constitutional values of public interest, social equity, re-distribution of resources etc, as contents of ethics; and 'individual' aspect where acceptance of responsibility, responsiveness and accountability for administrative actions is viewed as ethics in administration.
The discussion found in the following paragraphs is based on the positive approach of the concept (during the interview it was explained to the respondents that the accepted social and constitutional values and their practice in administration constitutes ethics in administration).

Altogether 73 per cent of the respondents identify public interest, social equity, equitable distribution of resources, positive discrimination, etc., as the values and standards by which the administration should function. Their interpretation of public interest and social equity is coloured by the practices in Indian administration and changing social dynamics. While public interest is identified with specific lobby group interest rather than the interest of the poor downtrodden and the unorganised (some of the administrators also lament this change) social equity is more often defined as "equalising all sections of society by improving their social status". However, in their "hurry to reach targets within stipulated time" (impose strongly by organisation structure and culture) the administrators appear to lay greater emphasis on bureaucratic standards of efficiency, economy and effectiveness.

Ethical dilemmas in work situations are faced by 85 per cent of our respondents. They arise for two reasons. They are: Selection between bureaucratic values of efficiency and economy (most essential to reach targets for rewards) and humanitarian values of empathy, fairness and humanness as means to serve the public in best and most ethical manner (this aspect
highlights their role more as policy implementors). These are generally solved by our respondents by "intelligent steps" based on the needs of moment of action "trying to balance both extremes". For example, 43 per cent of them assess themselves to be 'more empathetic' in their approach. They also think that, as a consequence, they may have to overlook certain rules and procedures 'to act in time' and effectively. However, none was in favour of violating rules as it would "place them at risk" of allegations of misuse of power and authority. However, 'complicated ' ethical dilemmas arise due to the domination of expected values (mostly driven by political expediency) over accepted values (spelled out in the constitution). These dilemmas can be solved in a scientific manner if the administrators possess three "mental attitudes" and three "moral qualities" according to Bailey (1965). A majority of the respondents appear to identify each of the qualities as essential. While about half of the respondents reflect that policies and administrative actions did not always confine to larger interest, a little less than half (47 per cent) of them feel that they are flexible in adopting different sets of accepted values as it becomes essential for working for long term goals. Similarly, all respondents think that they have, at some point of their service, come across paradoxes of procedures.

The recollection of various incidents, by the respondents, from their experience shows that they possess qualities specified by Bailey (optimism, courage and fairness) as essential for moral administration. While 65 per cent
of our respondents think optimistically about improvising administration about 50 per cent feel that they have, most of the times, stuck to their objective decision even under severe pressures to change them. Fairness, identified with humanness by a majority, is felt to be difficult to achieve all the times however, hard they try to. This is due to demands on administration that it should take tough and quick decisions to be effective. They, however, neither directly associate these with public service ethics nor consider them as guidelines to solve ethical dilemmas. In a majority of the cases ethical dilemmas are solved by the administrators themselves “based on experience particularly in the absence of peer group guidance”. This they feel "may have caused violations of subtle principles of administration". The dilemmas are, however, not extremely disturbing plunging the administration and administrators in to crisis.

When moderate scores of administrators on perceptions of the concept, familiarity with appropriate standards and ability to resolve conflicts are explained against recruitment and training practices, our results are quite interesting. The recruitment, though considered as fairly good, does not succeed in emphasising selection of people with commitment. This is evident from the perception of our respondents about their motivation to join civil services and their appreciation for service. They perceive superior civil services as bestowers of various material and social benefits. Though a majority of respondents, at the outset, said "service motive" encouraged them
to take up higher civil services it did not reflect in our conversations with them. A majority of them attach greater importance to factors like status, career prospects, security, authority and power. While first generation respondents attach greater importance to status, the second generation respondents lay stress on power and authority along with status.

In recent years service orientation and perception of public service as vocation have lost their prime position. This, according to our findings, is due to excess importance attached to competence, intellectual abilities and academic excellence in selection. This has undermined the search for qualitative aspects like perception of subtle ethical issues, their analytical ability, commitment to service, loyalty to public interest and constitution etc. among the aspirants. Though it is difficult to identify qualitative aspects through written examination system, it was made possible through a very well chalked out personality test. However, it has also been reduced to another test of academic achievements rather than reflecting the aspirants' intellectual and moral integrity, in recent times.

