CHAPTER III

Ethics in Journalism: An overview
Ethics involves what is right, impartial, fair, just, and responsible. Ethical practice is as important in media as it is in any other walk of life. Ethics based journalism with objectivity, accountability, fairness and truth as the key elements and are vital for responsible media practice.

3.1 Ethics: Meaning and Concept

The concepts of ethics is very subjective and relative, therefore it would be relevant to look at the theories which can be considered to determine correct media behavior. Basically three efficient theories that are consistently employed to determine media behavior are:

1. Consequentialism
2. Utilitarianism
3. Deontology

**Consequentialism:**

This theory suggests that the ethical value of an action should be determined on its consequences. Consequentiality theories concentrate only on the outcome of an action without considering about the means, i.e. how the consequences came about. Hence, all actions should be considered as of their possible outcomes before being executed. The consequences of an action can be judged from two perspectives: Ethical Egoism\(^{13}\) and Ethical Altruism\(^{14}\).

Ethical Egoism does not reflect a cohesive social model as such actions can harm others while Ethical Altruism holds those actions that benefit others and can be considered good.

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\(^{13}\) The view that morality ultimately rests on self-interest

\(^{14}\) The principle or practice of unselfish concern for the welfare of others


**Utilitarianism:**

Utilitarianism theory is applicable to the media as it considers the betterment of society at large. It considers ethical as that which is designed to create the greatest good for the maximum numbers. Mahatma Gandhi’s concept of *Sarvodaya*\(^{15}\) talks about the welfare of all and reflects the utilitarian theory. However, Gandhi’s *Sarvodaya* was not a utilitarian because he realized that the utilitarian objective of satisfying many people was not a sufficiently ethical model. Gandhi was of an opinion that asked why the well-being of the minority should be of any less value than that of the majority or why the welfare of certain people should be sacrificed. There are many arguments against consequentialism and the utilitarian theories of ethics.

The utilitarian approach encourages responsible and thoughtful behavior. Although it is possible to make mistakes in judgment, it is advisable to invest time in considering all the possible outcomes of a certain action, to determine whether the overall good is greater than the negative consequences.

**Deontology:**

Deontology concentrates on a person’s duty as a means to determine appropriate action. Kant is believed to be the most famous follower of this theory. He was of the opinion that it was the pretention behind an action that rendered it ethical or unethical. Kant felt that there was only one virtue which was good without qualification: GOODWILL. Actions inspired by goodwill are done out of respect for moral law and duty. Kant’s categorical perspective- Will to act well out of duty- has three important guidelines:

- An agent should be motivated by the principle, which he would be happy to see as a universal maxim.
- Always treat people as an end in themselves and not just a means.
- Act as if you were the law maker in the kingdom of ‘End’. (Kant, 1785)

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\(^{15}\) Sarvodaya means ‘universal uplift’ or ‘progress of all’
It is expected from a journalist that he does his job honestly and objectively along with the protection of the sources and loyalty with the employer. These factors create dilemma at times. Hence, it is important to understand all aspects of ethical issues.

“Facts are sacred, comments are free. Facts must not be tampered with; News must be reported with complete objectivity, without any distortion. A journalist should not mix news with views and must be careful enough to clearly distinguish between the two” – as said by the editor of the Manchester Guardian (Shamsi, 2005: P-49). Refusal of moral values in community life as in individual is the source of the corruption on a mounting scale among sections of politicians, public servants in the civil and defense services even the judiciary and others. The dominance of utilization and eroticism in the mass media especially electronic media is a part of this syndrome. Mahatma Gandhi was in favor of guiding children in the humanist morals which are common to all religions at their best. As the eminent Gandhian Shri Shambhu Dutta who has worked with Gandhi says that everyone is in the rat race or a strange competition at the cost of so many things that only time will tell, but lack of kindness and humanity in all strata of life is directly related to the lack of morality and ethics in media. When asked about the way left out to come out of this situation or to bring ethical issues in journalism, Shri Dutta replies immediately, off course Mahatma Gandhi. He throws light on the fact that Gandhian ethics of journalism set high standard to the entire journalist.

Objective process of social-economic and media development, intensifying competition within the press and from the other new media and other kinds of economical and political pressures have introduced serious problems. Higher level of manipulations of news, analysis and public affairs information to suit the owners financial and political interests; prejudice and propaganda masquerading as professional journalism; the down warding and devaluing of editorial functions in some cases; creeping corruption are deeply worrying tendencies. His journalism was fearless and without any external pressure as Gandhi said, “a person who follows the path of dharma does not feel helpless” (Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi, Vol.56: P-183).
It is in this context that it would be appropriate to give consideration to the concept of ethics and what we mean by ethics and its nature. Another term for ethics is moral philosophy and the two are usually used as synonyms. The latter term, is used more in Britain. While ‘ethics’ has a Greek origin, ‘moral’ has a Latin origin. Ethics is not similar as morals, and is not even a set of morals. It is said that ‘the object of ethics, by its own account, is to determine true propositions regarding righteous or vicious conduct. Morals or a set of morals can be derived from the propositions discovered by moral philosophy that is how morals and moral philosophy, however conceptually different, are often taken together in common parlance. Morality can be taught of intuition by good and wise people, without explicit philosophical analysis, but these intuitions themselves can be based on the implicit reasoning. Philosophical analysis, explicit or implicit, is necessary in any discussion of what is moral and what is not, or what is good and what is not. It includes ethics along with sciences. Since ethics emerges in society and has much to do with social relations, it could very well be considered, as a social science.

However the majority of writers on ethics are satisfied with treating it as a branch of philosophy. Well, philosophy itself can be considered a science that of logical investigation into abstract issues concerning all sciences, arts and experiences an ultimate science. Not many philosophers, however, would agree that science, generally understood as an investigation into the natural world, might prove or disprove, or evaluate moral concepts. While there can be an ethical evaluation of science and technology, yet it is for ethics to evaluate moral concepts and principles.

