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Preface

Today, morality is missing globally and in fact the most essential need of today's society is morality and ethics. If we want social harms to disappear from society, we must promote morality in society. Morality is the greatest asset of humanity. Society will not go anywhere without morality. At the moment, the neighbor is indifferent to the neighbor, because of the decline of morality in society. Honesty, transparency and avoidance of motivation should be among the concerns of the society, in this case, morality, security and trust in the society will be created. Why corruption has become prevalent in the political arena and fraud and corruption have grown in the economic arena is due to the decline of morality. We must promote morality in society, because morality is the savior of society. Examples of ethics in society are honesty and truthfulness, fulfilling the covenant of paying attention to the poor and subordinates.

In societies where immorality is rampant, personal interests take precedence over social interests. A person who adheres to moral virtues and has established the principle of not being absent, suspicion and faultfinding of others in his temperament; Definitely, in its social relations, it also considers the interests of the society, and if the members of the society are like this; Social morality is institutionalized in this society, and we will certainly have societies like the utopia. The importance of preserving moral virtues is so important in education and behavior that it is repeatedly emphasized in the Qur'an.

Morality requires us to tell the truth, even if it is against us, not to kill rights, not to lie, to adhere to justice. In today's society, however, we have strayed from some of the moral principles and in our daily lives we are immoral and violate moral virtues. Betrayal, assassination, and fraud are rampant, and we do everything, even against morality, honor, and justice, to achieve our goal. All these immoralities have taken place following the departure from social morality, the same morality for which the Prophet was inspired. In general, the main cause of the conflict is the distance from morality.

Dr. Syed Fayaz Husain

Editor-in-Chief IJRT

Editorial

Another Issue of 'International Journal of Religious Thoughts' is with you. This issue deals with a very important subject for everyone who believe in ethics and morality. Basically, Morality in life is very important for both those who believe in religion and those who do not believe in religion, because a life without morals is not acceptable to anyone.

With every succeeding Issue, the response that we are getting in the form of letters, mails and contributions from the learned authors has been encouraging for us. It is an indication in itself as regards the popularity of 'Religious Thoughts' that it has achieved. Our main goals in publishing this journal have been to inform the educated class about the common points of religions regarding the beliefs, morality, mysticism, spirituality, peace and security, so that we can reach an ideal, progressive, and stress-free society.

Another point that may be of interest to our worthy readers is that 'Religious Thoughts' has now been allotted ISSN number and we are trying to get the ISI standard (Scopus Title Evaluation) for this journal soon. It is a milestone in our journey, which started with the realization of the need to publish a Journal that presents discussions on Inter-Faith and various positive aspects of religion to Indian and Iranian readers.

The publication is a sincere attempt by Al-Mustafa Islamic Research Society to highlight those different paths and processes of thought exist in the world. We believe that initiating the process of dialogue and expression of different views and thoughts always adds to

sustenance of mutual understanding. In a world, where difference of opinion offers leads to misunderstanding and conflicts, we wish to use the tools of dialogue and interaction for better understanding and human relations. We intend to and have tried to take a deeper look at various existing religions and to develop a spirit of togetherness. Study of culture and religion shows that, peace oriented, convergent and scholarly approaches are welcomed by the right-thinking people in India and Iran both. While thanking the scholars and experts on the subject, we earnestly hope that they will continue to patronize us in this momentous task through their constructive criticism and suggestions.

Dr. Syed Fayaz Husain
Editor-in-Chief IJRT

The truth of morality

Part (1)

Dr. Reza Shakeri¹

Abstract:

This article deals with the truth of ethics and offers various definitions provided by theologians and ethicists (both those who believe in religion and those who do not believe in religion) and the relationship between ethics and religion and different interpretations of ethics. We conclude that morality is rooted in the nature of human beings.

Key Words: Ethics, Religion, Science, philosophy, originality

1. Introduction:

The relationship between religion and ethics is one of the most attractive at the same time the most slippery issues that has a long history of religious and philosophical ideas.

Throughout history, philosophers, on the one hand, and theologians, on the other, have always faced the serious question of whether in the relation of religion and morality, originality is with religion or morality;

That is, is religion the source of morality or is morality the source of religion?

Is God obliged to observe morality or is morality dependent on God's will?

¹. Chief Representative of Al-Mustafa International University, in India.

Assuming the absence of God, is it possible to talk about morality and live morally ? Or, according to Dostoevsky “If there is no God, do everything is allowed?” in other words, do materialistic worldviews and materialist thinking necessarily lead to Negligence and Immorality? Or can we talk about morality without religion and religious beliefs? What are the requirements of religion for morality? And what are the dependencies of morality on religion? And can morality be considered a part of religion and their relationship not as a type of contrast or interaction, but as an organic relationship?

These are among the most important questions that have always occupied the minds of philosophers of morality in the past and present, and each of them has given answers from their own point of view and has expressed solutions according to their own perception of religion and ethics.

And we, in sha Allah, after a detailed explanation of the word religion and ethics, we will explain the relationship between the two.

2. Conceptology

The subject of this article will be in three areas:

1. Religion, 2. Ethics, 3. The relationship between religion and ethics.
1. What is religion? 2. What is ethics? 3. What is the relationship between the two?

1. What is religion?

Robert Hume "Religion is so simple that any sensible child or adult can have a true religious experience, and it is so comprehensive and complex that it requires experience and analysis to fully understand and enjoy it"

Allama Mohammad Taqi Jafari says about the various definitions of religious scholars, philosophers and theologians:

"Many theologians to provide a comprehensive definition of the various religions, they have tried to examine the commonalities of religions and to provide a general and comprehensive definition of common elements.

"This method is different from the conventional methods used by philosophers to define religion in the abstract."¹

A. Religion from the view point of Western scientists

In the new era of Western civilization and in the Age of Enlightenment, the category of religion as a branch of humanities, like many other branches of science, was seriously considered by Western scholars and scientists, and extensive research on the history and nature of religions in the West It took place and then the two branches of the history of religions and the philosophy of religion in the West with two different approaches, one narrative

¹- Motahari, Mortaza, Introduction to Islamic Sciences, Tehran: Sadra, Print: 6, 1989

and descriptive and the other with a critical rationalist approach to study and research in the world's religions.

In the philosophy of religion, since scholars have sought to rationally practice religion as a single phenomenon, it has been tried to achieve a comprehensive definition of religion by relying on the commonalities of religions and eliminating differences, which can be as wide as possible. Include religions including divine and human, western and eastern An example of this effort, which can be considered a dominant aspect of the West's approach to religion, is presented in the book *Reason and Belief*. According to it, "religion consists of a set of individual and collective beliefs, practices, and emotions that revolve around an ultimate truth."¹

In the *Pleasures of Philosophy*, Will Durant, instead of stating the nature of religion and its constituent elements, expresses its function and effects, while being interesting, does not provide what we mean in this discussion. He had a wide-ranging discussion of religion, from which the following can be summarized:

The duty of religion

1. "Religion is very relaxing."
2. Faith is natural and is directly born of our instinctual and emotional needs. Religion [if] you put pressure on it for a century and then reduce the pressure, you see how it reappears in a year.

¹ - Jafari, Mohammad Taqi, *Philosophy of Religion*.

3. Faith is more natural than doubt, and therefore it is easier. Doubt is the cause of prohibition and contraction, and faith is the cause of expansion, appetite, and blood flow.

4. Optimism, which is itself a form of faith, is more common and more caring than pessimism, which is another form of doubt.¹

B- Religion from the perspective of Islamic thinkers.

Referring to religious texts, including the Qur'an and Sunnah, we find that the word "religion" in its literal meaning is used in two different meanings. On the one hand, the revelatory teachings brought to mankind by the divine prophets have been referred to as "religion"; like the verse "Abraham enjoined this [creed] upon his children, and [so did] Jacob, [saying], 'My children! Allah has indeed chosen this religion for you; so, do not die except as those who have surrendered themselves [to Allah]."²

On the other hand, in a broader sense, all schools that contain instructions for how to live, both right and wrong, are called religion; like the verse "It is He who has sent His Apostle with the guidance and the religion of truth that He may make it prevail over all religions", or "To you your religion, and to me my religion".

The situation is the same in our narrative tradition, and both types of application can be found in narrative assemblies. In some cases, "religion" refers only to the religion of truth, among which the

¹ - Will Durant, *The Pleasures of Philosophy*, pp. 482,474 translated by Zaryab Khoi.

² - Patterson et al., *Religious Wisdom and Belief*, translated by Ahmad Naraqji.

following narrations can be mentioned: "There is no life without religion" or "The purpose of religion is faith"

But in other narrations, religion has been used in a wider field of meaning and more general than divine religion, such as this narration from the Messenger of God, peace and blessings of God be upon him, who said: "...whoever sets up a religion other than the religion of God is a polytheist."

Considering these two types of applications, two definitions of religion can be offered.

In one definition, the religion of truth can be considered and the belief in the existence of God as its main constituent element can be emphasized. Accordingly, religion is defined as: "Religion means the belief in a creator for the world and man and the practical instructions are in line with this belief."¹

Religion can also be used in a broader sense and considered to be both true and false, as one contemporary thinker and expert has said in defining religion: "Religion is a set of beliefs, ethics, laws and regulations that Manage the affairs of human society and the upbringing of human beings. Sometimes all of this set is right and sometimes all of it is false and sometimes it is a mixture of right and wrong. If it is a set of truth, it is called the religion of truth, and otherwise, it is called the religion of falsehood or the eclecticism of truth and falsehood. "Religion is the right of a religion whose beliefs, laws and regulations have been revealed by God, and false

¹ - Mesbah Yazdi, Mohammad Taghi, *Philosophy of Ethics*, Tehran: Information Publications, 1988.

religion is a religion that has been regulated and ordained by a non-God."¹

2) What is ethics?

The word "morality" is derived from " kholq " meaning "temperament", al-Ghazali defines "Ethics " as follows:

“Word “kholq”: It is a state in the human soul and psyche, it causes the action appropriate to that state to pass easily and simply from him”.²

For example, "emotion" and soft-heartedness, or "violence" and hard-heartedness, are two states in human beings, and each of them wants its own action. The subconscious emotional group shows self-sacrifice, while the angry group is stingy with the slightest condescension, and so are other states of mind.

Of course, this type of sensual state is sometimes natural and inherited, and may arise in the human psyche through practice and repetition.

Ibn al-Muskawiyah after recalling what we quoted from al-Ghazali about "khloq."

He says: This type of state is of two types, sometimes it has a natural aspect and a temperamental root, and it may arise from practice and repetition of action in human beings³.

¹ - "Introduction of Religion and Morality" Qabsat, No.13.

² Ehya -ul- oloom 3/53.

³- tahzeeb -ul- akhlaq wa tatheer -ul-araaq, p 51.

From this expression we can understand the reality of Ethics, and it is the state or Character that is implanted in our psyche, and has somehow become part of our spirits, and has taken root in our being.

What is ethics?

After knowing the reality of "ethics", one can achieve the definition of "ethics" and "ethics knowledge" can be defined in some way.

1. Ibn al-Muskawiyah says:

" science of morality" is a field of consciousness in the shadow of which man acquires a state from which a series of beautiful works can easily pass.¹

2. Khawaja Nasir al-Din al-Tusi defines " science of ethics" as "Ibn al-Muskawiyah" and says:

"The science of ethics" is the method of acquiring virtues through which human beings become beloved and beautiful".²

3 . The dictionary of Dehkhoda states: "The science of ethics" is in the science of association with the people and it is one of the types of practical wisdom and it is also called the refinement of morality and the wisdom ethics.³

4. Ibn Sadr al-Din defines ethics in his book *Al-Fawid al-Khaqaniyah* as follows:

science of ethics: Awareness of the virtues and the quality of obtaining them, so that the human soul and psyche will be adorned

¹ -tahzeeb -ul- akhlaq wa tatheer -ul-araaq, p 27.

²- Nasirean ethics, p. 48.

³ -Dehkhoda Dictionary: 5/1526, Article of ethics.

with them, and also awareness of vices and the way to avoid them, so that the human soul will be away from it and its subject will be the human soul. in terms of being adorned with beautiful qualities and avoiding ugly qualities.

Allameh Tabatabai defines ethics as follows:

“It is the art that searches for human faculties, and distinguishes the virtues from the vices, so that man can achieve scientific happiness by being endowed with them, So, actions that bring public praise and beautiful praise in the human community come from him.”¹

Ethics is divided into three branches:

1. Prescriptive or grammatical ethics (or ethical principles) that deals with the question "what is right".

2. Descriptive ethics deals with the question "What do people think or read correctly?" and seeks to explain moral opinions.

3. Theoretical or meta-ethics deals with the question "When people say something right, what do they mean by 'right'?" and seeks to provide a definition of ethical terms.

Now that the point has been reached, and the two sides of the proposition "religion" and "morality" have been clearly defined, it is time to state the relationship between the two, its quality or lack of relationship.²

3) The relationship between ethics and religion:

¹ - Al Meezan Interpretation 1/376

² - "Morality and Religion" in: Philosophy of Religion: An Anthology, p.496-497, The Period of Plato's Works, translated by Mohammad Hassan Lotfi, vol. 1, Otifron, pp. 248-252.

History:

As mentioned, the issue of the relationship between religion and ethics, like many other philosophical and moral issues, has been constantly discussed by religious philosophers and thinkers since the beginning of human philosophical thought. The turning point in this issue is the dialogue between Socrates and Ethepron, narrated by Plato.

In the course of this conversation, Socrates asks Etherphon: "Is this thing right because God has commanded that thing, or has God commanded it because it is right?" And so, Socrates raises the issue that has always been at the center of the discussions of moral philosophers, theologians, and theologians for more than 25 centuries. Some have chosen the first clause and believed in religious morality, and some have chosen the second option and voted for the independence of morality from religion.

Prior to the modern era and the Renaissance, the dominant tendency of Christian thinkers was to believe in the harmony of religion and morality.¹

Most moral scholars sought to extract and explain moral precepts and values from the Bible. Although the complete moral system cannot be attributed to Christianity, what is found in the Bible is merely a series of moral advices whose key tenets are the "Ten Commandments" and the "Sermon on the Mount."

According to McIntyre:

¹ -Mohammad Taghi Mesbah Yazdi, "Religion and Ethics", *Qabsat*, No. 13, Autumn 1999, pp. 31-32.

“Jesus and St. Paul invented a kind of morality for a very short period, before God would finally establish the "promised kingdom" and end history.