Affirmative policies like reservation of posts, unlimited number of chances of appearing for examinations (for backward classes), rise in entry age limit for all etc, has not, in the view of our respondents improved the system. They, in fact, criticise them as contributing to demoralisation in the services. Interestingly even people from reserved categories opposed
reservations based on caste and they favoured reservations based on economic status. However, special facilities such as unlimited number of chances to appear for examination up to the maximum age limit, special state sponsored coaching etc., are favoured by our respondents for the weaker sections. Also our respondents did not favour increase in age limit for entry into service as it would "make it difficult to orient the trainees in the philosophy and values of public administration". Therefore, it may be stated that various improvements effected to the recruitment pattern have succeeded in selecting competent people. They, however, are yet to evolve techniques to identify qualitative aspects like commitment etc. among the aspirants.

As for training programmes, they concentrate more on skill development for efficient management of state affairs despite inculcation of ethics among trainees being one of the main objectives. This is evident from the type of training, curricula, and resource persons and also the perception of our respondents. Sixty seven per cent of the respondents hold that ‘skills essential for efficient administration’ occupies higher importance in training course. Secondary data also confirms the same. Separate ethics courses are not arranged both in pre-entry and post-entry training though contemplation in this regard is being made. However, topics like responsiveness, accountability, social equity, public interest etc. are discussed under administrative standards. Therefore their main thrust remains development
and inculcation of managerial skills to achieve efficiency. In other words the training sidelines emphasis on sensitizing the administrators to ethical concepts and standards and do not equip them with necessary skills for resolving ethical dilemmas. However, field level training, is viewed by our respondents, as inculcating the qualities of empathy, esparto de corps etc. This has led to various implications. The most important being the perception of several relevant values of public administration (like public interest, social equity, responsiveness, secularism, antyodaya etc.) as mere rhetoric and therefore, lack of conceptual clarity and reduced ability to identify nuances of ethical issues involved in matters

As per our findings regarding organisational culture (reflected in the aims of hierarchical structure, leadership, peer group culture, professional associations, implementation of ethics codes, laws and machinery) and ethical behaviour, it shows that there is profound influence. Our respondents experience shows that the target orientation and rule orientation constrain ethics in administration as they suppress many individual qualities (like innovation, humanity etc) to achieve uniformity of action (Weberian character of organisational ethic) providing “impersonal” character and therefore, ‘ethical shade’ to organisations. Similarly a majority of our respondents attribute decline in public service ethics to weakened organizational culture and values. The leadership—both within and without organisation—has changed over the years. According to 50 percent of our first
generation respondents “their seniors were worth emulating and set norms and values for the organisation which ‘shaped’ their juniors in the service”. However, the younger members of the service feel its absence. At the same time they feel that required amount of attention is not being paid for their administrative problems. This could be particularly seen in the failure of peer group performance and absence of role models. The peer groups and professional associations have ceased to be guiding forces for maintaining higher public service ethics according to 66 per cent of our respondents. They lack unity and are divided on caste, class and community lines. They neither assist their members, in solving ethical dilemmas and interpreting ethical issues involved in administration nor do they support ethical actions of their members; therefore, demoralizing them in the process. It is also held by our respondents that leadership within the hierarchy occupies a significant position in shaping the behaviour of administrators. Fifty per cent of first generation respondents felt that their seniors were “worth emulating”. This, however, is not so with the younger members of second generation. They appear to get the idea that their occupation of high office demands them to be subservient to the wishes of political masters.
Similarly reward (punishment) system established to encourage ethical actions, according to 86 per cent of our respondents, has been distorted. They perceive that organizational practices, on the contrary, punish legitimate claims. This is explained by them by frequent transfers of 'independent' and 'non-cooperating' administrators from their powerful posts to insignificant posts and their trials under disciplinary rules etc.

The restraining mechanisms (to curb corruption and ensure higher public service ethics) are not effective in investigating and penalising public officials occupying higher positions in the administrative hierarchy and politics. In fact, they have not succeeded in investigating corrupt activities of political leaders though they were brought under the jurisdiction of anti-corruption machinery in 1986. Of the total complaints before them 1.45 per cent and 1.27 per cent were against political leaders, and IAS and IPS officers respectively, during 1985-1990 in Karnataka. Although some of them were indicted on various charges of corruption, none of them was punished. This is attributed, among other things, to (a) excess emphasis on legal approach; (b) complicated procedural and legal requirements which slow down the proceedings diluting the impact; and (c) political interference in their internal affairs like appointments, transfers etc. where 'convenient' and 'cooperative' officers are posted.
Our study also establishes close relations between political culture and public service ethics. The decline in public service ethics is attributed to declining political ethics reflecting dominant trends in three phases. In the first phase (early independence phase) political culture exhibited sacrifice, commitment to public service, national reconstruction and social transformation. The same was reflected in the administrative culture also. In fact, it drew inspiration from political culture to uphold values like commitment to national cause etc. despite colonial orientation of the administrators. The relationship between them was cordial based on mutual respect and aimed at furthering the cause of public interest. Political interference in administrative matters was minimal. It is evident from the perception of our respondents that the administrators enjoyed greater autonomy in their functioning. The top political leaders encouraged administrators to be independent and provide free and fair advice and they even stopped political leaders at various levels from interfering in administration. The civil services were largely protected from harassment and unfavourable treatment by political leadership. These encouraged commitment and integrity among the administrators. The secondary data also confirm the same.