It should be noticed that ethics in the profession are only guideline, which are necessary- in the process of information dissemination. These ethics relate to language use, and means adopted in securing information for ensuring objectivity and fairness in presenting facts to the public. Collection and dissemination of information is the duty of the press. Because, the press as a mass communication channel operates in a public sphere for the benefit of the readers, the actions of the press are expected to be above ground. The public scrutinizes the actions of the press on all occasions and expects the press to reflect values and ethics of the profession. In the process of collection and
dissemination of information, the press adopts different means to obtain information and occasionally suppresses news from the public because of extraneous reasons. The press is, therefore, expected to have certain norms and ethics in the collection and dissemination. Former Press Council of India Chairman P.B. Sawant noted that the code of ethics all over the world emphasizes the following:

(a) Honesty and fairness, (b) reply to critical opinions, (c) objectivity in reporting, (d) prohibition to receive gifts, (e) respect for privacy, (f) distinction between fact and opinion, (g) not to inflame hatred, (h) not to use dishonest means to obtain information, and (i) general standards of decency and taste. (Sawant, P.B: 22, 2)

Nevertheless, Sonnenberg reported a study done in thirty one countries on the ethical code, and it was found that journalist adhered to fifty seven principles and ten principles were found to be common in all these countries. These ten principles are: truthfulness, honesty, accuracy of information, correction of errors, prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race/ethnicity/religion etc., respect for privacy, prohibition to accept bribes or any benefits, fair means in information collection, prohibition to allow any outsider to have influence on the journalistic work, prohibition of discrimination on the basis of sex/class etc., freedom of speech, expression, comment, criticism, professional secrecy (Sonnenberg, U, 2004). Though these codes specifically mention that public accountability and privacy of the individual seem to be important, the media violate them fully, asking for absolute freedom to discharge its duties. Thus, in several countries, certain elements of free press are synchronized such as press freedom, freedom of expression, privacy, libel\textsuperscript{16}/slander\textsuperscript{17} defamation, right to reply, access to public information, discrimination, pre-condemnation and court proceedings, responsibility of the publication, censorship, source protection and minors.

Ethics is not just a matter of subjective opinion. Their proposals are not specific to particular individuals but apply equally to all. They have a degree of generalization that

\textsuperscript{16} Defamation by written or printed words, pictures, or in any form other than by spoken words or gestures

\textsuperscript{17} Defamation in some transient form like spoken words, gestures, malicious, and false statement or report
can make it a systematic area of study, regardless of whether one prefers to call it a science or a branch of philosophy. There is a remarkable similarity amid ethics and economics, though economics is considered to be more definitely a science. The comparison arises not so much because both deal with values, since the way they look at values is difference. The similarity arises further, because both deal with the problems of choice and development. It is observed, ‘Ethics deals with the problem of choosing between different domains of life, and assumes there is real choice between different kinds, or else there is no such things as ethics’.

Ethics deals with the choice, not only between what is good and what is bad, but also between different principles or moral values or ends, because there can be several moral ends that sometimes conflict with each other. Freedom of choice is extremely important for moral decisions. Ethics becomes significant only in the context of choice. For example, merely not stealing by itself does not make anyone ethical.

However, when the individual knows that under the circumstances faced there is no possibility of being caught, and yet he does not steal, only then is he ethical. We could add that ethics is concerned not only with choice, but also with survival in this mundane world and development of both individual and communities. It is mainly concerned with moral and social development. Both ethics and economics can overlap each other when it comes to the issues related to human development. Thus, both economic choices and economic development are subject to ethical evaluation too, and not just in terms of rates of growth and efficiency. Ethics refers to the quality of the value judgments we make on matters big and small. So it may be natural to conclude that someone perceived to have chosen the “wrong” course of action has acted badly. But we must remember that the focus of ethics remains on the deliberative process rather than on the final decision (Plaisance, 2008: P-22).

The first step in ethics is to be very clear about what we mean by good and bad. It is also the major question, the answer to which constitutes a most important part of ethics. The main object of Ethics as a systematic science is to give correct reasons for thinking that this or that is good. What is good is an age-old question. What is just or
good is determined by the interests of the strong and the ruling, to guard their power, prestige, and property. Thus, the question of what is good is inseparably linked with the question of good for whom.

Ethics can also be taken as ‘doggy ethics’, in the sense that we call a dog good when it is obedient and ‘well behaved’. It is not in the interest of common people to follow such ethics, but they do stabilize themselves and security for their members. However it cannot be denied that rigidities can produce injustice in customs, laws, and even in moral codes, which, for example, authenticated social evils like untouchability, slavery, and blasphemy laws. Although to say that all ethics is of this type would be extreme cynicism. Definitely there is more to ethics than mere loyalty and obedience. In contrast to facts mentioned above. Gandhi would think that justice is the main weapon of the exploited and the deprived. It is justice which gives them the motive, power, and moral courage to fight against injustice. Exploiters on the other hand would have to try hard for some validation of their wrong-doing.

From Gandhian perspective: ‘for everybody who is powerless, justice and truth is the most important weapon in the fight for his freedom and growth’. The relevant point here is that Gandhi would brush aside the question of ‘good for whom’, as he would regard morality is good for all, the rich and the poor, young and old, and it should be sought for its own sake as an end in itself. When it is so pursued, it results in happiness and well-being of all. Without morality, society cannot just survive, including the weak. Morality involves mutual obligations and the necessity to ensure that it is conducive to the happiness of all sections of the society. Society would simply break down in to disorder and chaos without a common or universal concept of what is good for all. Such a situation is dangerous particularly for the weak. For Gandhi morality and truth was something as to the passionate love of the pure lover for his beloved (Santhanam, 1967: P-38).

Morality and ethics emerged because both the strong and the weak, individually and collectively, benefit out of it. The concept of what is good’, when used in a non-ethical sense, should not be confused with good’ used in an ethical context. The question
arises, ‘Good for what?’ We can refer to a good knife, which cuts well, or a good farmer who knows and practices cultivation wisely. Generally, though not always, in such non-ethical context, good is required not for its own sake but as an instrument or means, while a important characteristics of morality is that it is sought for its own sake though it may serve the purpose of enhancing the happiness and well-being of the society. However, aesthetic contexts also may refer to ‘good’ as an end in itself, such as when we refer to Sachin Tendulkar as a very good batsman, as his batting is enjoyed for its own sake, like good music. Even principles can be an aesthetic experience sought for its own sake, both being spiritual experiences. It however leaves open the question of defining what is morally good.

It is observed that ‘we call something “good” when we desire it and “bad” when we have an aversion from it’. However it was hastening to include that our use of the term is more stable than our desires. That is, even if for the instant we may not desire a thing, we may call it ‘good’ if it is desirable otherwise. Likewise, not one or two persons but many should be able to agree on the desirability of what is good. ‘Good’ is therefore not a mere individual view, but more a social or collective view. That is why, ‘there can be better in a world where the desires of difficult individuals be: Act so as to produce harmonious rather than discordant desires’. Significantly, ‘if harmonious desires are what we should seek, love is better than hate’. Desire for knowledge is in accordance with similar desire by others, while a desire for, say, large landed estates can be satisfied by only a few, depriving many others. Desire for power over others is likewise a source of conflict. Desires for activities, which are innovative rather than possessive, add to goodness in the world.

What is ‘good’ and what is ‘right’ may have a considerable overlap, but ‘good’ and ‘right’ are not exactly synonyms. The term ‘right’ is often used in the sense of what is proper and correct, both in moral and non-moral contexts. In moral contexts, it usually conveys the sense of what is just or fair. Justice is one of the principles of morality, but not an exclusive moral principle. The term ‘right’ may also be used when there are conflicting moral principles, raising a moral dilemma. When a preference is made for one of them as related to the situation faced, the selected principles are taken as the right or
correct one. The term ‘right’ has thus a reasonably relative flavour, even as the term ‘good’ has an absolute sense. The good precedes the right, and the question of what is right cannot be decided in a moral vacuum without any notion of what is good.