Therefore, they cannot be expected to find in their statements the basis for life in a sustainable society. In addition, Jesus did not in any way intend to Expand an essentially sufficient code of conduct, but rather to make amends to the morality of the Pharisees.¹

At the same time, pre-Renaissance Christian scholars, especially Augustine and Aquinas,

They always tried to establish the foundations of Christian morality by using the principles of Platonic, Aristotelian, Neoplatonic and Stoic philosophy.

Prior to the Renaissance, Christianity, the dominant religion in the West, had absolute control over all aspects of people's lives, including scientific, cultural, social, political, and moral aspects. But after the Renaissance, following the defeat of the Church and the spread of the anti-religious spirit, and the rule of the scientific, intellectual and secular spirit over all aspects of people's lives, the tendency towards humanism became the focus of people's spiritual belongings. It even got to the point where people like the Frenchman Auguste Comte, although he had declared the era of religion over, proposed the religion of humanism to fill the spiritual and religious void of the people.

¹ - McIntyre, History of the Philosophy of Ethics, translated by Insha'Allah Rahmati, p. 232.

Of course, the intellectual and cultural developments after the Renaissance had many fluctuations and many different and sometimes contradictory lines; Hence, it never had a single direction. This trend is still going on and there are still conflicting lines of thought in all cultural and philosophical fields.

Nevertheless, in spite of all anti-religionism and anti-morality, the issue of religion and morality is one of the most important concerns of modern philosophers. Even philosophers with atheistic and anti-religious tendencies have found themselves involved in this issue.

People like Nietzsche (1844-1900), Marx (1818-1883) and J.L.Mackie is a prime example of this group, and this has led to a resurgence in recent decades; Thus, a large volume of religious and moral research of Western philosophers has been devoted to it.

It goes without saying that there are debates on this subject in the margins of theological and principled books; For example, the issue of "good and bad deeds", which has been raised among Muslims since the beginning of the formation of doctrinal debates, is in fact the same issue that has been the main focus of philosophers of ethics on the relationship between religion and ethics since ancient times. Of course, the main purpose of the Muslim theologians in raising this issue was something else, But the Discussions they had clearly determine their orientation on this issue.

The ADLIYEH, (Those who believe in the justice of God) which considered God's command to do good deeds and His prohibition to do bad deeds to be the result of good and evil inherent in deeds, in fact, in a sense, expressed the independence of morality from religion as a proof. In contrast, the Ash'arites, who saw the command of God as the cause of good and bad deeds, in fact considered morality as a proof of religion.

Also, as a proof, most of the ADLIYEH, (Those who believe in the justice of God) believe that human intellect, regardless of religion, has the ability to discover the good or bad of some actions; But as the appearances of the Ash'arites are used, they believed that the intellect could not comprehend any good or bad of any action, regardless of the ruling of the Shari'a.

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Mapping Pluralism: Towards an Ethics for Co-existence

Qurat ul aein¹

ABSTRACT

The paper is an attempt to know the answer of certain questions like: Are all religions governed by the same ethics? What is the difference between the morals and etiquettes of a Muslim, a Christian and a Jew? Do all religions share the same universal ethics or do they act differently in showing generosity towards others. Is there any commonality which joins them together? The paper focusses on the different ways of approaching a religion and emphasizes the need to understand the pluralistic world in terms of ethics.

In the 21st era of globalization and immigration, the growing diversity is posing a great challenge to unity. So there is a dire need to look forward for the values to be imbibed to manage religious differences and live together as a common humanity in a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. The paper tries to address those challenges by bringing forth the bright side of contemporary pluralistic society and urges the need to build a society based on cosmopolitan ethics by sharing the common moral grounds. Despite some theological differences, Jews, Christians, and Muslims are all the spiritual descendants of Abraham, sharing much more in common than what divides them as members of a greater spiritual communion; they can and must work together to uplift the quality of human society worldwide on a shared ethical basis. So there is a great role of ethics in the integration

¹ Research Scholar, Shah I Hamadhan Institute of Islamic Studies, University of Kashmir, Hazratbal Srinagar

of pluralistic society which lead our goals for the same ethical domain. A pluralistic society governs all type of ethics...Meta, normative as well as applied and governs one to live and survive in a rich diverse society keeping intact his religious differences.

KEY WORDS: Abraham, Jewish ethics, Christian ethics, Islamic ethics, Global ethics

INTRODUCTION

What is Ethics and how is it different from Morality. Many times we use both the terms synonymously but the two are quite different. Ethics refers to the rules provided by an external source whereas morals refer to an individual's own principles regarding right and wrong. Morality is about living, and as long as we continue living, we will inevitably be confronted with moral questions—and if we choose to stop living, that too is a moral issue. There has always been a debate among philosophers whether source of ethics is religion or not? Ethics is not confined to an individual but the whole society. It starts from the respect of creation and reform for the better by resisting human nature against disturbing the nature of the world. It fills the gap between Philosophy and religion with knowledge called metaphysics and deals with the understanding of creation. Sometimes the thing which is legally accepted becomes unacceptable from ethical point of view and also what is acceptable to one religion may be ethically unacceptable to others. The final goal of being ethical is not only to choose between right and wrong but acting in the right direction. Tariq Ramadan says, “The fragmentation of knowledge is deep within our traditions and therefore ethics connect us to the fundamental worldview. The world is in crisis not because of moral issues but failure of system in itself. We have lost the semantics of the world by changing not only the scripture but also

the creation. We should reconcile all the moral systems together because day by day we are losing one or the other.”

There are many approaches to a religion in a multi-religious and co-existent society. Out of them, the Pluralistic approach is the best one. Pluralism does not mean to lose one’s identity but to gain consciousness of other soul mates. Our morals should be attractive enough to attract others and understanding of one another. Pluralism is not simply relativism, but makes room for real commitment. In the public square or in the interfaith council, commitments are not left at the door. On the contrary, the encounter of a multicultural society must be the encounter of commitments, the encounter of each other with all our particularities and angularities. This is a critical point to see plainly, because through a cynical intellectual sleight of hand, some critics have linked pluralism with a valueless relativism – an indiscriminating twilight in which "all cats are gray," all perspectives equally viable, and as a result, equally unconvincing.¹ A pluralist ethic is not merely an ideal destination for societies and states. It is about constant striving in every quarter, from schools and corporations to faith communities and law enforcement, to bridge the empathy gaps and ignorance gaps.¹

All the three monotheistic religions-Judaism, Islam and Christianity have their roots in the Middle East and recognize Abraham as their first Prophet. All of the Abrahamic religions claim to have a moral superiority on what is right and wrong not only at a local level, but at a global level as well. They also lay emphasis on the concepts of “equality, justice, compassion, freedom of consciousness and human rights and dignity” A love of humanity and the stranger is a key value in the Abrahamic tradition. he did

¹ Eck, Diana L (1993) The challenge of Pluralism Nieman Reports “*God in the Newsroom*” Issue Vol. XLVII No. 2

indeed become “the father of a multitude of nations,” permanently transforming the world with the revolutionary ideas of ethical monotheism, social justice, brotherhood of man, love of the stranger, and compassion for the weak. Abraham was the first to link individual belief and worship in the one God to social values and responsibilities. The ethical principles of monotheism recognize “that there is one Creative Source of the one creation, but that this very unity conveys a moral imperative concerning ethical treatment and conduct” in creation itself.¹

Prejudice and bigotry towards each other have been perpetuated by our lack of knowledge about the other and yet the pursuit of knowledge is at the core of both our religious traditions. Indeed, the fact that the term 'Torah' means 'teaching' and 'Qur'an' means 'reading' should instil in us the desire to read, understand and teach about each other.²

JEWISH ETHICS

One faith that holds more of a mixed bag than any other on the world's stage, when it comes to ethics and morality, is Judaism. The reason behind this is the amount of ethical questions that the Jewish people have been involved in the last 75 years or so. The first that comes to mind, of course, is the Holocaust, a horrendous extermination against at least six million European Jews that was carried out by Adolf Hitler's Third Reich and Nazi Germany during World War II. At the same time, many people view the Jewish nation of Israel as an apartheid state, occupying, in part, lands belonging to the Palestine state. However, one of the positive views of local Jewish ethics and morality is the one that shows that the Jewish

¹ Holy Bible Genesis, 18:19

² Rahim, Bismillah Ar Rahma Ar. An Open Letter: A Call To Peace, Dialogue And Understanding Between Muslims And Jews *European Judaism: A Journal for the New Europe*, Vol. 41, No. 1 (Spring 2008), pp.148-154 Berghahn Books

people recognize the hardships of their past and are willing to work to see that other people, regardless of race, colour, creed, orientation or tribe do not have to suffer some of the same harshness they were forced to.¹

Judaism is the oldest of the three major monotheistic religions in the western world. Their root is in the 2nd millennium and was codified into the Mosaic Law around 400 BCE. After the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE, Judaism became mainly rabbinic based. There are three main branches of contemporary Judaism: Orthodox, Conservative and Reform. There are also mystical and humanistic forms of Judaism that are relatively minor. Worldwide there are between 12-17 million Jews, divided about equally between Israel and the United States. Perhaps as many as a quarter of this number considers themselves to be non-religious Jews but understand themselves to be part of the Jewish people.²

Jewish Ethics come from the Written Law — the Torah, which comes from God, and from the Oral Law, the Talmud and the Midrash, which is the word of God as interpreted by the Rabbis. Study and practice of these ethical principles not only constitute individual worship, but lead to the establishment of just social systems and the promotion of the common good. Many of the Jewish virtues (*midot*) are also commandments (*mitzvot*), the practice of every one of which brings one closer to God and fulfills God's purpose for humanity. Of the 613 Jewish laws, 248 are positive commandments (things to do), and 365 negative commandments (things *not* to do). While many concern the individual's relationship with God (*Mitzvot Bayn Adam La Makom*), more than half of the mitzvot that apply today govern interpersonal relations (*Hilchos Bein Adom*

¹ Martin, Smith. (2015) Religion, Atheism, and Global Ethics *Intro to Philosophy*

² Dobrin, Arthur (2002). Religious Ethics: A Sourcebook pp.210
<https://arthurdobrin.files.wordpress.com>

L'Chavero), and relate to a comprehensive range of everyday social interactions. These form the basic moral guidelines and ethical parameters of how Jews are commanded to treat others.

The Hebrew Prophets and Talmudic Rabbis have made clear that while commandments between individuals and God are extremely important, God commanded that ethical behaviour towards one another is of greater importance and concern. King Solomon asserted that “To do righteousness and justice is preferred by God above sacrifice.”¹ Self-cultivation and scholarship are not only forms of worship, but ways of apprehending the meaning and form of ethical living. Judaism is thus pre-eminently relationship-oriented, focusing on the relationship between God and humanity, God and the Jewish community, and social relationships.

Rabbi Akiva famously observed that the greatest principle in Torah is to “Love your neighbour as yourself.”² Famed scholar Hillel added to this by summarizing all of Judaism in the sentence: “What is hateful to you, do not do to others,” adding that “the rest is commentary. Now go and study.”³ The understanding is that Torah is an explication of the manner of living an ethical life. The “ethical life” in Judaism is celebrated as a source of *simhah*, which Rabbi Jonathan Sacks describes as “the happiness we share,” or “the happiness we make by sharing.”⁴

Rabbi Emanuel Rackman observed that Judaism teaches a “special kind of justice”, an *empathic justice*, which “...seeks to make people identify with each another – with each other’s needs, with each other’s hopes and

¹ Op. Cit., Proverb 21:3

² Palestinian Talmud, Nedarim 9:4

³ Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31 a

⁴ Sacks, J. (2005). *To heal a fractured world: The ethics of responsibility*. New York: Schocken Books

aspirations, with each other's defeats and transformations." Because Jews have known the distress of slaves and the loneliness of strangers, we are to project ourselves into their souls and make their plight our own.

Jewish history and teaching also make clear that God is actively involved in the righting of wrongs and intervening in history: "The Lord heard our voice and saw our affliction, our toil, and our oppression. The Lord brought us out of Egypt with a mighty hand."¹ God is also mindful of his covenantal relationship with the people of Israel.²

The Hebrew Prophets throughout history have proclaimed that authentic worship of God cannot coexist with the perpetration of injustice or unethical treatment of others. Abraham also provides a paradigmatic model for compassion and acts of loving kindness in his overriding concern for the welfare and well-being of others. Abraham's compassion is demonstrated by his hospitality to strangers despite his own discomfort,

It has been told to you, O human being, what is good

And what the Lord requires of you:

Only to do justly, love *chesed* (mercy, kindness)

Chesed One is to practice acts of mercy, acts of *chesed* (kindness and compassion), even when it may not be convenient. As God has dealt with us in mercy, so we should deal with others. "Show mercy and compassion, every one to your neighbor."³

And walk humbly with your God.⁴

¹ Bible , Deuteronomy 26:5-8 English Standard Version 2016 Good News Publishers

² Holy Bible, Exodus 6, 5-7 New International Version 2011

³ Ibid. , Zachariah 7:9

⁴ Ibid. ,Micah 6:8

There are Eleven Core Jewish values which include:

Tikkun Olam :The concept of *tikkun olam*, literally "repair of the world," has come to stand for the Jewish commitment to make the world more merciful. Within our communities there are many shattered spirits, broken holy vessels. Our mission is to help repair those spirits and to share whatever God has given us with those less fortunate.

Tzedakah involves both justice and righteousness. It states "Seek justice and relieve the oppressed."¹

Respect for Human Dignity

Our notion of the infinite worth of human life stems from the fact that all people are created "in the image of God." Therefore, each individual is deserving of respect as a unique creation of the Divine.

Respect for Law

Jewish tradition has always demanded good citizenship, which requires following fair laws and showing regard for the decision-making process of the community in which they live.

"The law of the state is the law."² However, this does not demand blind obedience to the community's laws where they are in conflict with other ethical values.

Accountability

Our tradition holds us answerable to God and to others for our inactions as well as our actions. "Judaism does not say, 'Thou shall believe' but 'Thou shall do.'" (Moses Mendelssohn)

¹ Ibid., Isaiah 1:17

² Talmud , Gitten 10b

"Thou shalt not stand idly by the blood of thy neighbor."¹

Ethical people accept responsibility for their decisions and set an example for others. One

is responsible whether the act is intentional or inadvertent.²

The Hebrew original of the Ten Commandments says LO TIRTZACH, which means You

Shall Not Murder. Killing is justified when it is for self-defense. The Talmud teaches: "If

someone comes to kill you, rise up and kill him first."