However, this trend changed in the second phase (represented by late 1960s) when political ‘leaders’ started getting ‘selected’ on the basis of their loyalty to party high command. This practice encouraged emergence of
political leaders with narrow vision and greater interest in power. Many of the leaders exhibited neither the vision of leaders of first phase nor did they possess experience of working at the grassroots level. Populism, communalism and criminalization replaced service to masses and work for national interest as instruments for capturing power. The pious goals of social transformation and nation building were replaced by partisan, community and regional interests. As a consequence unequal relations between political leaders and administrators started growing. While independence of administrators started getting curtailed dependency and association of administrators with political leaders started getting recognition and encouragement. 'Convenient' and 'cooperative' administrators were rewarded. This period experienced partisan activities of administrators which were undertaken for fulfilling party and personal interests and career development.

Many such instances occurred during emergency and post-emergency period. In this phase although there were charges of excess against administrators (for example, abuse of state authority for fulfilling party interests such as forging of records, fabrication of rules for detention, antedating of detention orders, forcible sterilization etc.) there were no serious charges of corruption against them.
The third phase (mid 1980s onwards) experienced the emergence of political leaders with personal interest. The emergence of leaders with lack of vision, doubtful integrity and criminal background brought perceptible change in political and administrative culture during this phase. Fulfillment of personal and communal interest, lack of mass base and replacement of dominant party by multi-party governments coupled with frequent change of governments contributed for politicization of administrative machinery. A majority of our respondents faced "very frequent negative political interference" as a consequence of political leaders' interest in "delivering goods to capture votes in the elections". Even political leaders have gone to the extent of preventing the administrators from taking action against criminal and anti-social elements who 'help' them in winning elections. The relationship between political leaders and administrators grew much more unequal with the transfer of triple powers of transfers, promotions, punishment to political leaders. These powers in the opinion of our respondents, are being 'used' by them to sideline, harass and punish honest, independent and 'non cooperative' administrators. On the other hand 'convenient' and 'cooperative' administrators are elevated to coveted positions. They are even shielded from punishment demoralizing the administration. Secondary data also confirm the same. It is viewed that this has further encouraged nexus between political leaders and administrators for mutual benefits. Such incidents are growing multifold, as mentioned earlier, relegating public service ethics to the background.
Policy Implications

Reflections from the study show that Public service ethics have deteriorated due to various reasons. Based on them we suggest a few steps to improve ethics in Public Service. They are divided into four groups (a) Improvements in the recruitment methods, (b) Improvements in the orientation pattern, (c) Improvements in the organisational environment, and (d) Improvements in the political environment. All are interrelated and represent both individual and environmental factors.

Even after fifty years of independence and two important expert committees (Kothari Committee and Satish Chandra Committee) to review the recruitment methods it appears that very little effort has been made to select committed personnel. The committees also, while recognising the importance of committed personnel, laid emphasis on securing competent and intelligent managers of state affairs. This is evident from the nature of examination and requisite qualifications for selecting the candidates. It is essential to change the recruitment methods where emphasis needs to be on the selection of both competent and committed personnel. The difficulty in identifying the quality of commitment among aspirants can, to some extent, be reduced by adopting four alternatives. They are (a) recruitment of aspirants at a much younger age, i.e. after plus two level, (b) their orientation
in discipline, the philosophy of public administration, state craft, public
service ethics, relevant values of the society and polity, social service,
character building etc., (c) While encouraging aspirants to select from the
present choice of subjects, subjects like philosophy, ancient political thought
and public service ethics should be introduced as compulsory subjects for
written examination. This helps in assessing candidates familiarity with
relevant values of public service; and (d) allotment of marks should be based
on their performance in the written examination along with observation of
their discipline and behaviour during the training period.