The Enlightenment philosopher, Immanuel Kant has made a very significant contribution to the question of what is ethical. He wrote a path breaking book, Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals, published first in 1785, which sets out his approach to principles, apart from other books on philosophy, very briefly and simply put, the morality of action, according to him, is not based on its consequences but on the purpose of doing one’s business sincerely, for instance, is certainly commendable, but what makes it moral is if the reason is doing so is for the sake of sincerity and end in itself, rather than merely as it is the best policy to attract and stay is business and make more profits in the long run. An action, if is to be considered as moral, is not something in response to our self-centered desires or inclinations, however done as duty for its own sake. In following our desires or inclinations, we are not free persons, and only a free or autonomous person can be able of moral action. But what is this duty? How is it made known to us? It is not somewhat given by others, but is derived from our own free will. It is arrived at by our analytical power, as Practical Reason, logic applied to moral questions. While humans are capable of this way of thinking as rational beings, all humanity is to be treated with due respect and dignity. No person is to be used as a mere object, a mere instrument to satisfy our own ends, but as an end in itself. It emphasis on giving due respect to all humans, all humanity, consequently gave rise to the notion of human rights.

Gandhi while deciding what is good or bad said that he relied to a great extent on listening to the ‘inner Voice’ or conscience. Quite a few philosophers do not agree with this system, because they believe that conscience can vary from person to person, but ethics has uniformity and universality, as observed above and it is not a matter solely of individual view, For instance, Hitler’s conscience. (Assuming he had one) acted very differently from Gandhi’s reply to such criticism is that every person whether a saint or a criminal, has an Inner Voice”, but some suppress it and make it feeble. They let their insensitivity and selfishness surpass the Inner Voice. Although even a criminal would
know in his hearth that what he is doing is immoral, and he may possibly rationalize it in some way to relieve or stifle his conscience. Though, an innate decision of what is good or bad in an individual’s mind is a result of social acculturation. Even as a child, a person imbibes some ideals taught by or observed from its parents or from social environment. This is at least one of the essential reasons for the need to spread education extensively, including moral education.

While judging what is good or bad, the Gandhian approach can be said to consist of three criteria: purpose, means, and consequences. This approach is more ample. This may not inevitably be an original idea of Gandhi, and he has himself approved different sources of his inspiration and thought, but the approach has a usual Gandhian flavor. A person could find that his deeds has gone wrong and brought about unforeseen and unwanted consequences. Although if his intention was pure, and there was no negligence or carelessness on his part, his action may not be considered as immoral. Immoral means do not fail in bringing about unwanted consequences. Ultimately, the goodness of an action or decision is to be judged by consequences, particularly on others, at least consequences as expected on the basis of reasonable, impartial thinking, being cautious about wishful thinking. Gandhi said that we commonly call “wrong” or inappropriate actions “unethical”, doing so can obscure the fact that ethics is about how grapple with the difficult gray areas (Plaisance, 2008: P-22).

Gandhi made it clear that morality is not guided only by the reason of liberal egotism or prudence. In fact, he was critical of modern civilization on the view that it reduces morality to enlightened selfishness. Ethics, for him, was more positive and nobler, and was encouraged by mutual consideration empathy and love, and not by self-interest. As morality is not simply intended self-interest, it transcends dry reasoning and becomes spiritual in nature, in Gandhi’s viewpoints. An ethical person is more than logical; she or he is spiritual too. Not that Gandhi would push apart self-interest from morality overall, but pursuing self-interest had to have a moral base. For example, seeking freedom for India from the British rule was not a question of mere self-interest
for India, it was moral too. Colonialism\textsuperscript{18} violated the principle of equality of human beings, and deprived a large number of people of their solemnity, freedom, and even economic well being. To rise beside it was more than self-interest; it was a moral responsibility.

3.2 Need for Ethics and Accountability

Morality is to be pursued for its own sake, as an end in itself rather than as means, is a lofty principle, which has the support of great practitioner of morality like Gandhi, however it may not motivate or encourage all, mainly the ‘practical’ people, because following moral values may entail personal sacrifices. For example, it may be enticing and individually beneficial for the influential to take bribes. Moreover they may be so powerful that they can simply cover their tracks and not be exposed. It is not good for the society if they behave so, although from their own point of view why should they be ethical? It is pretty enticing to be a ‘free rider’. The detailed but briefly placed answer to was that in considering why I should be ethical, I should take a long term view of myself, of what I should be, and seek the answer to the question of what I should do in that light. Developing a practice of taking bribes, for instance, will damage my very being and deprive me of mental peace. In short, ‘every rational being has a reason to cultivate virtues, regardless of his particular desires’. This is how ‘virtue ethics’ developed. Furthermore this is the reason why all religions have emphasized the need to develop a strong moral character. It did not confine the possibility of being righteous to a person in seclusion. It urged people to be good citizens too, enlightening a strong civic sense, participating enthusiastically in public or political affairs, and influencing decision through active deliberations. It is believed that it is by becoming a proactive part of the society and polity for achieving common good that one realizes one’s moral potential. The modern significance of this teaching for people, mainly in countries like India, can barely be exaggerated.

\textsuperscript{18} Colonialism is a practice of domination, which involves the subjugation of one people to another
3.2.1 Accountability

The word accountability in language originates from the metaphor of ‘keeping an account of one’s conduct’. It means that an account has to be made available to a higher authority or another. In the media discourse, accountability is used to explain a media channel’s functioning to the higher authority or a group of person’s in the event of its behavior. The press plays a vital role in disseminating information to the public to make the latter well informed. In the market driven journalism, the media indulge in sensationalism to maximize profits and commercialism is said to be the motive for such behavior. Therefore, the society or the elite expect the press to be accountable to its constituents and press accountability is central to its behavior. (Pritccard, 2000: P-1-10) Press accountability is defined as a process by which press organizations may be expected or obliged to render an account to their constituents. A constituent is a person, group, or organization whose goodwill is essential for any media organization. Moreover, a media organization can have many constituents including audience members, advertisers, news sources, peers in other organizations and regulatory authorities.