The Bible talks about wars the Israelites were to wage against the inhabitants of the land of Canaan-later to be Israel. But the underlying theology was that God was the ultimate owner of all land, that God gave the land to the Israelites, and God commanded them to displace the other nations by means of warfare. Modern Jewish theology would clearly take a very different view about warfare, seeing it as justifiable only as a means of self-defence, or as a way to protect people who were being attacked by an oppressor.³

CHRISTIAN ETHICS

Christianity consists of a countless number of branches, churches and denominations. While there are churches that are centralized and have a well-developed approach of ethical questions, others are decentralized and rely upon individual interpretation. For Christians the source of all ethics is

¹ Holy Bible Leviticus 19:16 New International Version 2011

² Mishnah Bava Kamma 1:2

³ Dobrin, Arthur Op.Cit., pp.214

the Bible and, most particularly, the teaching of Jesus Christ. There is a marriage between the Biblical revelation and ethics.¹

Like Jews, Christians believe that humankind was created in the image of God. Christianity shares the Abrahamic ethic of human equality, since all of humanity is created in the same image, descended from Adam, all are fallen and in need of salvation through faith, and God loves all among his creation equally. The Abrahamic vision of spiritual liberty is understood by the moral choice given to individuals to accept or reject faith in Christ and to repent and atone for wrong-doing.²

For a Christian, the key for being a good person is to live in a community with others and share the basic level of humanness with others. As Christians they also promise to live moral lives in their vows at baptism. In the baptismal vows of the Episcopal Church in the United States, for example, they pledge to persevere in resisting evil, and pledge to seek and serve Christ in all persons, loving their neighbours as themselves, and strive for justice and peace among all people, respecting the dignity of every human being. The main test of ethical behaviour for a Christian is whether an act or a failure to act is in keeping with Christ's command that we love God and love our neighbours. Having said that, the evaluation of an ethical problem takes work.

Christianity inherited Judaism's concern for the individual relationship with God and the importance of manifesting that love in relations with others. When Jesus was asked which of God's commandments was most important, Mark records Jesus' response: "The most important one is this: 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God, the Lord is one. Love the Lord your God

¹ Dobrin, Arthur. Op.Cit., PP.68

² Lynn, Kunkle. The Ethics and Pro-Social Values of Judaism, Christianity and Islam abrahamic family reunion .org

with all your heart and with all your soul and with your entire mind and with all your strength.”¹ He then added: “The second is this: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ There is no commandment greater than these.”²

Elaborating on Biblical ethics, Jesus proclaims that “In everything, do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets”.³ Like Judaism, Jesus asks believers to love all others as God loves creation: God sends sunshine and rain on the good as well as the bad.⁴ As God does not distinguish among his creation, nor should his believers. Conversely, wrong beliefs lead to bad actions.⁵ Also, “The good man brings good things out of the good stored up in his heart, and the evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in his heart. For out of the overflow of his heart his mouth speaks.”⁶ Correcting one’s inner beliefs and purifying the heart, then, is the first task for Christians in order to be reconciled with God and with each other.

As the Hebrew Prophets had proclaimed, there was a fundamental contradiction between authentic worship of God and mistreatment of others. Early Christians pointed this out in embedded Christian values of love in community: John writes, we love because He first loved us. If anyone says, "I love God," yet hates his brother, he is a liar. For anyone who does not love his brother, whom he has seen, cannot love God, whom he has not seen. And He has given us this command: Whoever loves God must also love his brother.”⁷

¹ Holy Bible, Deuteronomy 6:4 New International Version

² Ibid., Mark 12:31

³ Ibid., Mathew 7:120-

⁴ Ibid., 5:43-48

⁵ Ibid., Mark 7: 14-22

⁶ Ibid., Luke 6:45, also Matthew 22:33-35

⁷ Ibid., John 4:19-21

Early Christians used the term *agape* to mean “Christian love”, the kind of self sacrificing love of God for humanity that Christ exemplified. In many Bible translations, *agape* is translated as charity (from the Latin *caritas*).¹

John records Jesus as proclaiming, “This is my commandment, “and that you love one another as I have loved you”. No one has greater love than this, to lay down one’s life for one’s friends.”² Jesus’ subsequent death on the cross represents for Christians the ultimate act of compassion and love. Paul writes that “God proves his love for us in that “while we still were sinners Christ died for us.”³ According to 1 John : We know love by this, that he laid down his life for us - and we ought to lay down our lives for one another.⁴

How does God's love abide in anyone who has the world's goods and sees a brother or sister in need and yet refuses help? Paul talks at length about brotherly love⁵ and its significance to the community.⁶ As a divine gift, *agape* “appears to be a dynamic force that is conterminous with the presence of the Spirit of God, engendering the practical realities that make harmonious communal life possible.”⁷

Brotherly love becomes the litmus test for the follower of Christ: “By this all will know that you are my disciples... if you have love for one another”.⁸

¹ Lynn, Kunkle, Op.Cit.

² Ibid., John 15:12,13

³ Ibid., Roman 5:8

⁴ Ibid., John 3:16-19

⁵ Ibid., Thessalonians 4:9; Romans 12:10

⁶ Ibid., Romans 14; 1 Corinthians 8: 12-14

⁷ Ibid., I Corinthians 13; Galatians 5:14 Switzer, Vol. II, 637

⁸ Ibid., John 13:35

Thangaraj writes that the “human response to God’s love is expressed not only through one’s love of God with one’s entire being; it is primarily expressed through the love of neighbor.”¹

For Paul, love is not only a theological concept but also an ethical prescription preventing corrosion of early Christian communities in times of communal discord and bickering.² For Paul, those who live in God’s Spirit by baptism are enabled in their capacity to love fully.³

Christian social values, while centrally based in the cardinal principle of love, also carry over many of the ethical precepts found in Judaism. As Hebrews explains: Let mutual love continue. Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by doing that some have entertained angels without knowing it. Remember those who are in prison, as though you were in prison with them; those who are being tortured, as though you yourselves were being tortured.⁴

Christians understand God’s desire to see a love of ‘the other’ regardless of their religious, tribal or other identity markers. Christian love went so far as to emphasize the love for enemies and praying for persecutors elaborate this principle explicitly:⁵

"If you love those who love you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ love those who love them. And if you do good to those who are good to you, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ do that. And if you lend to those from whom you expect repayment, what credit is that to you? Even ‘sinners’ lend to ‘sinners’, expecting to be repaid in full. But love your enemies, do good to them, and lend to them without expecting to get

¹ Thanagaraj, Vol. II, 451

² Ibid., Galatians 5:15

³ Ibid., Switzer, 6:37

⁴ Ibid., Hebrew 13:1-3

⁵ Ibid., Matthew 5:43-48; Romans 12:14; 17-21

anything back. Then your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High, because he is kind to the ungrateful and wicked. Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.¹

Jesus undertook “transforming initiatives” to respond to violence (Glen Stassen, *Just Peacemaking*) Transformational because they changed expected roles and status. You have heard that it was said, “An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth.” But I say to you, Do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also; and if anyone wants to sue you and take your coat, give your cloak as well; and if anyone forces you to go one mile, go also the second mile.²

Paul’s twelfth letter to the Romans has a number of ethical verses expounding on the manner of living a pious life that is “holy and acceptable to God” based on Jesus’ teachings.³ These include: “Bless those who persecute you; bless and do not curse them⁴”, and “Do not repay anyone evil for evil”⁵ and “If it is possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all”.⁶ Paul concludes: Beloved, never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, “Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.” No, “if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; for by doing this you will heap burning coals on their heads. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.”⁷

¹ Ibid., Luke 6:32-36

² Ibid., Mathew 5, 38-41

³ Ibid., Romans 12:1

⁴ Ibid., Mathew 38-40 verse 14

⁵ Ibid., 5:38-40 verse 17

⁶ Ibid., Romans 12:18

⁷ Ibid.,12:19-21

Christianity teaches that God chose to send Jesus as a mercy to humankind instead of punishing them for their transgressions. In fulfilling God's will¹ and in forgiving others, Jesus provides Christians with the ultimate example of the transformation of evil into good. Jesus' actions and principles of nonviolence were a source of inspiration and empowerment for early Christians. In particular, Christians drew from Jesus' remark to Simon Peter, who rushed to defend him and he was being arrested: "Put your sword back in its place," Jesus said to him, "for all who draw the sword will die by the sword."² Jesus enjoined his followers not to harm those who harm them:

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you: Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be sons of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous."³

"If you forgive those who sin against you, your heavenly Father will forgive you. But if you refuse to forgive others, your Father will not forgive your sins."⁴

Matthew⁵ asks Christians to "forgive your brother from your heart" if they are to receive the blessings of God's forgiveness and find peace. Humility was essential for Christians living in community.⁶ To early Christians, Peter wrote, "All of you, live in harmony with one another; be sympathetic, love as brothers, be compassionate and humble."

¹ Bible, Mathew, 26:39 New International Version

² Ibid 26:52 see John 18:11

³ Ibid 5, 43-45

⁴ Ibid 6:14-15

⁵ Ibid 18:35

⁶ Ibid 20: 25-28; Mark 9:35; Philippians 2:2-8

Self-Righteousness

Speaking to social ethics and universal compassion, Jesus warned against self righteousness in judging others. Why do you see the speck in your neighbour's eye, but do not notice the log in your own eye? Or how can you say to your neighbor, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' while the log is in your own eye? You hypocrite, first take the log out of your own eye, and then you will see clearly to take the speck out of your neighbour's eye."¹

Mercy

If all are sinners, Christians are then asked to not only be humble, love others and refrain from passing judgment, but also to be merciful with the struggles of others. Matthew ²records Jesus as saying "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy."³

ISLAMIC ETHICS

Muslims understand their faith as *din al-fitrah* (natural religiousness), which at its purest level is in a state of instinctual and natural surrender to God. ⁴Therefore, Muslim Ethics starts with God and ends with God. The primary sources of Islamic ethics are the Quran and the prophet Muhammad(s). The Quran says that every religious community in the world is the ummah of one or the other prophet as God has completed his responsibility by sending forth his message to all the human beings through his 1, 24000 prophets:⁵

¹ Mathew 7:1-5

² Ibid5:7

³ Lynn, Kunkle. Op.Cit.

⁴ Holy Quran 30:30 Sahih International

⁵ Ibid 10: 47

In Islam, social justice is rooted in a strong underlying egalitarian ethic, based on the Qur'anic principle that for God, the only differentiation among creation is in piety (*taqwa*) or righteousness (*birr*). Allah says in the Qur'an:

You are the best nation produced [as an example] for mankind. You enjoin what is right and forbid what is wrong and believe in Allah¹

“And establish prayer. Indeed, prayer prohibits immorality and wrongdoing”²

The Qur'an makes it equally clear that the practice of justice is as important with those with whom one is estranged or in conflict with:

“O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to Piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do.”³

Regarding Diversity, the Qur'an explains:

O mankind! We created you from a single (pair) of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that ye may know each other (not that ye may despise (each other)). Verily the most honoured of you in the sight of Allah is (he who is) the most righteous of you. And Allah has full knowledge and is well acquainted (with all things).⁴

“Had God willed, He would have made into one community (*ummah*); but [it was His will] to test you in what He gave you. So compete with each

¹ Ibid 3:110

² Ibid 26:45

³ Ibid 5:8

⁴ Ibid 49:13

other in doing good works. To God you are all returning, and He will inform you about how you differed.”¹

Islam is not a religion of coercion and the Quran says “The Truth is from your Lord; so let whoever wills, believe, and let whoever wills, disbelieve.”²

This freedom of thought in matters of ultimate belief not only underscores human choice, reason and dignity in Islam, but also forms the basis for diversity, pluralism and tolerance in Islam – essential building blocks for a just and peaceful society.

The Qur’an states that God sent out different prophets to different people at different times to reveal the same truth of the oneness of God and of individual moral accountability ³

About Prophet Muhammad, the Quran says:

And indeed, you are of a great moral character.”⁴

And the Prophet Muhammad (s) himself says:

“I have been sent to perfect good character.” ⁵

Qatadah reported: I said, “O mother of the believers, tell me about the character of the Messenger of Allah, peace and blessings be upon him.”

Aisha said, “Have you not read the Quran?” I said, “O course!” Aisha said,

“Verily, the character of the Prophet of Allah was the Quran.”⁶

¹ Ibid5:48

² Ibid18:29

³ Ibid2:213

⁴ Ibid., 68:4

⁵ Al Muwatta 1614

⁶ Sahih Muslim 746

Safwan reported from a number of Companions of the Messenger of Allah(s) on the authority of their fathers who were relatives of each other. The Muhammad(s) said: Beware, if anyone wrongs a contracting man, or diminishes his right, or forces him to work beyond his capacity, or takes from him anything without his consent, I shall plead for him on the Day of Judgment.¹

All mankind is from Adam and Eve. An Arab has no superiority over a non-Arab, nor does a non-Arab have any superiority over an Arab; white has no superiority over black, nor does a black have any superiority over white; [none have superiority over another] except by piety and good action.²

The Quran also emphasises that such differences do not suggest that their origin is different, rather it emphasises that human beings have a common spirituality and morality.³ The differences exist because God has given human beings the freedom to choose: “And had your Lord so willed, all those who live on earth would have believed to faith altogether: would you force people against their will to believe!”⁴

Help one another in benevolence and piety, and help not one another in sin and transgression”⁵

“Do you order righteousness of the people and forget yourselves while you recite the Scripture? Then will you not reason?”⁶

GLOBAL ETHICS

¹ Sunan Abu Dawud Hadith 3052

² Sahih Muslim 54

³ Holy Quran 7:172, 91:7-10

⁴ Ibid 10:99

⁵ Ibid 5:2

⁶ Ibid 2:44

"Global ethics," helps in identifying "a rather unique set of moral problems that either cut across national boundaries or at least are shared by diverse peoples and communities despite their different geographical locations," that is, extracting "reasonable parameters" that can apply globally and which are "grounded in a moral vision of human dignity, personal and social responsibility, and justice."¹