Alternatively elaborate aptitude tests should be made compulsory on
the lines of Indian National Defence Academy to identify aspirants with
‘right aptitude’ for public service. Although the expert committees and some
scholars observe reservations about its objectivity, in the absence of a
scientific study, not withstanding them, efforts have to be made to design
aptitude tests and implement them objectively to select ‘right persons’.

Second, the impact of training in ethics aspects of administration is
far from satisfactory. Training programmes - both induction and in-service -
concentrate more on the development of managerial skills. Therefore, special
efforts need to be made to emphasise on ethics aspects in training by bringing
a balance between development of managerial skills , analytical abilities to
solve ethical dilemmas and visualise values embedded in the issues arising in
day to day administration. This could be made possible by (a) establishing an independent integrated agency for imparting training in aspects of ethics on the lines of Office of Government Ethics in USA along with the training institutions in existence, (b) the agency should design its programmes so as to familiarise the trainees with ethical aspects of administrative behaviour through training in finance regulation, conflicts of interest regulation, codes of conduct, lobbying regulations and different nuances of social and constitutional ethics to improve their ability to identify and implement appropriate standards for ethical administration.

Third, organisational climate is not conducive to ethical behaviour. The tall hierarchies, rule and target orientation, ineffective implementation of anti-corruption laws, distorted reward (punishment) patterns and weak peer groups make administrators more amoral and in some cases encourage them to be immoral. Apart from reviewing rules and laws, to avoid delays, a few other actions are necessary. They are (a) fixing the reward (punishment) patterns, (b) control of service conditions of administrators by independent and integrated Civil Service Board and (c) Strengthening of professional associations.

Fixing the reward (punishment) patterns and making them clear to members of the service at the time of appointment (conveyed through the government orders). The rewards should be extended to ethical practices in
administration which should be given wide publicity and encouragement. They should be delinked from political influence. The terms of political and civil service interaction on these matters should change from the present 'in the control of politicians' to 'the best served well rewarded'. This should be supplemented by protection of whistle blowers through appropriate laws.

Transfers, promotions, punishments and other matters related to service, of administrators, which have become tools in the hands of political leaders, should be withdrawn from them. They should be governed by independent and integrated Civil Service Board.

The board should be established by the head of the state at various levels to monitor administrative behaviour. It should consist of people of proven integrity drawn from various fields of social life like journalism, judiciary, executive, social service, sciences, education, politics and civil service itself. Service matters and career development of administrators should be decided on the basis of its report and recommendations. It should allot grades to civil servants on close observation of their overall performance, their behaviour with the public, their working ability, efficiency, integrity and such other qualitative aspects ensuring high ethical values in public service. If the civil servant gets higher grade he/she should be promoted on schedule, if he/she secures middle grade it should be
awarded according to the time schedule fixed by the concerned authority and the services of persons who secure a grade below average should be reviewed. Further post-retirement benefits should also be based on recommendations of this board. However, objective performance evaluation techniques should be evolved to minimise probabilities of injustice.

Another such strategy which could bring effective positive changes in public service ethics is the support of Professional Associations. They can operate in several ways. Firstly, they should be strengthened by bringing unity among members. They should support "right actions" of their members against external forces. Secondly, they should be active in arranging discussions and seminars on matters related to ethical complexities to analyse them and guide their members in providing just and efficient administration. Thirdly, the associations should act as "conscience keepers" of their members by encouraging self-assessment. Fourthly, they should develop agency specific ethics codes, monitor their implementation and review the functioning of their members along the lines of such codes.

Fourth, the political environment does not extend any support to ethical administration. On the contrary the degenerated political system has strong influence on public service ethics. The political culture needs to be revived to improve public service ethics. Three issues need to be stressed in
this regard. They are (a) Improved quality of political participation, (b) Right to information, and (c) Judicial activism.

The quality of political participation needs to be revived. There should be restoration of internal party democracy to break the nexus between politics and crime. The creation of a committee, on the lines of the Nolan committee of UK, formulating codes and monitoring their implementation would hasten revival of political values.

Right to Information as prevalent in the Scandinavian and European countries should be established. The excessive use of the Official Secrets Act, 1923 and provisions of Article 19(2) of the Constitution should be discontinued. This could be done either by duly recognising the people’s right to information embedded in Article 19(1) (Fundamental Right of Freedom of Speech and Expression) and Article 21 (it is interpreted that Right to Life also includes, in its broader horizon, the Right to Information) or by providing statutory status to right to information as in Sweden. The Attorney-General should be given an additional duty of overseeing its implementation.

Judicial activism in dealing with the wrongdoings of public figures - former as well as present - also constitutes an effective external support mechanism in the direction of enhancement of public service ethics.