3.2.2 Accountability to Employers

Although the profession of journalism is considered to be a public service, journalists as employees are grateful to provide an account to their employers. The employer considers his enterprise as a profit-earning enterprise instead of a public service unit to work for the interests of society. A classic example is an editor failing to publish a justifiable news story that is potentially unfavorable to the interests of an important advertiser because the advertiser declares that he will stop the advertising if the story appears. For instance, the case of Observer in the United Kingdom can be considered. Publisher Tiny Rowland owns Lonorho International, which has a group of newspapers with business interest in Africa. In 1984, Donald Trelford, the editor of Observer published a full-page report alleging atrocities by the army in Zimbabwe where Lonorho companies earned 1500 million profit annually. Rowland cabled an immediate apology to Robert Mugabe, the Zimbabwe President and sternly rebuked Trelfod, Hamlin, and (Brue, 1992: P-33-48). Further, the owners are also complacent about certain public
issues to satisfy an advertiser. They highlight specific issues by placing them in the inside pages to keep them off from public view.

3.2.3 Accountability to Subjects

Accountability is one of the most important parameters of ethical values and it is very difficult to practice ethics based journalism without accountability, as an example of this kind was published in the newspaper, The Hindu, “The press is also expected to be accountable to the subjects involved in incidents while reporting stories. Journalists may get sensational stories when public personalities are the subjects involved in the issue. For example, the shooting incident that took place in Hyderabad, Andhra Pradesh in which prominent film star, Bala Krishna allegedly involved. He reportedly shot at two other people over a financial issue” (The Hindu, June 4, 2004 (1))

Though it was the job of the police or the court to pronounce the verdict whether he was guilty or not, the newspapers as well as TV channels ran special stories and arraigned the film star allegedly involving him in the shoot-out.

A misjudgment on the part of the media tantamount to negligence and an error of this kind and its consequent harm may be excusable. But a valid excuse does not remove an obligation to accept accountability. For example, The Statesman of Kolkata published a news item ‘Homeless children come home to slave’ in its issue dated April 30, 1999.

3.2.4 Accountability to Sources

In the process of gathering news from different sources, journalists are liable to be accountable to their sources of information, because the source reposes faith and trust on the journalist not to disclose the identity of the source. The disclosure of source’s identity will harm him/her and consequently his/her privacy will be invaded. Though journalist’s main goal is to provide information to the public, the information given by the source will serve the interests of the public related to a policy decision of the government asks the reporter to maintain secrecy of the source. Sometimes, the source may say ‘off-the-record’, the journalist is bound to keep off the information in not
disclosing it. However, the journalist can use his discretion in disclosing the information when it is related to a crime, national security, and financial loss to the organization and so on.

3.2.5 Objectivity

Objectivity can be defined as a value-neutral projection of reality and therefore objective view of an event is equally important while constructing social reality. Therefore, what can be objectivity in journalism? Objectivity, according to Boyer consists of six elements:

- Balance and even-handedness in presenting different sides of an issue;
- Accuracy and realism of reporting;
- Presentation of all main relevant points;
- Separation of facts from opinion, but treating opinion as relevant;
- minimizing the influence of the writer’s own attitude, opinion or involvement;
- Avoiding slant, rancor or devious purpose (Boyer, 1981, 58(1): P-24-28)

In order to be objective, newspapers implement various practices to prevent manipulation of information by giving by-lines, credit line to the sources, by writing explicit interpretive stories. Nevertheless, objectivity is a virtue in the profession and therefore in public accountability, journalists will not deviate from it. Because in the profession of journalism, some newspaper may deviate from it while other newspaper may represent reality as it is. Ryan commented that objective journalists are accountable to their audiences, to the highest ethical and professional standards of objective journalism, and, finally, to their employers. They never assume that employers, not themselves, bear the ultimate responsibility for their behavior (Ryan, 2007: P-3-22).

Ethics is extremely social and the very basis of human society. Man could be on the whole selfish brute by character, but he sees many advantages of living in a society and even dreads solitude, whereas enjoying the company of others for its own sake. This requires regular adjusting to others, without wiping out one’s uniqueness. Man finds
pleasure neither in the complete isolation and freedom in absolute communism of a society of ants and honeybees. Greed encouraged by selfishness is not an absolute evil, as it does maintain the society and the economy moving, after all. It wishes only to be restrained, so that it is constant with the best interests of all.

Ethics has a crucial role in achieving the common adjustments on a fair and impartial basis, making them equally rewarding. In view of the consequences of how to behave with others is at the heart of the matter. It is only when human beings pattern their actions to each other based on this concern that social relations are formed. It involves transcending our narrow egos.

As civilization makes development, the roles of ethics become more leading and significantly persuade human action. It is in the very nature of ethics to entail limits on human freedom, so as to encourage the freedom and welfare of all. The thought that ethics promotes the welfare of all has been basic since ancient times, both in India and the West. In the *Rigveda*\(^{19}\), it was assumed that *ritam* or moral order is after the smooth functioning of the world, and of even the universe. *Dharm* is the consequent and more popular term for ethics, (not at the cosmic, but at the individual and social level), used since the Vedic times, and its role was thought to be similar as well. *Dharma* is often said to be that which promotes the welfare of all beings in Mahabharata. The very origin of the term, *dharma*, is from the verb, *dhri*, which means ‘to uphold’ *Dharma* is that which upholds the world and the society. It is not a matter of individual well-being in seclusion. If all or, at least most people in a society behaved in a morally satisfactory way, it creates conditions where all human beings can understand their full potential, not otherwise.

Accuracy ensures that one’s thinking are based on things as they really are. They claim on the significant characteristic of speaking truth and say that if result is harmful, speaking truth is to be avoided. It is not consequence merely in terms of individual interests, but on common welfare, which is the principle. Whatever is beneficial to the welfare of beings, that is to be regarded as truth. This principle is sometimes followed

\(^{19}\) *Rigveda* is an ancient Indian Sacred collection of Vedic Sanskrit hymns
with good intention. A doctor may try to boost the morale of her patient by saying that he is improving, even if he is not quite well. If a child insists on eating more of something that may harm it, mother may tell him/her that it is finished, even if in fact it is not. Truth has to be tempered by judgment and love though deviations from it are not accepted as norm, that is why Gandhi put ahimsa closely and inseparably with truth; the two have to go together. Ahimsa, for him, was not merely avoiding violence, but meant love and care. Gandhi often equated ahimsa with love and satyagrah with truth. He considered these concepts inseparable in social action. He believed that without ahimsa it is not possible to seek and find truth (Nojeim, 2004: P-106).

3.3 Relativity in Ethics

This leads to the subject of alleged relativism in ethics. Is ethics unconditional or relative? Is truth meant for following only when it is suitable to do so, merely for convenience? At times it is held that morals are comparative to each culture, and other cultures cannot make an opinion on it. If ethics were to be that entire relative, it cuts the very basis of ethics from under, for everything and anything would be right and there can be no difference between right and wrong. Ultimately, ethics is the philosophy of how we can live and lead a significant life, and relativism is hardly a help in this. All religions, including Hinduism, have discarded ethics of pragmatism or relativism in ethics. The learned may reproach or praise; wealth may come or go; death may come now or later; the (morally) courageous never diverge from the path of justice even by a step. However, absolute observance to ethical norms may be extremely difficult, mainly if, in specific situations, there is a conflict among different moral norms. The Hindu epics Ramayana; and Mahabharata are rich in the discussions of such moral dilemmas. It does not mean that these epics or Hinduism understood in the relativism of ethics. It looks, autocracy in ethics is not possible to practice, and relativism is not possible to believe. Gandhian way for finding a solution to a moral dilemma is first to avoid self-interest, and then see what is in the interest of the weakest.