Dalai Lama talks about a universal approach to ethics, to have a clear understanding of what unites us all, namely our common humanity. Since we are social animals—that is, since our survival and flourishing depend on being part of a group or community—our capacity for empathy has profound implications for our pursuit of happiness and well-being. Most of the problems we face in the world today—such as armed conflict, poverty, injustice, and environmental degradation—have arisen and are maintained by complex human activity. Furthermore, most persistent sources of inner suffering at an individual level—fear, anxiety, and stress, for example—are also closely connected to our mental complexity and our excitable imaginations. For this reason, I often make the point that the factors which divide us are actually much more superficial than those we share. Despite all the characteristics that differentiate us—race, language, religion, gender, wealth, and many others—we are all equal in terms of our basic humanity. And this equality is corroborated by science. The sequencing of the human genome, for example, has shown that racial differences constitute only a tiny fraction of our genetic makeup, the vast majority of which is shared by all of us. In fact, at the genome level, the differences between individuals appear more pronounced than those between different

¹ Soni, Jayandra; Raymaker, John. *Focus* Introduction: Toward Sharing Values Across Cultures And Religions *The Journal of Religious Ethics*, Vol. 39, No. 2 (June 2011), pp. 193-20

racess. In light of these considerations, the time has come, I believe, for each one of us to start thinking and acting on the basis of an identity rooted in the phrase "we human beings."¹Compassion reduces our fear, boosts our confidence, and brings us inner strength. By reducing distrust, it opens us to others and brings us a sense of connection with them and a sense of purpose and meaning in life. Compassion also gives us respite from our own difficulties. The observation that our concern for others contributes to our own well-being is also supported by scientific research. There is now increasing scientific evidence that love, kindness, trust, and so on have not only psychological benefits but also observable benefits to physical health. I know of one recent study showing that the deliberate cultivation of love and compassion can even affect our DNA itself. An impact has been observed on the parts of our DNA known as telomeres, which are associated by medical science with the process of aging.²Some of the greatest fighters against injustice of recent times, people of strong character and determination like Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King Jr., Václav Havel, and others—have been motivated by universal compassion. One could not describe such people as meek or retiring just because they combined their devotion to the welfare of others with a commitment to nonviolence.³Compassion by no means implies surrender in the face of wrongdoing or injustice. When an unjust situation demands a strong response, as in the case of apartheid, compassion demands, not that we accept injustice, but that we take a stand against it. It does imply that such a stand should be nonviolent. But nonviolence is not a sign of weakness, but rather one of self-confidence and courage.pp34The long imprisonment of Aung San Suu Kyi after her

¹ Lama, Dalai 2011 *Beyond Religion Ethics for a Whole World United States of America* pp18-21

² *Ibid.*, pp.28

³ *Ibid.*, pp .34

election victory in Burma is an example of this. And the recent arrest of my fellow Nobel Peace Laureate Liu Xiaobo in China is another. When people criticize such violations of justice, countries defend themselves by saying everything has been done according to the rule of law. However, when the law is tied to narrow interests, it fails to uphold the fundamental conception of justice as a principle of fairness based on human equality. For the law genuinely to uphold justice, it must protect universal human rights. At the heart of a democratic ethic is a commitment to genuine dialogue ... a readiness to give and take, to listen, to bridge the empathy gaps as well as the ignorance gaps that have so often impeded human progress. It implies a pluralistic readiness to welcome diversity and to see our differences not as difficult burdens but as potential blessings.”¹

CONCLUSION

After a comparative study of ethics of all the Abrahamic religions – Judaism, Christianity and Islam, it is clear that all have descended from the same source Abraham and preach the same ethical teachings of justice, fraternity, liberty, love, tolerance and brotherhood on which is based our Universal ethics or Global ethics or some might call it Secular ethics. The Global ethics propounded by Dalai Lama is itself based on the core teachings of Buddhism which in some way is related with the core principles of other religions. Living in a world of diversity which threatens us day by day more so because of immigration and globalisation have lead us to ethical crisis. I believe if everyone follows the core teachings of his

¹ Khan , Aga. His Keynote address at the Athens Democracy Forum 15 September 2015

religion with Tolerance, Dialogue and finally Pluralism, we can go a long way in not just eradicating differences of each other but living within these differences to learn from each other. The ethics applied in a Pluralistic society should add to the goodness of the society because all religious ethics speak the same language. We should try to draw out the common good out of these differences and being able to receive its positive end. Martin Smith rightly says, “Perhaps we should look at what we, as human beings, have in common, and use this common ground to figure out what is ethical for all, what is just for all, and what the best thing for the entire human race is. Only then, do I feel that global ethics can be achieved.” Global ethics would bring global justice which ultimately would bring human solidarity and global peace.

ⁱ Sajoo, Dr. Aryn B (2016) *Pluralism: Beyond Ethnic and Sectarian Identities* The Institute of Ismaili Studies <https://iis.ac.uk>

Epistemological approach to Ethics: A critical study with response from rational and theological perspectives

Mudasir Ahmad Tantray¹

Abstract:

This paper tries to explain and investigate the knowledge and understanding of the morals or ethical standards. Ethics is the study of the freedom of will and choice and epistemology are the study of 'How we know or understand this will or choice in order to make ethical standard. There is a relation between ethics and epistemology while the former deals with the ought, ideal and especially with the formulation of criteria for norms, latter deals with the justification of the theories that lays or implies sources for the knowledge of the morality (i.e. what is right or wrong, good or bad, truth or falsehood, valid or invalid, 'is' and ought. In this paper, I have used two approaches to determine what is right or wrong i.e. rational approach and theological approach/ religious perspective. These two approaches act as the sources of origin of the knowledge of morals or moral statements. Rational view defines norms or laws of the ethics by reason or by logical way and the theological view exemplifies norms or character on the basis of three

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metaphysical entities i.e. God, Man, and Society. This paper exemplifies the evolution of morals. It also tries to evaluate the morals on the knowledge of a-priori and a-posteriori truths. Moreover, the social aid of the evolution of the morality as well as the rational, empirical, intuitional and religious has been enlightened with the norms of the methods of ethics.

Keywords

Ethics, morality, reason, theology, religion, society, knowledge, norm, experience, intuition, logic, good, and bad.

Objectives

1. To explore and examine the rational and theological sources about the knowledge of morals.
2. To analyze the relation between epistemology and ethics
3. It tries to clarify and demonstrate the difference between knowing values/norms and scientific matter of fact. It also explains the role of epistemological theories to know the origin of morality.

Introduction

Ethics is the normative science, also called regulative science. Ethics investigates certain uniformities or laws which govern them. It is different from positive science which deals with the facts whereas normative science is concerned with values and positive science is concerned with facts. Epistemology is the philosophical discipline

that inquiries into the nature of knowing morals, its origin, validity and limits of knowledge. Epistemology is the science of understanding and ethics is the normative study of this understanding of morality. Ethics is the science of character, customs, freedom of choice and moral behavior. Ethics provides us the knowledge of morals and this knowledge has its source in reason, intuition, society and in tradition or religious scriptures. The knowledge of morals, source of moral consciousness, and limitation of ethical understanding can be interpreted and clarified in many ways by the moralists in contemporary era. There is the most important and crucial domain which discusses moral issues according to the norms of those standards which are palpable within the time scale of different relative modes. One of the three concepts of God, Man, and World, ethics deals with the concept of man, his choice and acceptance. In ethics there is a hot controversy among the hedonists and intuitions, rationalists and theologians, determinists and indeterminists, absolutists and relativists. While hedonists believe that the what is right or wrong of an action depends on the consequence and so far as intuitionists are concerned what is right or wrong depends on the motive of the agent towards the action. There are three ideals of human life; truth, goodness and beauty: logic interprets intellectual values, aesthetics interprets aesthetic values, and ethics interprets judgments of moral values. Truth is the ideal of knowledge, good is the ideal of will and freedom and beauty is the ideal of feeling or emotion. As we know that normative science studies what ought to be and positive science studies what is; one is axiomatic and another is factual. In modern

philosophy most of the interest is played by moralists, academicians, professors, theologians in delivering lectures on the field of ethics to maintain discipline among students and to make people's character as well as to enlighten them with moral knowledge. But it is a matter of confusion that ethics is a normative science and this type of science cannot make up people with moral knowledge or we can say like that 'as by studying aesthetics which is a normative science can't enhance beauty of the agents, same is the case with the normative nature of ethics which can't build morality of the agents. So by ethics we can't craft morality in immoral agents. There is a long debate today on ethical knowledge by logicians, theologians and rationalists on this issue "whether delivering lectures on ethics can compose or build morality among people or it is a barren thing to do on and then why we are organizing seminars, debates, seminars, guest lectures and workshops on the area of ethics to enlighten and develop morality in students and among people. This type of approach I have discussed in my conclusion with analysis.

Ethics and epistemology

Epistemology or the theory of knowledge is a branch of philosophy which investigates the nature, scope, quality, limits, and validity of knowledge. There is a close relationship between ethics and epistemology, without epistemology morality is barren and without ethics, epistemology is meaningless and non-existent. What is moral knowledge, extreme is it? How good it is? Just as the metaphysics tries to discover what knowledge is and how it differs from mere opinion that is, epistemology tries to establish normative criteria for

what is to count as knowledge. Epistemology makes a distinction between opinion and genuine knowledge. Ethics encompasses both individual behavior, as a personal ethics, and the large question of the good life; what sort of behavior leads to the most enjoyable existence? Do I have a duty to others? What is it? Ethical questions of this kind are as old as western philosophy and are explored at great length by Aristotle. We find him wrestling with such questions as: what is the good life? How do we achieve it? To what extent does it depend upon living in a good society? Moral questions involve questions of right and wrong, good and evil. According to Aristotle, morality functions best when it fulfills its purpose and it is according to nature. A good horse for example embodies all the qualities that we look for in a horse similarly, a good human being should embody these characteristics that flow from the essential nature of what it means to be human. For Aristotle that essential is reason. To be good human beings means we should act in accordance with reason¹. It is written that 'as physics deals with the laws of nature and ethics deals with the laws of free moral action. For physics laws must apply to nature as an object of experience, while ethical laws must apply to human wills as effected by desires and instincts which can be known only by experience.'²

Knowing or understanding moral judgments

¹ David Stewart, H. G. Blocker: *Fundamentals of Philosophy*, 6th Ed. (New Delhi: Pearson, 2006), p.19.

² H. j. Paton: *The Moral Law*, (New Delhi: Surjeet Publication, 2004), p. 13.

Moral concepts are the presuppositions of ethics. It depends on the choice of the individual what he recognizes good for him, others and sometimes it is not the agent which postulates morality but the societal regulations. Immanuel Kant postulates three types of morality i.e. freedom of will (choice or will which determine what is right or wrong), immortality of soul (virtues or moral judgments are traits for the soul) and existence of God (what we do is only the duty to obey God's will). Moral judgments include the propositions about duties, obligations, emotions, descriptions, prescriptions, virtues, rights etc. moral judgments are the judgments of values. There is no conflict in moral judgments in what we recognize as right and what to recognize as factual which are judgments having no moral worth. The statements having moral worth and the statements having legal or factual value are as under.

1. Do not cut forests
2. Implant trees in your surroundings and in forests to maintain its glory.
3. Do not harm others in words, deeds and thoughts.
4. Thou shalt not lie, kill, assault, and steal.
5. Do not pollute water, soil and air.
6. Do not suck thumb.
7. To grow or to keep beard.

In the above statements 1, 6, 7 are not ethical or moral judgments but either factual or legal and at sometimes religious, because there is no freedom of will in which agent is responsible to the actions but to the government or to the religious sanctity i.e. God. The statements 2, 3,4,5, are moral judgments which are normative in

character and with regard to these statements the moral agent is free to decide according to the standards of the deeds. In certain conditions these moral concepts or statements become relative. If we take the moral judgment do not harm others by words, deeds and thoughts is a relative concept it is applicable only for the person who is truthful and honest in his words deeds and thoughts but not applicable to the person who is using harsh and abusing words drinking alcohol playing gambling receives bribe and also for the person who is a mean jealous and pessimistic. Chastity and modesty is a moral judgment both in Indian context and western perspective but what it can note here in India is not the same in western world. To pay charity to beggars is moral judgment but in various countries it is against their morality and law to give charity to beggars because their way of paying charity to others is different. So, we can argue that all moral judgments are legal but all legal judgments are not moral. Moral statement is an action or duty on which one is of having free will. Free will or choice is not an ordinary choice or freedom, it is the freedom with responsibility and accountability for oneself and for others. Free will does not mean that an individual is free to do each and every thing. It means indeterminism in which an agent is free within the boundaries of passion, society, self, religion, culture and also linguistic limits. No government can impose laws on moral agent.

Sources of the knowledge of Ethics

Ethics as the science of human conduct which enlightens human beings with the validity of moral laws, customs or habits. Moral consciousness is the consciousness of right and wrong. Moral consciousness is the awareness or information of the moral quality as well as values of voluntary actions of the persons behavior. However, it involves; cognitive or intellectual, effective or emotional, conative or volitional factors. Ethics deals with the volitional part of the moral act. So, there are many resources or foundations from which we derive morality. The most essential and morally sanctioned are: Reason, Authority/Religion, Intuition and Social norms/society.

Reason (intellect)

Rationality is the presupposition for ethical judgment or moral thinking. In ethics there are many philosophers who regard reason as the source for moral knowledge, while some ethical philosophers believe that reason is either the element in human mind or it is the thesis which we derive from experience and customs with the help of abstraction, analysis and argumentation. Some of the ethicists accept that the element of reason in mind is created and operated by the will of God. Hence knowledge of moral statements in the domain of rationalism depends upon the deductive system of the nature, world or man. According to Immanuel Kant; Reason is the element in human cognition. Reasoning is scientific way of apprehending ethical knowledge. Understanding raises man's dignity. Those who does not use the intellect are like a herd of goats,

deaf, dumb and blind. No better than lowest of beasts. The ideal of intellect is to know truth from error, as an ideal or basic value for man's wisdom means the knowledge of faith, ideals and values.¹ According to Kant, the a-priori or pure part of ethics is concerned with the formulation of moral principles with such term as 'ought', 'duty', 'good', 'evil', 'right', and 'wrong'. This a-priori part of ethics may be called a metaphysics of morals. Kant's doctrine of a pure knowledge rests mainly on the assumption that mind or reason as he calls it- functions actively in accordance with principles which it can know and understand. He holds that such rational principles can be manifested not only in thinking as such (which is studied in logic), but also in scientific knowledge and in moral reason. We can separate out these rational principles and we can understand how they are necessary for any rational being, so far as he seeks to think rationally about the world and to act rationally in the worlds. If we believe that reason has no activity and no principles of its own and that mind is merely a bundle of sensations and perceptions, there can be for us no a-priori knowledge, but we are hardly entitled to assert this without considering the arguments on the other side.² Many philosophers have argued that rationality is unique to human beings that our ability to reason sets us apart from all other creatures and gives us the unique capacity to attain wisdom or knowledge. Some contend, however, that some nonhuman creatures are also rational, or at least that they are capable of certain behaviors usually associated with rationality for example, symbolic

¹ Masud ul Hassan: *History of Islam*, (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 1995), p. 146-47.