The subsistence of ethical conflicts or dilemmas may be increasingly felt in the contemporary world, what with conflicting values like competence and social objectivity,
or freedom and impartiality. They aim in turn to a rising need to sharpen what one may term as our moral aptitude, capacity to perceive through convenient rationalizations clothed in, extremely moralistic terminology and arrive at just decisions. Emotional intelligence underscores compassion, eagerness to realize others’ points of view, capability to stay calm, communication skill, ability to usefully manage interpersonal relations, initiative, and co-operation. A sensitively intelligent person knows that it pays to be good, helpful, and generous. Ethical intelligence includes all these; but underscores much more the values of sincerity, devotion to truth, and aversion to any action that harms others.

In addition, it includes the wisdom to distinguish among the right and the wrong without being influenced by self-interest, and the moral courage to act according to one’s logical certainty without at the same time closing one’s mind. While self-interest may not be eschewed in emotional intelligence, ethical intelligence is expected to be nobler. There is a difficulty in ethical intelligence which may not affect usual intelligence tests. It is that any test of ethical intelligence may have to cope with various solutions each with its claim to be right. This only adds to the need of furthering one’s capability for moral judgment through thoughtful discussion and openness to different points of view. Tests of ethical intelligence may be helpful, though, in revealing the type of personality involved, the values believed in by the person and the social class the person represents. although the challenge of ethical intelligence lies in going beyond one’s self-interest and prejudices, even beyond one’s class background, and arriving at a just answer.

There is an attractive viewpoint on this subject of moral dilemmas in the face of accurate situations. Its conceptual frame is borrowed from micro-economics20. There is a trade-off between different moral principles, which can be conceived as fact-independent indifference curves, whose axes point out ‘packages of different extents to which competing principles are implemented’. ‘The trade-off values, the rates of which we are eager to permit condensed implementation of one principle for the sake of improved

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20 It is a branch of economics that studies the behavior of individual households and firms in making decisions on the allocation of limited resources
implementation of another, are a priori: the facts determine only which implementation packages are feasible. A moral optimum so attained may still appear to be relative in the sense that it takes in to account both moral principles and facts. Moral principles, per se or taken in isolation, are independent of facts or actual situations (though they may have been evolved in the context of society and actual world). But when it comes to their implementation in actual situations, conflicts between them arise and a trade-off becomes necessary. This does not make ethics relative, which would have been the case if the trade-off were amid moral principles and expediency or self-interest. The trade-off, however, is between moral principles themselves, to decide which one is important and to what extent, without compromising one’s moral consistency and honesty. Sawant noted that the code of ethics all over the world emphasizes the following: a) honesty and fairness, b) reply to critical opinions, c) objectivity, d) respect for privacy, e) distinction between fact and opinion, f) not to inflame hatred, g) not to use dishonest means to obtain information and h) general standards of decency and taste. Absolute morality, which is entirely regardless of moral dilemmas really faced, is incredible, as ethics is for acting in this world. That is why Gandhi said he dealt with relative truth, which did not imply yielding to selfishness and dishonesty (Sawant: 22(2)).

3.4 Individuals to Institutions

Ethics is not meant only for individuals acting in isolation. On many aspects of vital importance, such as fighting social evils like dowry, corruption, and environmental worsening, we may have to act in concert. It desires coming out of our individual shells, coordinating with compatible people, spreading awareness, and initiating group action. There are also important global issues requiring co-operation and co-ordination between countries. With increasing globalization, there is also an increase in the global responsibility in tackling mass poverty, illiteracy and ill-health, in averting environmental crisis, in implementing human rights, and in achieving durable peace. Countries not sensitive and responsible enough in this regard, have not only to be brought around but also assisted and supported by the global community. All this requires developing proper institutions and individuals’ loyalty and support to them, without which neither individuals nor institutions can be effective. To conceive of
Community is not to choose between a thoroughly instrumental vision within which everyone’s sole concern is ‘What’s in it for me?’ and a thoroughly constitutive vision within which everyone’s constant preoccupation is ‘doing what’s best for the group’. There is a middle ground between these two visions, and it is likely to provide a more solid foundation for a healthy society than either a strictly influential or a firmly constitutive formation.

An individual can be a member of several institutions at the same time, and gain advantage from all of them, also contributing to their sustenance and development. The interests of the individuals on the one hand and of communities or institutions on the other can be reconciled if there is mutual appreciation of the value of each. This needs ethics of mutual respect, support, and care in the relationships between them. Problems can arise when individuals tend to derive their identities from institutions or communities on exclusive basis and get fanatical about them. They forget that we all have in fact multiple identities and that individual derive their strength and support not from just one institution but many of them. Fanatical attachment to one is not only blindness although it also amounts an immoral approach, as it has the potential of important to violence. Just as there are moral ‘do’s and ‘don’ts for individuals, they are there for groups, corporate enterprises, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), political parties, and governments too.

3.5 Liberty and Equality

Freedom and equality are amongst the most significant values at the level of the state, in the sense that it is the responsibility of the state to ensure them and watch out to see that they are not compromised. The state may not always do so on its own, and citizens’ vigilance and pressure on the state would always be necessary to see that these morals are appreciated and put in to way.

Although ‘liberty’ and ‘freedom’ can be used interchangeably, the latter is a broader idea. For instance, ‘liberty from hunger’ would be a peculiar expression, while ‘freedom from hunger’ is not. ‘Liberty’ is the traditionally used word in political
philosophy, while ‘freedom’ has been increasingly used more recently particularly since
the close of World War II. ‘Freedom’ has been used in a way, which has incorporated
egalitarian concerns (like freedom from poverty, hunger, and deprivation), which the
traditional usage of ‘liberty’ has not bothered about. Thus, while the values of liberty and
equality seem to be ever in conflict, this is not the case between freedom and equality.

The term freedom can be said to seek reconciliation between liberty and equality. Liberty is ‘that condition of men in which coercion of some by others is reduced as much as possible in society’. It does not favor the use of the concept of liberty (or freedom) in the sense of power or ‘ability to do what I want’ (subject to the condition that it does not harm others), because such a use can be employed to support the claim for redistribution of wealth, and any forced redeployment would mean coercion for the enterprising who will be deprived of wealth and thus of incentive for enterprise. But it is precisely when liberty is interpreted as ability to do or achieve that it can be reconciled with equality, since such an ability cannot, in all fairness, be confined only to a few but has to be extended to all in a humane and just society.

Restricting liberty to a merely negative implication as absence of coercion does lead to conflict with equality. Equality is not so much about equal distribution of wealth or income, as giving an equal or fair starting point in life for all as far as possible. In a race, we cannot insist on equality of achievement, but should insist on equality or fairness in starting point. Once this equality is assured, liberty is necessary to allow each to achieve her or his maximum potential. It is not enough to merely ensure equality before law, though it is the minimum necessity for ensuring a just society. It is not enough even to assure a formal equality of opportunities when some people suffer from serious disabilities and deprivations such as poverty, ill health and poor education or lack of any of it, in having access to opportunities. It does not support leveling down all capabilities to a low equal level, but on leveling up by paying attention to those who have been unfortunate enough in life to be not capable to use opportunities that economic growth provides.
Essentially, the media as pillar of democracy are expected to be value-oriented which will give credibility to the newspaper. According to Gunther, the credibility of a paper depends on the characteristics, audience demographics, and personal dispositions. But, for the newspapers, the values are only news values, which are supposed to be their values of existence, which will keep their credibility intact when the newspapers adopt them. Thus, the media without misusing their freedom can uphold news values such as accuracy, impartiality, and decency aiming at larger sections of population (Gunther, 1992: P-147-167). Krishnamoorthy, clarifies that ‘news values must relate to the ongoing context in a country. The larger section of the people must be their primary beneficiaries’. Further, he adds that “a re-examination of news values and concepts in Indian print is essential to ensure that like every other public activity, journalism too has a public service objective on the basis of which alone newspapers can claim and exercise freedom of the press” (Krishnamoorthy 1988, 28-34). Normally, the goal of a newspaper is public good. Thus, Mahatma Gandhi outlined the three objectives of newspapers. According to Yadava (1985), they are: a) to understand the popular feelings and give them expression, b) to arouse the people certain desirable sentiments, and c) to fearlessly expose defects in public life (Yadava, 1985, 12(3): P-111-119).

Every society needs incentives for their members to realize their best. In this task it is essential to promise that one gets what is due, which is the result of one’s effort, skill, and talent. Otherwise nobody will give ones best to the society and no progress can take place. But unrestrained liberty to exploit people or nature can come in the way of achieving a humane and sustainable society. In market economy, moreover, all disparities in income and wealth cannot be justified in the name of intrinsic talent. Much depends on how market values, different talents and capacities. When market valuation is so erratic, taxing the rich to benefit the society as a whole and particularly the poor cannot be wrong. We cannot ignore the underdog, because if ignored, they can pull down those who sit smugly in ivory towers.

Hence, ethics of fair play and compassion is needed to moderate the ideology of efficiency to make the society and the economy more inclusive. That is where Gandhi
comes in. Gandhi steered clear of both libertarian market fundamentalism\textsuperscript{21} and totalitarianism\textsuperscript{22}, and showed his own third way. He recognized the role of the individual, but his individual was not the ‘Economic Man’ of the economists, maximizing utility and profits and thinking of nothing else. His individual was a Moral or Ethical Man practicing self-control in his wants and kindness and compassion towards others particularly the weak. Freedom according to Gandhi could be said to be of two kind’s licentiousness (liberty to do whatever one wanted) and freedom to act according to one’s conscience. The first is not freedom at all, while the second is real freedom according to Gandhi, which assumes a deeply ethical character. The Ethical Man strives to secure and use such freedom reliable with and promoting the interest of the society of which he is a lively member. With such a person, there is no need for any irresistible state control, even without which liberty and equality are submissive with each other.

Unfortunately, however, all people may not act up to the principles usual of a perfect ethical man, and it is essential for the state and society to secure positive rights and protect them from intrusion by others. Gandhi built his own ethics even in his role of a journalist and followed the same until his last. He adopted persuasion as the only means to bring about change, be that in India or South Africa. His quality of possessing utmost patience was germane of the journalist in him (Vyapuri: P-286). These rights are of three kinds’ liberty rights, rights to sufficient welfare, and right to work and non-discrimination in employment. Liberty rights are rights to life, freedom, property, security, and resistance to oppression. These rights are fundamental to the survival and progress of every society. They are against all other persons and institutions, and made justifiable by law, the second type of rights consists of rights to food security and adequate health care, shelter, and education. These rights are necessary to achieve a humane and civilized society.

\textsuperscript{21} A movement or attitude stressing strict and literal adherence to a set of basic principles

\textsuperscript{22} A system of highly centralized government in which one political party or group takes control and grants neither recognition nor tolerance to other political groups
However, there is no point in recognizing them without taking concrete steps to evolve necessary institutions and legislation to implement them so that they too are justifiable like liberty rights. By the very nature of these rights they are against state, which is responsible for implementing them. But in certain cases like family, they can be primarily against parents whose responsibility is to see that their children receive adequate food, health care, and education. If the parents have no resources to provide them, it is for the state to do so. Once the state creates facilities to provide them such as education, it would be unlawful for parents to keep their children from schooling, similarly, it would be unlawful for any husband to turn away his wife and children from his house and deprive them of their right to shelter and food, irrespective of whether the state can provide them.

The third type of rights, namely right to work and non-discrimination in employment, goes a long way in assuring dignity to all citizens and helps in keeping adequate standard of living to all. These rights also need to be justifiable, through necessary legislation and creation of needed institutions. Liberty rights in the absence of rights to adequate welfare in the form of basic goods and services can lead to unacceptable levels of inequality. Dissimilarity may not be eliminated by these rights, but can be brought down to at least tolerable levels. Right to employment and non-discrimination in it can further promote equality. Moreover securing these rights, state will have to generate circumstances for equality of capabilities and provide impartiality of opportunities.

The world would not have survived if the bulk of us had no respect for moral values. Ethics becomes particularly relevant in justifying the misery of the poor in a world of intense competition, with the Darwinian principle of survival of the fittest requiring significant change. This is because even the fittest cannot survive unless others to survive and are cared for. The greater role played by mutual dependence and complementarities is not often seen, as competitive aspect is over stressed. What Gandhi did was to highlight mutual dependence and need for loving regard for each other. Gandhian economic thought, particularly point out the central tendency of development
of the world towards less and less violence, or more and more non-violence, gives us new hope. This is not an unrealistic assessment.

We have only to compare the present state of the world, (even if it is worse than what it ought to be), with what it used to be for common human beings as depicted in the novels of nineteenth century. In world of increasing complexity, Gandhi preached simplicity, in a world of increasing confusion he pointed to the simple qualities of character in which the solution might lie; in a world devoted to material goals, he clearly showed their limitations; in a period of urbanization\(^{23}\) he showed that decentralization meets other and perhaps more important needs than material gains can offer (Maharajan, 1996: P-195). That is where ethics and humanity’s commitment to moral values and social justice have helped, notwithstanding many failures. Relying not only on the innate goodness of humanity, but also on its instinct for survival and even betterment, we can reasonably look forward to a world where there will be more justice, compassion, freedom, peace, time and capability for creativity even for common people, and sustainability, than now. But such a world will not come about without our striving for it.