² H. j. Paton: *The Moral Law*, (New Delhi: Surjeet Publications, 2004), p. 14.

communication (language), or solving practical problems. But, despite this contention, the idea of rationality remains central to our conception of philosophical activity. This is especially true insofar as rationality is associated logical thinking.¹ According to Descartes 'thinking' and 'knowing' are the certain things of which human being is inclined. It is our duty and obligations to know things' what they are? And 'How they are'?. Descartes placed the question 'what can I know?' and a very determined pursuit of certainty in the answer at the centre of western philosophy for three hundred years.²

Theology (religion)

Theological approach to morals, theology (science of God) plays a vital and crucial role to define and derive the moral knowledge either from the will of the God or from the metaphysics of the religious scriptures. from theological point of view moral knowledge and understanding is mentioned in the holy scriptures, and books of the religious. This moral consciousness is derived from the interpretation of the religious dialogue which according to some philosophers, moral consciousness or moral knowledge is innate in human beings as like Descartes, Leibnitz believes and other maintained that moral knowledge exists in the intellect of approaching these regulative actions or customs, like as Locke and Hume asserted. The deterministic approach to morals holds that we

¹ Michael. F. Wagner, *An Historical Introduction to Moral Philosophy*, (Englewood Cliffs, N. j: Prentice Hall, 1991), p.8.

² Bryan Magee: *The Story of Philosophy*, (London: Dorling Kindersley Ltd, 1998), p. 84.

determinate by the nature and environment which means that we are not free to take moral judgments in the same manner indetermination holds that we are free to regulate moral knowledge and condition can abstract conscience to perform moral judgments: in theology the judgments of value are according to what is in the nature of scriptural knowledge one cannot go beyond. The Theocentric philosophy in the religion of Islam, Judaism, Christian and Vedas accept the centric ethics e.g., canards of Judaism one's own standard of religion. what is ethical in the religion of Islam is what ethical judgment taken from the scriptures holy faith and jurisprudence commands a persists for us in scripture is morally good for us and what he prohibited for us is bad. Thus, for these philosophers who are accepting theological view argues that good and bad of actions depends on the will of god. Same is the case with the Vedas. The highest good "Summum, Bonnam of life" is what is in the authority of Vedas. The other God salient religions believe that the value or moral judgments are considered as good or bad by their Prophets or trustworthy persons of their faith, so faith is emphasized and recommended as the value for moral knowledge. There are philosophers who are both Theo-centric as well as rationalistic in the west, i.e. continental rationalist philosophers and British empiricists and critical philosophers like Kant, further more in the Muslim Philosophy; Ash rites who accepts faith for determining moral concepts and brought reason to subordinate the Theo-centric account for the knowledge of morals. Asharities like Al-Gazali derived the moral consciousness from tradition with the help of reason or intellect but there is hot controversy between the

philosophers of faith (theologian) and the philosophers of reason where from the former account of vision. Moral concepts like duty, obligation, customs, choice, norms, virtues, character, behavior, generosity, pleasure, etc are derived from the tradition of the religions and from the latter; the moral knowledge or consciousness of the same concepts depends on the consequence or causation or rational argumentation of their act of performing.¹As far as the scriptures of religion or tradition is concerned there are there sources of knowledge.

- (i) Knowledge by inference (logical knowledge)
- (ii) Knowledge by perception and reported perception or observation
- (iii) Knowledge by personal experience or intuition

Likewise, there are three types of errors

- (i). The error of reasoning.
- (ii). The error of observation.
- (iii). The errors of intuition. .

Intuition

Intuition is the source from which we derive the moral knowledge. Intuition is explored in different senses. It is the inner knowledge of morals without using one's experience or immediate knowledge without observation. Those moral statements or morals which are derived from the axioms, laws and standards of what is good and

¹ Seyyed Hossein Nasr: *Islamic Philosophy from its Origin to the Present: Philosophy in the land of Prophecy*, (New York: State University of New York Press, 2006.), p.93-103.

bad are intuitional in character. An intuition is the immediate apprehension of an object by the mind without the intervention of any reasoning process. A moral intuition is, accordingly one that apprehends some moral object immediately without there being any reasoning about it. There are three possible objects of moral intuitions.

(i) Perceptual intuitionism/ individual intuitionism: it is type of intuitionism in which we can know directly that one particular act, such as assassination of Caesar by Brutus, is right. To have this type of intuition does not imply that political murder would be right in any other case. It deals with intuitions about individual actions.

(ii) Dogmatic intuitionism/General intuitionism: in this type of intuitionism, we may know directly without reflection that a certain class or kind of actions is right or wrong; for example, telling the truth is always right. The theory which holds that this is the only way of knowing the rightness or wrongness of actions is called by Sidgwick as 'dogmatic intuitionism'. This type of intuitionism deals with the intuitions about classes of actions.

(iii) Universal intuitionism: in this type of intuitionism, we may know directly some moral principle by which we can judge actions to be right or wrong. We may know intuitively for example that any action which treats a man merely as a means is always wrong. This type of intuitionism deals with the universal principles of ethics.¹

(iv)

¹ Willaim Lillie, *An Introduction to Ethics*, (Delhi: Surjeet Publicatipons, 2007), p.118.

Social customs/Society

Society is the source of morality from its two ends, on the one hand the society formulates its own moral standard and on the other, society copies moral standards from the people who differentiates from each other due to their caste, creed and religion. Social values give us the knowledge of the morals. Society is the one of the fundamental basis of validity, nature and limits of knowledge of the morals. What is good or bad (normative) is decided on the social criteria. Although social values and ethical values are dissimilar i.e. all values in the society can't be signed in the standard of ethics, because it has a special cause; society is a positive entity and morals are normative. As per the criteria of my paper society is governed by two main poles; religion and reason. The sanction of moral statements or morals are formulated on the customs and faith of the people to their deity. All social knowledge cannot provide us ethical knowledge, only those social customs or societal regulations can become the moral that studies

Experience

Experience is the valid source of knowledge. Through this aid of knowledge we can apprehend morals or norms. Religious consciousness and rational enquiry, both provides us the criteria which can fit within the standard of morality. What is good or bad, right or wrong, virtue or vice, truth or falsehood, can be well determined on the schema of, when we observe the norms of orthodox people and the norms of the people who are using their reason and experience. the ethical philosophers who accepts

experience as the source of moral knowledge are known as empiricists or hedonists. According to them, what is right or wrong depends on the experience or consequence of the moral standards.

Conclusion

Epistemology is a significant branch of philosophy which study the about faculties of knowing, this field plays a lucid part to explain and determine the knowledge of the morals, i.e. 'How we know about morals, moral statements, standards, norms and also about values, obligations, choice. What knowledge makes something ethical (deals with values; good and bad) and factual (deals with facts and scientific ideals). Ethics is science of understanding free will and choice. Epistemology describes the method of debating ethical issues that rely on the theories of idealism, realism, rationalism, empiricism, criticism and intuitionism. Despite these epistemology theories which studies about the morals, we have also other sources of knowing morality i.e. social view and theological view point. The epistemological, rational and theological question to morality are: How we know them? is morality innate or acquired? what is the origin of morality, limits of knowledge of morality, does moral issues depends upon society, does they are creations of religious beliefs, is morality intuitional, what is the role of morality in the formulation of knowing new and old religious beliefs and social institutions. What is difference between statement of facts and statements of values? All these questions are clarified in this research paper with suitable examples. Thus, morality exists only when there are agents of morality. It means that morality exists only if we are known about it. So, epistemology has a great deal with

ethics. Rationalism, empiricism, and intuitionism extended the role of understanding morality as in their own methodology and nature. Two things are reasonably exaggerated in this paper one is that reason or rationality extended the knowledge of the morals to its apex. It studied both the a-priori and a-posteriori judgments in the area of morality, also it makes us aware about the causational and consequential nature of ethical issues, second is that the 'theological or religious' approach to debate on the ethical issues. As rational part explained the role of reason and religious part explained the role of faith.

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Islamic Ethical Philosophy: An Outline of its Implications among the Working Groups of Society

Mohd Younus Kumar¹

ABSTRACT:

Islam is the divine religion which laid emphasis on the divine injunctions regarding the maintenance of the worldly as well as spiritual affairs of the human life. It is the systematic way of living which also guides in each and every social action of the humans. Its ethical philosophy is oriented in accordance with the injunctions laid down in Qur'an and Hadith. As the human life is diverse in nature, it ordains the basic principles within the domain of ethical philosophy for the welfare and comfort of the general public. Ethics deals with those standards that prescribe what man ought to do. It also addresses virtues, duties and attitudes of the individual and the society. In addition, ethics is related to customs, traditions as well as beliefs and worldviews. Notably, there are other fields, such as law, human feeling and culture, which address the same subjects that ethics address. Ethics as the basic necessity of each and every work of humans plays an important role for the influential outcome of the work. The society demands from the working groups, the most humane and benevolent job with which each and every individual may get benefited irrespective of class, caste, creed, sex

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and religion. In connection of the above mentioned background of ethical philosophy, the present study will highlight the implications of ethical philosophy in Islam, in which the more emphasis will be laid upon the ethical standards which Islam promotes among the working groups of society. Therefore, the focus of the paper will be the traders and businessmen and the teachers in which their duties towards society will be highlighted within the domain of Islamic ethical philosophy.

Key Words: - Islamic Ethical Philosophy, Implications, Trade and Business, Teaching

INTRODUCTION:

Ethics is one of the main themes of human life. In the history of Islamic civilization it ever remains a motivational force for its followers. Islam as the divine religion guides human beings on ethical grounds in each and every aspect of life. *Akhlaq* is the appropriate term in Arabic that stands for the translation of the word ethics. The root from which it derives its meaning means to create, to shape, to give form, to mould or to produce. While the term *akhlaq* is a plural of *khuluq*, referring to collections of distinct traits of character, the knowledge of morality (*ilm al- Akhlaq*) translated as ethics, moral sciences or moral philosophy. In this way Islamic ethics means the shaping or moulding one's behaviour and character in accordance with the norms laid down in the sacred literature of Islam i.e., *Qur'an* and *Hadith*. Ethics from Islamic point of view is different from Western perspectives. Ethics, according to Western sociologists is relatively dependent on individual

perspective in order to determine good or bad. However, in Islam the source of ethics is its religious institution, transmitting a divine revelation to mankind. In other words, the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* automatically become the source of *akhlāq* in Islam. In Islamic ethics the basic assumption is faith in a personal God and morality is the attempt of each individual as well as society to approach Him as far as possible.¹ Thus, all modes of behavior and character traits derived their goodness or badness from the Holy Book and the sayings and practices of the Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) who himself has been described as the best model of behavior for all believers.² Broadly speaking, the concept of ethics refers to the normative evaluation of acts. Islamic investigations into metaethics have taken both (dialectic) theological and philosophical forms, and all possible combinations of answers have been given to the ontological and epistemic questions.

The *Qur'an* states that the best person is who upholds the moral foundations and invites others to practice the values.

*"But those who believe and do deeds of righteousness,- we shall soon admit them to gardens, with rivers flowing beneath,-to dwell therein forever..."*³

¹ Bashir Ahmad Dar, *Qur'anic Ethics*. (New Delhi: Adam Publishers, 2000), p. 15.

² Dr. Shukri Ahamd and Dr Musa Yusuf Owoyemi. The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition. *International Journal of Business and Social Science*, 3(20) October 2012, p 117.

³ *Al Qur'an, Surah Nisā'*:125. The translation of the Quranic verses mentioned in the whole paper are taken from the translation of Abdullah Yusuf Ali, *The Holy Qur'an: Text, Translation and Commentary*. (Maryland, USA: Amana Publishers, 1997).

The Prophet (S.A.W) also laid emphasis on ethical development of humans. Once Prophet (S.A.W) said: “A Muslim is the one who avoids harming Muslims with his tongue and hands.”¹

In Islam, work has been given special importance to the extent that it is considered as an act of worship itself. Islam has laid down some universal fundamental rights for humanity as a whole, which are to be observed and respected under all circumstances. To achieve these rights, Islam provides not only legal safeguards, but also a very effective moral system. Thus, whatever leads to the welfare of the individual or the society is morally good in Islam and whatever is injurious is morally bad.

In the premodern period, ethics was chiefly concerned about the formation and disciplining of the self through the cultivation of practices that were deemed ‘good conduct’. Such conduct was naturalized through education, ritual, and disciplinary practices that were intended to help the devout Muslim to internalize the values that underlay an ethical life.² But in modern times ethics gained the profound importance in the day to day affairs of life as well. The jurisprudence is much influenced by these ethical norms. To be fair, some jurists, other than the mystics, did attempt to engage *fiqh* in a dialogue with moral and ethical objectives. In order to highlight the ethical strains implicit in the law, some jurists began

¹ Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhārī. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1987) Hadith No. 10.

² Ibrahim Moosa, ‘Ethics and Social Issues’ in *Encyclopedia of Islam and the Muslim World*. Richard C. Martin ed. vol. 1 (USA: Macmillan Reference, 2004), pp. 224-225.

to emphasize the role of public interest (*maslaha*) by elaborating its ethical purposes (*maqāṣid*), such as in the protection and advancement of religion, life, reason, wealth, and paternity or family.