Gandhi was emphatic on the role of individual responsibility of all of us in all aspects of life. ‘Each of us must be the change we wish to see in this world’, he advised. Further, ‘the future depends on what we do in the present’. The present situation is not yet such as to make us feel complacent and smug. The powerful continue to capture most of the benefits of economic development. It is a request to ethical principles and social justice, which serve as the most potent weapon of the weak. It is not merely economic growth which would help achieving social justice, but politics too, with both economics and politics tempered by ethics.

3.6 Ethics for a Globalizing World

The world is undergoing globalization at a fast rate in manufacturing, transport and communications, services, religion, and culture. The process has gathered its own

\(^{23}\) It is the physical growth of urban areas as a result of rural migration and even suburban concentration into cities
momentum, but there is a need to intervene in it to protect both human and environmental interests. On the one hand, we are in the process of the making of a Universal Man. On the other hand, severe tensions have of cultural identities which are deeply resented. Fortunately for us, leaders like Mahatma Gandhi can show a way out of crisis. Gandhian thought is meant mainly as a guide for action, and hence the application of his perspective to politics, economics, and environment. Gandhi may sound too puritanical to the taste of modern generations, but there is still a lot to learn from him and follow. Discussing ethics in journalism Gandhi said, “The debates about media ethics revolve around the media’s role in the maintenance of a democratic society. Although the media plays an essential role in the formation of public opinion and personal choices, most media organization are commercial enterprises, which seek readers/viewers/listeners advertising revenues and favourable regulatory decisions. The conflict between the media social and commercial obligations on occasions results in a compromises on media ethics” (Thakurta, 2012: P-162).

One major factor that changed the face of Journalism is Globalization. Globalization has bought basic shifts in the way journalism is conceptualized and operationalised. The technological development has introduced so many new aspects and meaning to journalism and journalist. Although globalization has helped in the interconnection of different cultures, countries, people but it is not that interrelated when it comes to media ethics. Hence, it has been a challenge for media ethicists to define a global code of journalism ethics. In this regard, a group of media scholars and leading ethicists from North America, Europe, the Middle East, Asia and Africa gathered at the University of Stellenbosch at the Stellenbosch Institute for Advanced Study in South Africa, for a round table discussion entitled ‘In Search of Global Media Ethics’. The round table was co-organized and chaired by Professor Herman Wasserman of the University of Stellenbosch and Professor Stephen J A Ward of the University of British Columbia and it took place between 15 March and 17 March, 2007. The ultimate finding of the three days discussion was the idea of two categories of global media ethics.

Some of the papers that was presented in this regard were like ‘The foundation of moral obligations’, ‘basis of moral philosophy’, ‘Moral philosophy as the foundation of
normative media theory: Questioning African Ubuntuism (an African philosophy) as a framework’. The remarking papers fall under the second category which focused on particularities and case studies as a way to explore the potential of global media ethics. These studies tried to be westernize ethical media theory. There was a view that the analysis of media globalization requires a closer examination of the ethical principles advocated by media theorists.

Other papers in this regard focused on the Socio-cultural ecology of particular countries. All the participants of the seminar agreed that much work is needed and should be done in the area of global media ethics, with respect to the issue of definition (what is and is not ethics), the metaphor of ethics in the context of the universal, normative ethics, metaethics and descriptive ethics or applied studies. (Thakurta, 2012:401)

However, there have been efforts for ethics in media after Independence and the first Press Commission, 1954 had recommended for Press Council of India to make some guidelines for the journalists. The Press Council of India has issued norms of journalistic conduct.

3.7 Press Council of India and Norms of Journalistic Conduct:

It starts with principles and ethics in Part A and it talks about the fundamental objective of journalism which is to serve the people in a fair, accurate, unbiased and decent manner. In this part the focus is on accuracy.

Accuracy and Fairness

One of the important needs of any news report is accuracy. It means that the information should be given in a truthful manner and without distortion, exaggeration, sensation. Following are the reasons why inaccurate reporting must be avoided in any circumstances:

- It can cause irreparable personal harm to the person or persons featuring in the news report.
- It can prevent the general public from making informed decisions (from investing in securities to voting for a particular candidate).
- It could adversely affect the journalist concerned and her/his media organization’s integrity as well as credibility. (Thakurta, 2012: P-87)

**Check and Cross Check to Avoid Error**

All journalists need to check and cross check facts carefully a report or article of public interest and it is one of the most important aspects pre publications of any information. Whenever or wherever there is a doubt, it needs to be verified and if verification is not possible it should be clearly mentioned in the report. PCI also talks about that any document that forms a basis of a news report should be preserved at least for six month.

**Avoid Defamatory Writing**

While media has the right to comment and criticize but it must avoid defamatory writing against any individual / organization. It should not distort or misrepresent a fact and comment should be an honest expression of opinion. Newspapers cannot claim privilege or licence to malign a person or body claiming special protection or immunity on the plea of having published the item as a satire under special columns such as ‘gossip’, ‘parody’, etc. Publication of defamatory news by one paper does not give licence to others to publish news/ information reproducing or repeating the same.

**Avoid Plagiarism:**

PCI has clearly issued instructions against plagiarism as it says, Using or passing of the writings or ideas of another as one’s own, without crediting the source, is an offence and against the ethics of journalism’. It also mentions that the practice of lifting news from other newspapers, publishing them subsequently as their own, ill-comports the high standards of journalism. To remove it unethically, the “lifting” newspaper must duly acknowledge the source of the report. The position of features articles shall not be lifted
without permission and proper acknowledgement. The press shall not reproduce in any form offending portions or excerpts from a proscribed book.’ (PCI, 2010)

**Avoid Intrusion to the Privacy of an Individual:**

Press Council of India also issues guidelines regarding right to Privacy it mentions that the Press shall not intrude or invade the privacy of an individual, unless outweighed by genuine overriding public interest, not being a prurient or morbid curiosity. So, however, that once a matter becomes a matter of public record, the right to privacy no longer subsists and it becomes a legitimate subject for comment by the Press and the media, among others. It explains that the things, concerning a person’s home, family, religion, health, sexuality, personal life and private affairs are covered by the concept of privacy excepting where any of these impinges upon the public or public interest.

**Privacy of Public Figures:**

Press Council of India mentions that although right to Privacy is an important human right but degree of privacy differs from person to person and from situation to situation. A person who has become a public figure cannot expect to be afforded the same degree of privacy as a private person. His acts and conduct as are of public interest even if conducted in private may be brought to public knowledge through the medium of the press.