Apart from the formation of innate character, Islamic ethics is much more than that, being multi-dimensional and related to various aspects of life such as social, political, cultural, spiritual, and economic. These aspects develop an ethical standard of living called Islamic work ethics. Islamic work ethics could be defined as a set of values or system of beliefs derived from the *Qur'an* and *Sunnah* concerning work and hard work. Kamal Hassan has listed five attributes of the Islamic work ethics. These are as follows:

1. Employees have to fulfill their job for the societal obligation with purpose to seek pleasure of Allah.
2. Trustworthiness as a vicegerent of Allah which comprehends all aspects of living as a human.
3. Muslim must perform his duty as a religious obligation as well as to implement all ritual obligations. Motivational reward is not only linked with earthly reward but also awarded in the Hereafter.
4. Employees must adhere to diligence and efficiency as well as fairness in preserving public interest.
5. Employer-employee relationships are based on human value which is beyond race, color, language and inheritance.¹

¹ Dr. Shukri Ahamd and Dr Musa Yusuf Owoyemi. *The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition*. op. cit., p. 118

Thus, it is clear from the above points that Islamic work ethics goes beyond hard work as it includes the concept of worship which is geared towards pleasing one's Lord. Islamic Work ethics brings material gains and develops spiritual dimension and connection to the Lord as well. The emphasis of Islam on work ethics leads towards the fact that scholars of Islam considered work as *ibādah* (a religious duty) and *jihād* (strive in the cause of Allah). Work in Islam is also argued as the dedicative effort striving to further self-interest economically, socially and psychologically, to sustain social prestige, to advance welfare of the society and reaffirm faith.¹

Scholars interpret ethical philosophy of Islam keeping in view the divine as well as material benefits and argued that there are eight basic principles of Islamic ethical Philosophy; 1. It is transcendental- i.e, they are coming from divine scales. 2. Man is born with good natural disposition; evil traits are acquired and additional to the human nature. 3. Human beings are equal and there is no favouritism of any ethnic groups over another; no individual is closer or nearer to Allah (S.W.T) except through good deeds. 4. Human conducts are judged to be ethical or otherwise, depending on the intention of the individual and in accordance with the divine texts (*nusūṣ al-sharī'ah*). 5. Islam grants to all, the right of enjoying their natural rights such as freedom and liberty. 6. Islam offers an open system approach to ethics, not a self-oriented system, as individual interest and personal satisfaction are very much related

¹ F. Kamaluddin & Ab. Manan, The Conceptual Framework of Islamic Work Ethics (IWE), *Malaysian Accounting Review*, 9(2) 2010, p. 62.

to the public welfare and collective interest, egoism has no place in the Islamic moral system. The entire human race is considered as one entity; therefore, the interest of each and every one of this entity matters. 7. Islamic ethics is characterized by principles and norms, not by numbers and hedonism. 8. It is true that in Islam, ethical values aim to bring human interest (*jalb al-maslahah*) and to prevent hardship (*dar al-mafsadah*); however, this cannot be equated with ethical utilitarianism. This is because, in utilitarian theory of ethics, moral conducts are evaluated on the basis of their utilitarian outcome, not by principles or motives, while as in Islam the concepts of *jalb al-manfa'ah* (human interest) and *dar al-mafsadah* (to prevent hardship) is principle-guided.¹

IMPLICATIONS:

The scope of ethics in Islam is widespread because it encompasses each and every act of humans whether it is related to his self or his profession. Regarding the self improveness of humans, Islam is clear as it mentions different types of values like honesty, truthfulness, benevolence, loyalty etc, but the domain of his profession also demands ethical standards with which the healthy and prosperous society is possible. There are several principles of Islam regarding the ethical standard of the professional works which includes trade, farming, teaching, medical fields and others. The present study focuses upon two working groups of the society viz, trade and business, and teaching. It is because the major portion

¹ Abdurezak Abdulahi Hashi, *Islamic Ethics: An Outline of its Principles and Scope. Revelation and Science*, 1(3) 2011, pp. 126-127.

of population is directly or indirectly related to these two fields of work in the history of human civilization. The ethical standard in the work culture gets degraded day by day because of the ignorance of ethical framework in it. For instance, a recent survey of 2,000 major US corporations revealed that these are the ethical problems (arranged in order of importance) takes place with the concerned managers: (1) drug and alcohol abuse, (2) employee theft, (3) conflicts of interest, (4) quality control issues, (5) discrimination in hiring and promotion, (6) misuse of proprietary information, (7) abuse of company expense accounts, (8) plant closings and lay-offs, (9) misuse of company assets, and (10) environmental pollution.¹ Unless and until the work will be considered the supreme service towards humanity and the realization of religious obligations in it, the attainment of prosperous society from the side of the working groups is impossible. Therefore, the ethical philosophy can play an important role in this menace. Work is sacred because it is seen as a duty to build a strong national economy. One's work is not an end in itself, but a means to destroy the non-economic dependent control over the economy. Therefore, work constitutes the first pillar in the construction of a healthy economic system.²

1. TRADE AND BUSINESS

¹ Dr. Rafik Issa Beekun, *Islamic Business Ethics*. (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1996), p. 4.

² Dr. Shukri Ahamd and Dr Musa Yusuf Owoyemi. *The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition*. op. cit., p. 123.

Trade among Muslims is not a new thing. It was the profession of prophets. The Prophet Mu Muhammad hammad (S.A.W) himself was directly involved in the trade activities before being appointed as a Prophet. Muslims are urged to emulate Prophet Muhammad (S.A.W) in such noble characters which *Qur'an* itself declared:

*"Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern (of conduct) for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah"*¹

Indeed, he is the best model for Muslims. His practice, rule and manner of life, the nobility of his character, and his truthfulness are sufficient to guide man to be successful in this world and the Hereafter.

Trade and Business should be viewed as an approach that is able to influence and develop the civilization of a nation. In Islam Ethics plays an important role rather guides in business transactions as well. The business ethics are defined in the Islamic scriptures in order to make the society prosperous and free from malpractices. There are several ethical doctrines of Islam which are directly or indirectly linked with trade and business activities rather implementation of those are highly emphasized in Islam.

The Islamic worldview implies that the market system should be maintained, but that the price mechanism be complemented with a device that minimizes unnecessary claims on resources. This device is the 'moral filter'. This means that people would pass their

¹ *Al Qur'an, Surah al Ahzāb:21.*

potential claims on resources through the 'filter of Islamic values' so that many claims would be eliminated before being expressed in the market place. Resources would not be allowed to be diverted to the production of luxuries until the production of necessities was ensured in sufficient quantities.¹ There are several ethical principles in Islam which are directly or indirectly related to the trade and business activities. The main among them are as under:

Trust is the fundamental ethical principle of Islam. The essence of the trust is the sense of accountability which implies the sense of having to appear before Allah and to account for one's actions. So it becomes the basic principle of trade and business transactions in Islam. Broadly speaking trade and business dealing comprises of owner/seller and customer/buyer relations. The first and foremost action takes place between the two is of trust. Whenever customer is finding trust in the seller or any enterprise, he is approaching to it.

¹ Gillian Rice, Islamic Ethics and the Implications for Business. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 18 (1999), p. 346.

Almighty says in the *Qur'an*:

*"And if one of you deposits a thing on trust with another, Let the trustee (Faithfully) discharge His trust, and let him fear his Lord."*¹

Therefore, all actions and decisions making in the trade and business activities that is based on the nature of trust is necessary to ensure that the business is fair to everyone whether they are a buyer or seller. Fraud and oppression would be avoided if all parties are trustworthy and true. By the nature of this trust, traders gain appropriate and the buyer will also get the goods or services corresponding to the price paid.

Another ethical standard of business dealings in Islam is truthfulness. Truth is the principle which is guiding each and every act of humans. Business is also based on the principle of truth. Almighty says in the *Qur'an*:

*"O ye who believe! Fear Allah, and (always) say a word directed to the Right"*²

Justice is another principle included in the ethical philosophy of Islam. Justice generally means putting things in the right place. Islam is the just religion and promotes justice in each and every aspect of life. The justice in business dealings are emphasized in *Qur'an* at several places.

"O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: But let there be amongst you Traffic and trade by mutual good-will: Nor

¹ *Al Qur'an, Surah al Baqara:283.*

² *Al Qur'an, Surah al Ahzāb:70.*

kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah hath been to you Most Merciful”¹

Almighty says in the *Qur’an*:

“Woe to those that deal in fraud. Those who, when they have to receive by measure from men, exact full measure, But when they have to give by measure or weight to men, give less than due. Do they not think that they will be called to account?”²

“Give just measure, and cause no loss (to others by fraud). And weigh with scales true and upright”³

“Give full measure when ye measure, and weigh with a balance that is straight: that is the most fitting and the most advantageous in the final determination”⁴

Such principles are the direct guidance from Almighty Allah regarding the implication of justice in trade and business activities. The reward and punishment which is promised in the *Qur’an* for good and treacherous trader respectively makes the Muslim traders and businessmen ethically good.

There are some general principles of Islamic ethics which plays an important role in trade and business activities.

¹ *Al Qur’an, Surah al Nisā’:29.*

² *Al Qur’an, Surah al Mutaffifīn:1-4.*

³ *Al Qur’an, Surah al Shu‘arā:1891-182.*

⁴ *Al Qur’an, Surah al Banī Isra‘īl:35.*

1. The product or service must be lawful. The *Qur'an* categorically prohibited the unlawful trade and permits the lawful one. As Almighty says in the *Qur'an*:

*"O ye who believe! Eat not up your property among yourselves in vanities: But let there be amongst you Traffic and trade by mutual good-will: Nor kill (or destroy) yourselves: for verily Allah hath been to you Most Merciful"*¹

*"They ask thee concerning wine and gambling. Say: "In them is great sin, and some profit, for men; but the sin is greater than the profit." They ask thee how much they are to spend; Say: "What is beyond your needs." Thus doth Allah make clear to you His Signs: In order that ye may consider"*²

2. The method of production should not cause an undue and excessive harm to Allah-given resources and bounties for the benefit of all mankind.

*"Do no mischief on the earth, after it hath been set in order, but call on Him with fear and longing (in your hearts): for the Mercy of Allah is (always) near to those who do good"*³

3. Productive resources are not to be left idle in the name of private ownership, especially resources that are crucial to the lives of people.

4. The production process should not cause harm to others e.g. building a noisy factory in the middle of a residential area.

¹ *Al Qur'an, Surah al Nisā':29-30.*

² *Al Qur'an, Surah al Baqara:219.*

³ *Al Qur'an, Surah al A'rāf:56.*

5. As it is forbidden to consume the unlawful, it is also forbidden to restrict the consumption of the lawful without a valid reason.

“Say: Who hath forbidden the beautiful (gifts) of Allah, which He hath produced for His servants, and the things, clean and pure, (which He hath provided) for sustenance? Say: They are, in the life of this world, for those who believe, (and) purely for them on the Day of Judgment. Thus do We explain the signs in detail for those who understand”¹

6. Both consumption and spending are qualified, however, by the ethical rule of moderation and avoidance of extravagance.

“O Children of Adam! wear your beautiful apparel at every time and place of prayer: eat and drink: But waste not by excess, for Allah loveth not the wasters”²

7. Refraining from hiding any known defect in an item offered for sale. Refraining from the exploitation of the ignorance or desperate needs of others by giving them less than a fair price or wages.

“To the Madyan people We sent Shu‘ayb, one of their own brethren: he said: “O my people! worship Allah. Ye have no other god but Him. Now hath come unto you a clear (Sign) from your Lord! Give just measure and weight, nor withhold from the people the things that are their due; and do no mischief on the earth after it has been set in order: that will be best for you, if ye have Faith”³

¹ *Al Qur’an, Surah al A‘rāf:32.*

² *Al Qur’an, Surah al A‘rāf:31.*

³ *Al Qur’an, Surah al A‘rāf:85.*

2. TEACHING

Presently, the teaching profession is plagued with weaknesses that hinder the development of ethical standards among students as well as teachers. Consequently, the outcome of teaching learning process is not fruitful to the learners and society at large. The primary need in this situation is the development of ethical standards among the teaching professionals. Islam is the religion which guides in each and every aspect of life to be run with ethical standards. Teaching is also such profession where Islam guides very well. According to Al-Attas, the purpose of Islamic education is not to fill the pupil's head with facts but to prepare them for a life of purity and sincerity. This total commitment to character-building based on the ideals of Islamic ethics is the highest goal of Islamic education. Thus, in order to achieve the ultimate goal of Islamic education there must be a paradigm shift in the teaching methods and approaches towards teaching. Teachers' efforts should focus on moral development and character building, which require different teaching techniques, methods and approaches.¹ In Islam, there are several ethical standards which must be imbibed into the spirit of the teacher. The ethical philosophy of Islam is having general interpretations and applications. However, they may be implied to each and every possible aspect of human civilization. Teaching is also included in this process. The first and foremost ethical principle is to develop

¹ Sayyid Muhammad Naqib Al-Attas, *The Concept of Education In Islam*. (Kualalumpur: Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC), 1979, p. 104.

the sense of responsibility. The teacher is only the working group which can imbibe this principle among the students for further implications in their lives.

The educator recognizes the magnitude of the responsibility inherent in the teaching learning process. The desire for the respect and confidence of one's colleagues, students, parents, and the members of the community provides the incentive to attain and maintain the highest possible degree of ethical conduct.¹ This ethical principle is backing every moral law which extends the love and fear of God, the sense of accountability on the Day of Judgement and the promise of eternal bliss and reward in the Hereafter. The sense of responsibility among the working groups of society especially teachers gets inspiration from the noble *Hadīth* of Prophet (S.A.W). He said:

*"Each of you is a shepherd and each of you shall be asked concerning his flock; a leader is a shepherd of his people, and he shall be asked concerning his flock; and a man is a shepherd of the people of his house, and he shall be asked concerning his flock; and a woman is a shepherd of the house of her husband and over their children, and she shall be asked concerning them"*²

The following are the general implications of ethical principles which are emphasized in the *Qur'an* at several places. Allah (SWT) had established a reference for the explanation of many events

¹ Kenneth A Strike and Jonas F Soltis. *The Ethics of Teaching*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2009), p. viii.

² Muhammad bin Ismail Al-Bukhārī. *Ṣaḥīḥ al-Bukhārī*. (Beirut: Dār Ibn Kathīr, 1987), vol. 5. *Hadīth* No. 4892.

including moral principles for Muslims as can be seen in the Glorious *Qur'an*, which are having their implications in the teaching learning process as well. Some of these values are as under:

Honesty and Justice

Work is *amānah* (trust). The trust which no other creation is able to accept for fear of not being able to discharge it properly. The concept of trust covers all definitions of worship including one's working life. In one's work, one must possess a feeling of accountability for his work, because all these deeds will be reckoned in front of Allah in the Hereafter.¹

*"O ye who believe! stand out firmly for Allah, as witnesses to fair dealing, and let not the hatred of others to you make you swerve to wrong and depart from justice. Be just: that is next to piety: and fear Allah. For Allah is well-acquainted with all that ye do"*²

*"Allah commands justice, the doing of good, and liberality to kith and kin, and He forbids all shameful deeds, and injustice and rebellion: He instructs you, that ye may receive admonition"*³

*"We sent aforetime our messengers with Clear Signs and sent down with them the Book and the Balance (of Right and Wrong), that men may stand forth in justice..."*⁴

¹ Dr. Shukri Ahamd and Dr Musa Yusuf Owoyemi. *The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition.* op. cit., p. 123.

² *Al Qur'an, Surah al Mā'idah:8.*

³ *Al Qur'an, Surah al Naht:90.*

⁴ *Al Qur'an, Surah al Hadīd:25.*

Justice in Islam is considered as the unity of spiritual and material values. The Islamic values should not be isolated in the realm of idealism far from the practical worldly life. Rather, these values will guide a Muslim's life in its entirety both spiritually and materially, religiously and worldly.¹

Modesty

In the teaching learning process modesty plays an important role for the teacher. A teacher has to develop the sense as he/she is teaching his/her own children so that he may behave modestly with them. Modesty is said to be the half *īmān* (belief) in Islam. This ethical principle is mentioned at different places in *Qur'an*. As Allah says in the *Qur'an*:

*"Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do"*²

These values can guarantee a good quality of life. The ethical standards get developed by the teachers are transmitted automatically among the students and fellow mates in particular and the society in general which could develop prosperous, healthy and secure society. Moreover, the below mentioned norms should be inculcated among the teachers:

¹ Dr. Shukri Ahamd and Dr Musa Yusuf Owoyemi. *The Concept of Islamic Work Ethic: An Analysis of Some Salient Points in the Prophetic Tradition*. op. cit., p. 123.

² *Al Qur'an, Surah al Nūr:30*.

1. Soul must be merely governed under control and administration of intellect to keep it safe from passions, anger and whim of the soul. 2. Recognizing good and bad ethics in the others' personality and comparing them with those of themselves, and trying to establish good ethics in their soul. 3. Good prudence is another prerequisite in teaching profession; in other words, good prudence is essential for them, than for any other people, to perform good prudence with respect to their important position in the society. 4. Teachers need to establish a deep relationship with the learners and reach a comprehensive recognition of them in order to educate and purify them. Any constructive effort towards educating the learners is merely possible through a comprehensive knowledge about their points of weakness and strength. 5. Teachers' behaviour must be based upon rules of religion and generosity. Religion is expected to dominate all structures of educational system and all teachers or trainers are required to behave towards learners or trainees according to religion and generosity in educating and purifying them.¹

CONCLUSION

Ethical development is among the main themes of Islamic civilisational history. The ethical philosophy of Islam has universal applications among its followers. Moreover, it remained the matter of concentration to other faiths as well. As Islam has laid more emphasis on the ethical progress of the human beings, the purpose

¹ Kamal Nosrati Heshi. et al, Teachers' Professional Ethics from Avicenna's Perspective. *Educational Research and Reviews*. 10(17) September 2015, p. 2468.

of which is to maintain the unity among its followers in letter and spirit. God consciousness gets developed by the application of such ethical standards in one's life. The sense of responsibility, gentleness, honesty, truthfulness, justice, after all the development of good manners is the root concern of Islamic ethical philosophy. The development of such qualities among the working groups of society is the indemnity for the prosperous and humane society. As the big portion of population in the modern times is dealing with the trade and business activities, the incorporation of ethical standards are necessary as well in order to make the big portion ethically sound. Another working group which is more influential as per the enhancement of ethical principles among the younger generation of the society is the teacher. The teacher should be ethically sound because his/her interaction with the students directly influences their behaviour which will put the long lasting effects among the future generations of the civilization.

Thus, on the basis of moral characteristics, Islam builds a higher system of morality in society by virtue of which mankind can realize its greatest potential. Islam purifies the soul from self-seeking egotism, tyranny, wantonness and indiscipline. Islam generates kindness, generosity, mercy, sympathy, peace, disinterested goodwill, scrupulous fairness, and truthfulness towards all creations in all situations. It nourishes noble qualities from which only good may be expected in this life as well as in Hereafter.

“Entrepreneurship and Business Ethics: An Islamic Perspective”

DR. GULSHAN AKHTAR¹

Abstract:

Islam places the highest emphasis on ethical values in all aspects of human life. This is a religion that provides not only guidelines for spiritual matters but also worldly matters, including the conduct of business. This article shows that Islam is a practical religion with entrepreneurship practice characterized by taqwa (faith), tawakkul (dependence on Allah), efficient and proper use of resources, the use of permissible sources of production and the production of permissible products, sincerity in efforts, trustworthiness in all dealings, concern for societal welfare and the environment, fairness and transparency in all activities, pursuance of knowledge, taking pride in work/ labour, and consultation with stakeholders before decision making. Islamic entrepreneurship and business is an area of business management study due to the increasingly dynamic international business environment in which culture and religion are important to developing business relationships. This article aims to analyse the characteristic of entrepreneurs from al-Quran and al-Sunnah.

Key words: *Ethics, Islamic entrepreneurship, Qur'aan, Sunnah, Business ethics*

JEL Classification: M53, Z12

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Introduction:

The word 'entrepreneur' is derived from the French word "Entreprendre" meaning 'to undertake'. The main features of entrepreneurship are identified as risk taking and action orientation which is in tandem with the notion of entrepreneur who is the most elusive of the cast of characters that constitutes the subject of economic analysis (Baumol, 1993). A country is poor not because of the lack of resources. Rather, it lacks sufficient number of good entrepreneurs. Thus, entrepreneurs are called forth factor of production, engine of economic growth and catalytic agent of change. And entrepreneurship is both cause and consequence of economic growth.

Ethics means Science of Morals. Ethics in general can be defined as the system of rules governing the ordering of values .it also refers to the rightness or wrongness of the decisions and behaviours of individuals and the organizations of which they are a part (Hellriegel & Woodman, 2001). Business ethics sometimes referred to the moral principles and standards that guide behaviour in the world of business. From the Islamic context, the dimensions of ethics are numerous, far-reaching and comprehensive. Ethical system in Islam derived from the teachings of the Holy Quran and from the Sunnah (i.e. recorded saying and behaviour of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him). Islamic ethics deals with all aspects of human life. It deals with relationships between man and Allah, man and his fellowmen man and other elements and creatures of the universe, and man and his innermost self (Hanafi & Sallam, 1997; Supriyatna, 2012). Furthermore, the goals of Islam

itself are not primarily materialistic. They are based on Islamic concepts of human well-being and good life that emphasize brotherhood and socioeconomic justice and require a balanced satisfaction of both material and spiritual needs of all humans.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To analyse on the concept of entrepreneurship and business ethics from Islamic perspective.

Methodology:

This study is a desk-based and library-oriented research. I studied the Holy Quran, Sunnah, available published literatures, journals and magazines.

Literature Review:

Beekun and Badawi (2005) examined Islamic business ethics from a normative perspective. The important finding claimed that business ethics cannot be separated from ethics in the other aspects of a Muslim's daily life. The Islamic ethical system is balanced, fair, just and benevolent, and seeks to respect the rights of both primary and derivative stakeholders without allowing for exploitation, nepotism and other human ills.

According to Abeng (1997), all business practices involve explicit or implicit harm and injustice to the contracting parties or to the public at large are disapproved by Islam. Further, in order to build a good business, any businesses must have a good Muslim business leader that will drive the business into a lawful business as intended by

Sunnah. He also noted that there are six components needed to be understood by Muslim business leaders. Among others, are fulfilled of promises, exactness in weights and measures, truthfulness, efficiency, selection of merit and investigation and verification.

Wilson (2006) acknowledged the uniqueness of the Islamic code of business ethics and the positive contributions that “trust” can render to the economic activity in the form of cost effectiveness and organizational competence.

Rameli et. al. (2014) contended that several indicative characteristics (such as Sunnah entrepreneurs, ḥalāl entrepreneurs, bai’ entrepreneurs, khiyār entrepreneurs etc) can be examined based on the generic business functions (such as production, marketing, finance and human resources).

Fulop et. al (2000) and Abor & Quartey (2010) indicated that there were favourable reaction regarding ethical codes, the ethical managers and committees, and the ethical audit. In the implementation of ethical practices, communication problems within the company, expected law changes, complaints of customers and changes in management and ownership played an important role.

Ideology of Islamic entrepreneurship and business ethics:

Islam as a complete and comprehensive way of life highly encourages the development of agriculture, industry, trade and commerce, because; resources are mobilized and increased for fulfilling the needs of people through business (Ariff, 1991). Allah the almighty says “Business is lawful for you” (Quran, 2:275).

Islamic entrepreneurship is the process of starting an enterprise for producing goods or rendering services which are halal for making reasonable profits. It does not involve in those activities which fail to ensure consumer rights, social responsibilities, ethical values and healthy business practices. Islamic entrepreneur is a person who starts and manages business enterprise following the guidelines of Islam. He carefully avoids undesirable hoarding, unkind treatment to employee and unfair dealing with customers. Profit making is not the only goal of Islamic entrepreneurship. Rather, earning of divine satisfaction, social welfare and protection of national interest are the motivating forces of such entrepreneurship (Chowdhury, 2008). Islamic entrepreneur and business has some distinct traits which are described below:

Unity (Touheed): Islam is the law of nature and its business philosophy exists only when the relationship between human being with Allah becomes stronger. In fact this is the religion that links success to the actions if human being makes it with the accordance of Allah will and surrendered in front of him. There should be Unity of ideas and actions in a person's existence and consciousness (Asad, 1993). We believe that we are answerable to Allah and our success depends on our performance in this life on the earth, this adds a new dimension to the valuation of things and deeds in this life.

Allah says that "all of you hold firmly to the rope of Allah i.e. the Qur'an and don't create divisions among yourself" (Qur'an, 03:103).

Justice (Adl): Islamic Ethical Entrepreneur must perform Justice. This means that Entrepreneur must be temperate in all things i.e. the benefit side, equal treatment or fair to all customers, taking into consideration fair and unbiased and gives the right to the right (Nor, 2012). In other words, justice means putting things in the right place.

Allah says, which means: "Allah commands you to do justice and kindness" (Qur'an, 16: 90).

Trust (Amanah): Trust is a key to positive interpersonal relationships in various settings because it is central to how we interact with others. It is another fundamental ethical principle of Islam. The essence of the trust is the sense of accountability which implies the sense of having to appear before Allah and to account for one's actions (Manan, 2012). Indeed, trust is greatly emphasized in the Qur'an and Hadith.

"Allah command you to render back your Trusts to those to whom they are due; and when ye judge between man and man, that ye judge with justice: verily how excellent is the teaching which He gives you! for Allah is He Who hearth and see the all things." (Qur'an, 4: 58).

Sincerity (Ikhlas): Sincerity is generally understood to be truth in word and act. Sincerity also can be defined as the quality or state of being sincere; honesty of mind or intention; freedom from simulation, hypocrisy, disguise, or false pretence; sincereness. Islam has emphasized this code of ethics as we see in the Quran and Hadith.

Allah says: "So woe to the worshippers, who are neglectful of their Prayers, Those who (want but) to be seen (of men), But refuse (to supply) (even) neighbourly needs." (Qur'an, 107: 4- 7).

Truthfulness (Sidqun): Truthfulness is one of the basic ethical values of Islam. Islam is, in a way, the other name of truth. Allah speaks truth, and commands all Muslims to be straight forward and truthful in their dealings and utterances. Islam strongly condemns falsehood and deceit in any form (Ahmad, 1991). Truthfulness is repeatedly mentioned in both the Qur'an and Hadith

Allah says: "Oh believers! Fear Allah, and say the right thing." (Qur'an, 33:70).

Benevolence (Ihsan): As far as kindness is concerned, benevolence to others is defined as an act which benefits persons other than those from whom the act precedes without any obligation. It also means fineness, proficiency or magnanimity in dealing with others. Along with the concept of justice, the concept of benevolence is also frequently repeated in the Qur'an and the Hadith.

Allah says: "Spend your wealth for the cause of God, and be not cast by your own hands to ruin; and do good. Lo! God loves those who behave with benevolence." (Qur'an, 2:195).

Fear of Allah (Taqwa): Successful entrepreneurs and business men must have fear of Allah.

Allah says: "O you who have believed, shall I guide you to a transaction that will save you from a painful punishment? [It is that]

you believe in Allah and His Messenger and strive in the cause of Allah with your wealth and your lives. That is best for you, if you should know." (Qur'ān, 61: 10-11).

Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said, "An adulterer will not commit adultery when he is fearful of Allah, and a thief will not steal when he is fearful of Allah."

Dependence on Allah (Tawakkul): Where there is no risk there is no entrepreneurship; because; future is uncertain and no one can certainly say what will exactly happen. As a result, risk may be derived at any time from economic, political and natural environment. Allah says, "When you have made a decision put your trust in Allah, certainly, Allah loves those who put their trust (in Him)" (Quran, 3:159). In Islam, the notion rizq (provision) ultimately is granted by Allah.

The entrepreneur in Islam must have tawakkul. In that sense, risk is 'out-stored' and risk taking is made easier. In Muslim nations people tend to be fatalists. Fatalism is characterized by the phrase "Inshā Allah", which means "If Allah wills it". This means that Muslims will do their best, but the external outcome may not be under their control. However, dependence on Allah without any endeavour is not supported by Islam. Islamic Entrepreneurship is a position of divine trust. A Entrepreneur must enjoy this trust with the highest degree of responsibility.

Permissible in Islam (Ḥalāl): The concept of "Ḥalāl"; discourages Islamic entrepreneurs from selling alcohol and pork which are

considered to be “Ḥarām” (not accepted in Islam) and discourages entrepreneurs from leading any prohibited endeavour. Islamic entrepreneurs must use ḥalāl means to produce ḥalāl products.

As commanded by Allah: “Eat of the things which Allah provided for you, lawful and good, but fear Allah, in whom we believe.” (Qur’ān, 5:88).

Prevent Wastage of Resources and Environment: Islam encourages people to enjoy resources without waste. Allah says: “O children of Adam! Eat and drink but waste not in excess, for Allah does not love the wasters.” (Qur’ān, 7:31). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) requested his followers not to waste water even when doing ablution for prayer next to a flowing river and do not make cause to pollute the river. He encouraged the people to remove harmful objects from the path of people and considered that to be the basic manifestation of belief. Therefore, entrepreneurs should be careful about any wastage in their organization under their leadership and also protect the environment

Practicing High Moral Values with Sincerity (khuluṣī yā t): The Qur’ān and Sunnah of Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) explicitly recommend moral entrepreneurial activity, for instance, the elimination of ribā: “But Allah permitted trade (bai’) and forbidden usury (ribā).” (Qur’ān, 2:275). An Islamic entrepreneur must be sincere and fair enough to attain the organizational objectives.