The press has however, a parallel duty to make sure that the information about such acts and conduct of public interest of the public person is obtained through fair means, is properly verified and then reported correctly. PCI also says that the interviews/articles or arguments pertaining to public persons which border on events that are in public knowledge, if reported correctly, cannot be termed as interference into private life. There is a very thin line between public and private life and public persons should not to be too sensitive to criticism.
Norms for interviews and phone conversation

According to the PCI, the Press will tape-record anyone's conversation after their permission except where the recording is necessary to protect the journalist in a legal action, or for other compelling good reason and the Press shall, prior to publication, remove offensive epithets used by a person whose statements are being reported. Apart from that interference through photography into moments of personal grief shall be avoided. However, photography of victims of accidents or natural calamity may be in larger public interest.

Impartiality

The PCI advises that any information that contradicts aspects of a published report should be published. It includes contradictory evidence and comment. A newspaper should publish all replies given on matters of public interest to enable readers to judge their value.

To maintain impartiality adjectives should be avoided except where required and there should be a clear distinction between opinion and fact. When opinion is presented as fact it misguides the readers and more so when opinion is treated as fact and the journalist’s partiality is apparent, it will serve to undermine her/his professional credibility. PCI also stresses on the fact that journalist should be free of any obligation to news sources and interested groups, including political parties.

Procedure of Legal Reporting

Press Council of India has clearly given guidelines on legal reporting. According to it the newspapers have a duty to report faithfully the proceedings of either House of Parliament, Legislative Assembly and in this regard the newspapers shall not be liable for any proceedings civil or criminal in any court unless it is proved that reporting have been made with malice. However, the newspapers should not publish any report based on proceedings of a sitting of either House of Parliament or Legislative Assembly or as the case may be either House of the Legislature of a State, which is not open to the media.
Apart from that newspaper shall not as a matter of caution, publish or comment on evidence collected as a result of investigative journalism, when, after the accused is arrested and charged, the court becomes seized of the case: Nor should they reveal, comment upon or evaluate a confession allegedly made by the accused. PCI also guides about the reporting news pertaining to court proceedings and it says that before publishing a news item about court proceedings, it will be appropriate for the correspondent and editor to ascertain its genuineness and, correctness and authenticity from the records so that the concerned person can be held guilty and accountable for furnishing incorrect facts or wrong information about the court proceedings.

** Corrections and Apologize for Errors: **

The PCI states, ‘When any factual error or mistake is detected or confirmed, the newspaper should promptly publish the correction with due prominence and with apology or expression of regrets in a case of serious lapse. The newspaper should promptly and with due prominence, publish either in full or with due editing, free of cost, at the instance of the person affected or feeling aggrieved/or concerned by the impugned publication, a contradiction/reply/ clarification or rejoinder sent to the editor in the form of a letter or note. If the editor doubts the truth or factual accuracy of the contradiction/reply/clarification or rejoinder, he shall be at liberty to add separately at the end, a brief editorial comment doubting its veracity, but only when this doubt is reasonably founded on unimpeachable documentary or other evidential material in his/her possession. This is a concession which has to be availed of sparingly with due discretion and caution in appropriate cases.

However, where the reply/contradiction or rejoinder is being published in compliance with the directions of the Press Council, it is permissible to append a brief editorial note to that effect. Right to rejoinder cannot be claimed through the medium of Press Conference, as publication/coverage of news of a conference is within the discretionary powers of an editor.
Freedom of the Press involves the readers' right to know all sides of an issue of public interest. An editor, therefore, shall not refuse to publish the reply or rejoinder merely on the ground that in his opinion the story published in the newspaper was true. That is an issue to be left to the judgement of the readers. It also does not behove an editor to show contempt towards a reader.

The council further states, ‘An editor who decides to open his columns for letters on a controversial subject is not obliged to publish all the letters received in regard to that subject. He is entitled to select and publish only some of them either in entirety or the gist thereof. However, in exercising this discretion, he must make an honest endeavour to ensure that what is published is not one-sided but represents a fair balance between the views for and against with respect to the principal issue in controversy...In the event of rejoinder upon rejoinder being sent by two parties on a controversial subject, the editor has the discretion to decide at which stage to close the continuing column’.

**Avoid Obscenity and vulgarity:**

The Press Council of India states, ‘Newspapers/journalists shall not publish anything which is obscene, vulgar or offensive to public good taste and newspapers shall not display advertisements which are vulgar or which, through depiction of a woman in nude or lewd posture, provoke lecherous attention of males as if she herself was a commercial commodity for sale.

It also says,’ the globalisation and liberalisation does not give licence to the media to misuse freedom of the press and to lower the values of the society. The media performs a distinct role and public purpose which require it to rise above commercial consideration guiding other industries and businesses. So far as that role is concerned, one of the duties of the media is to preserve and promote our cultural heritage and social values.’

Apart from the above guidelines and norms, the Press Council of India has issued guidelines on the matters which are very important for ethics in journalism such as avoid glorification of the social evils, Verification of data from authentic sources,
newspapers/journalists shall avoid presenting acts of violence, armed robberies and terrorist activities in a manner that glorifies the perpetrators on their acts, declarations or death in the eyes of the public. Publication of interviews of anti-social elements by the newspapers glorifying the criminals and their activities with the resultant effects are to be avoided, Provocative and sensational headlines are to be avoided and headings must reflect and justify the matter printed under them, the caste identification of a person or a particular class should be avoided, newspapers shall, as a matter of self-regulation, exercise due restraint and caution in presenting any news, comment or information which is likely to jeopardise, endanger or harm the paramount interests of the State and society, or the rights of individuals with respect to which reasonable restrictions may be imposed by law on the right to freedom of speech and expression under clause (2) of Article 19 of the Constitution of India, publication of wrong/incorrect map should be avoided, blackmailing or extortion of money from people under threat of maligning them through the columns of newspaper amounts should be avoided, advertisements must be clearly distinguishable from news content carried in the newspaper and it should not publish Liquor & Tobacco Advertisements, no advertisement shall be published, which promotes directly or indirectly production, sale or consumption of cigarettes, tobacco products, wine, alcohol, liquor and other intoxicants, newspapers shall not publish advertisements, which have a tendency to malign or hurt the religious sentiments of any community or section of society, advertisements which offend the provisions of the Drugs and Magical Remedies (Objectionable Advertisement) Act, 1954, or any other statute should be rejected, newspapers should not publish an advertisement containing anything which is unlawful or illegal, or is contrary to public decency, good taste or to journalistic ethics or propriety. (PCI, 2010)

Apart from this, Professional journalistic ethics codes fulfills an important function, by helping to spell out and reminding journalists about the moral choices they are likely to face in reporting the news and by providing them with a sense of their responsibilities and what is expected of them in the pursuit of their duties (Jacquette, 2007: P-21).