Concern for Social Welfare (zakāt): The social welfare system in Islam in which everyone is obligated to give a percentage of their excess goods to the community, is just one example of such mercy between community members. Many texts in Qur'ān and ḥa dīth encourage Muslims to offer charity in different forms.

Allah says: "O! who have believed, bow and prostrate and worship your Lord and do good that you may succeed." (Qur'ān, 22:77). Allah says: "You will never attain the good [reward] until you spend from that which you love. And whatever you spend, indeed, Allah knows it." (Qur'ān, 3:92).

Accountability: Islam teaches responsibility as a vital component of management. An entrepreneur bears financial risk and, therefore, is responsible for all the activities to run his or her business and succeed. The managers are accountable for their duties and responsibilities to the Board of Directors. The Board in turn is answerable to the beneficiaries/ stakeholders. As per the Islamic teachings, each and every human being will be made responsible for good or bad deeds and will be rewarded or punished accordingly.

Allah says: "...whosoever does good equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it. And whosoever does evil equal to the weight of an atom (or a small ant) shall see it." (Qur'ān, 99:7-8).

Consultation before a Decision (Al-ShuRa): Under the principle of consultation managerial leaders in Islam must consult with their people before making any decision. They must consult with their subordinates in formulating any strategy or policy. This is similar to

the modern day participative management. Allah directed his Prophet (peace be upon him) to consult with his companions. For Ibn Al-'Arabī (1957), al-shūrā in Islam is the discussion of an issue so as to allow each member to participate and consult each other and come up with a decision on the general ideas on the issue.

Allah says: "And those who have answered the call of their Lord and establish prayer and who conduct their affairs by consultation and spend out what we bestow on them for sustenance." (Qur'ān, 42:38).

Dignity of Labour: Islamic entrepreneurs must recognize the dignity of labour. Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said: "Pay the wages to the labourer before his sweat dries up." (Al-Tirmidhī, 1983). Islam pointed out that earning by the toil of labour is the best. Hence, practicing managers should duly recognize the dignity of all categories of efforts especially physical labour of the workers and employees.

Group Spirit (jama'ah): Islamic entrepreneurs must try to achieve organizational goals and objectives with teams rather than through individual endeavours. Extreme unity should be practiced by the executives, staff and workers for motivating and energizing team work. Islam preaches esprit de corps (i.e., team efforts). Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) said "The Hand of Allah is with the (team)." (Al-Tirmidhī, 1983).

Morality: An entrepreneur can increase his reputation among all stakeholders with the help of his personal moral branding. A man having high-moral reputation can easily develop good image and thereby can develop his/her enterprise. In spite of having a lot of knowledge a person cannot be accepted by others unless and until his morality is good. The Messenger of Allah said: "Indeed I have been sent to complete the perfecting of good character" (Sunan An-Nasai). Almighty Allah declares about the character of His Prophet (peace be upon him): "And you are on an exalted standard of character" (Quran, 68:4). The Prophet (peace be upon him) also says "The best among you are those whose character is good" (Shhih-al-Bukhari). The wise says, "When money is lost nothing is lost, when health is lost something is lost, but when character is lost everything is lost."

Ethical Issues in Current Business Practices and Islamic Business:

Much more studies are conducted to draw the relationship between religion and ethical issues in business. Rice (1999) highlights the moral and ethical guidelines that must be necessary for the managers to trade internationally specially in Muslim countries. Some of the transactions are contempt in the light of Islam which may harm the Islamic ethical structure and ethical under planning are required to overcome the issues (Weir, 2004). Usury is considered a big sin in Islam and strictly forbidden (Lewison, 1999). Bribery, cheating and fraud, Discrimination is mostly used unethical practices used in the current businesses (Quddus, Bailey III, & White, 2009). Lets us examine one by one in the light of Islam.

Bribery: Bribery “is defined by Black’s Law Dictionary as the offering, giving, receiving, or soliciting of any item of value to influence the actions of an official or other person in discharge of a public or legal duty” (Quddus, Bailey III, & White, 2009). It will create a variance of interest for those who involves actively in such a practices (Ferrell et al, 2005). The practice is strictly forbidden and discouraged in Islam as Allah says in The Qur’an (Qur’an 4:29) “O you who believe! Don’t use other’s wealth illegally except through trading by mutual consent”. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) discourse on it and cursed the one who bribes and the one who takes bribe (Abu-Dawud, Book 24, and Hadith 3573).

Usury: Practice of usury is forbidden in Islam is because this practice causes oppression and inequality on society and the national economy itself. This will cause the rich will get richer and the poor will be poorer. The prohibition against the practice of usury is mentioned in the Qur'an as follows: Meaning: "Those who eat (take) usury will not stand except as stands one whom the Evil One by swaying because of (his) touch it. Allah has permitted trade (merchandise) and prohibits usury. A Muslim entrepreneur must free themselves from practicing usury either in system financing and investment.

Fraud and Cheating: These are the activities that are in some ruin the customers trust in the market place. Unfortunately these practices are promoted unfairly by mean of profit maximization.

Ferrell et al. (2005) defines fraud as “any purposeful communication that deceives, manipulates, or conceals facts in order to create a false impression”.

Allah highlights Fraud in The Qur’an (Qur’an 26:181-183) “Give full measures, and don’t be one of those who less (in weight and measure). And weight with a true and straight balance. Don’t reduce the credit of the people and don’t go around spreading mischief in the land”. These verses of The Qur’an reject the concept of fraud and focus on much more care are to be taken while involve in selling activity. The instrument used for the weighting purpose must be true and balance and Allah warned us to avoid the cheating practice in marketing. As ethics is a broad practice and touch around every field of the business. The issues create simply when traders and businessmen failed to be remain in ethical circumstances.

Discrimination: The discrimination on the bases of race, gender, ethnicity, colour, family etc does not permissible in Islam and Islam teaches us a lesson of equality and brotherhood. It is a common ethical issue while trading in a different cultures and societies of different countries (Ferrell et al, 2005). However it is strongly rejected by Islam on the bases of race or gender. Rejecting the concept of discrimination Allah says in The Qur’an (49:13) “O mankind! We have created you from a male and female (in this respect all people are equal). (The difference between the people is that) We made you into nations and (each nation has) tribes for your

identification. Indeed, the most honourable from you with Allah is that (believer) who is the most pious among you”.

In Islam the persons will be judged on the basis of their actions, not on their race, gender etc and same the reward system that Allah prepare are only on the basis of good performance, not on the race or gender. The same concept also promoted by the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) says “No Arab has superiority over any non-Arab and no non- Arab has any superiority over an Arab; no dark person has behaviour in hiring, buying and selling. Superiority over a white person and no white person has any superiority over a dark person. The criterion of honour in the sight of God is righteousness and honest living” (Rice, 1999). The reduction of discrimination in the business world reduces the employee’s turnover rate, reduce hiring cost, improve productivity and develop overall goodwill (Ferrell et al, 2005).

Conclusion: In the era of globalization, different offenses in business ethics committed by Islamic entrepreneurs such as bribery, breach of trust, to practice usury and more. In line with the challenges of globalization, businesses are required to provide a strong commitment to ethics as it ensures credibility, image and reputation in the eyes of the community, customers and other stakeholders. Therefore, the values and ethics of Islam played an important role in entrepreneurial activities.

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) acted as a role model for Muslims and showed them how to apply these basic concepts in

real life. Entrepreneurship falls under the economic systems as mandated by Islam. Entrepreneurship from Islamic Perspective is different from economical, social or cultural entrepreneurship, as it encompasses specific practices, scriptural sources as well as a meta-physical objective and relationship to Allah. An entrepreneur practicing Islam in his or her enterprise should demonstrate specific characteristics in all business functions, vis-à-vis production, marketing, finance and human resource. Business is not only a source of a living even be one of the branches of faith that can draw closer to Allah. Making the business as a form of worship will encourage Islamic entrepreneurs who are faithful to God and be successful in the businesses.

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Social ethics in Qur'an: An overview

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Abstract:

Islam is a revealed religion and its teachings are universal and permanent. These guide mankind in all times. Islam contains numerous principles that organize relationships among members of the society. One of the most important principles is social ethics with all important values that it involves like peace, love, brotherhood and prosperity. It is not only practiced for Muslims, but regarded as an ideal by every human being regardless to his/her beliefs or religion. Social ethics includes justice as a concept that refers to equality in giving rights and in abiding by obligations without discriminations for any reasons, either for religion, race, color, etc. Therefore, it is necessary for every individual to realize the concept of an overview of social ethics in Qur'an. In this paper I want to highlight the concept of social ethics in Qur'an, its nature, fundamental elements and discussion will be done how it can help us to render equilibrium and justice in the society.

Keywords: social ethics, human equality, Mutual responsibility, peace, brotherhood and freedom of conscience.

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Introduction: Social responsibility is an ethical framework and suggests that an entity, be it an organization or individual, has an obligation to act for the benefit of society at large. Social responsibility is a duty every individual has to perform so as to maintain a balance between the economy and the ecosystems. Ethics is a philosophical discipline relating to concepts of good and bad in our moral life in community. Islamic ethics defined as "good character," historically took shape gradually from the 7th century and was finally established by the 11th century. It was eventually shaped as a successful amalgamation of the Qur'anic teachings, the teachings of the Sunnah of Muhammad, the precedents of Islamic jurists (Sharia and Fiqh), the pre-Islamic Arabian tradition, and non-Arabic elements (including Persian and Greek ideas) embedded in or integrated with a generally Islamic structure. Although Muhammad's preaching produced a radical change in moral values based on the sanctions of the new religion and the present religion and fear of Allah and of the Last Judgment. The foundational source in the gradual codification of Islamic ethics was the Muslim understanding and interpretations of the Qur'an and practices of Muhammad. Its meaning has always been in context of active submission to Allah performed by the community in unison. The motive force in Islamic ethics is the notion that every human being is called to "command the good and forbid the evil" in all spheres of life. Muslims understand the role of Muhammad as attempting to facilitate this submission. Another key factor in the field of Islamic ethics is the belief that mankind has been granted the faculty to discern Allah's will and to abide by it. This faculty

most crucially involves reflecting over the meaning of existence. Therefore, regardless of their environment, humans are believed to have a moral responsibility to submit to Allah's will and to follow Islam.

Body of Paper: Every human being is connected with Allah spiritually. However, in this material world, we also get ourselves connected with other entities, such as parents, family, community, society, country, etc. As time goes by, new connections are added at every new stage in life. The ethics of connectivity with others has deep spiritual roots in religion. Its understanding makes our lives happy and more comfortable. We live, move and have our being among these relationships and sometimes our existence depends partially or fully on them. Our day-to-day condition – happy or otherwise – is also subjected to the interaction with these relationships. Every entity, with which we are connected, entails certain rights and responsibilities. We are to fulfill these to maintain a kind of cordiality in relationships. The teaching of Islam encompasses the whole life; it guides us first to fortify our spiritual bond with Allah. This is fundamental and the core of Islam's overall message. Every individual is supposed to strengthen the spiritual link with Him by continuous remembrance of His existence. One has to keep one's mind and thoughts towards Allah to earn His blessings. Similarly, Islam encourages us to maintain happy relationships with other fellow beings. It urges civility, humility, tolerance and straight dealing with our fellow beings. These values subordinate the self and emphasize the others and are essential for cordial and peaceful coexistence in society. Islam is a religion of

peace which can only be realized when an individual has happy relations with others. The Holy Prophet (PBUH) likens Muslim brotherhood to a building composed of bricks. Every brick is joined and connected with other bricks, thereby fortifying the building. The Prophet started his mission of preaching Islam by inviting his relatives to it first. Though his relatives did not all respond positively, his invitation indicates the weight he gave to relatives. When he established himself in Madina, he tried to conclude peace agreements with many tribes, such as those of the Jews of Madina, the Christians of Najran, and the Makkans at Hudaibiya. He dispatched emissaries to rulers of far-off lands such as Rome, Iran and Abyssinia inviting them to peace and good relations with them.

We come across a number of verses in the Quran, directing us to fulfill the obligations to those we are connected with. The Quran says: "And do not forget liberality between yourselves. Truly Allah is all-Seer of what you do" (2:237). Verse 4:36 also enjoins us to "worship Allah and join none with Him in worship, and do good to parents, kinsfolk, orphans, Al-Masakin (the poor), the neighbor who is near of kin, the neighbor who is a stranger, the companion by your side, the wayfarer (you meet), and those (slaves) whom your right hands possess. Verily, Allah does not like such as are proud and boastful."

There are numerous factors that can imbalance relations in society and Islam forestalls them. Greed for material wealth is one such impediment that causes fissures among close relatives. A greedy person usurps the other's property unjustly; therefore, Islam directs us: "And eat up not one another's property unjustly" (2:188).

Another factor that is likely to affect good relations is differences in opinion. Sometimes we have differences with people around us, but these should not be made a matter of ego and waiting for the other party to take the initiative to normalize a relationship. We must understand that coming to terms quickly after differences brings us peace and serenity. Islam allows a diversity of opinion; this existed among the Prophet's companions. Friction among close relatives is part of human nature but one needs to be watchful that these do not reach a point of no-return. Islam does not give importance to difference of ethnicity, caste, status and language, etc., as all such factors cause cracks in happy relations in society.

A balanced approach in maintaining worldly relations is the right course. Unnecessary intrusion in the affairs of others also affects relations. Nobody likes meddlesome behavior, therefore, one must be careful to not overreach. Over-engagement and unnecessary intrusion in the affairs of others are portents of a darker scenario.

Presently, we face a situation that can best be described as being stuck between the devil and the deep sea. We give importance to material wealth and social status. Our modern culture has promoted isolated living. We live behind closed doors with little interaction with neighbors', relatives and other members of society. Everyone has become individualistic, focused on self-interest alone most of the time.

It is generally observed that residents of, say, an apartment block do not care for others when they park their vehicles and block common passages. Some throw trash from their balconies and others do not

pay their monthly maintenance charges regularly. Similarly, a teacher who is supposed to build the future can be found involved in self-service. A student who will manage a future society is unaware of his responsibility. A doctor who is to assure his patient's health can be found making money alone. Thus few think of their social responsibility. This negligence can lead to fissures and unbalanced situations in society.

For a human being as a social animal it is important to feel a close connection and mutual empathy; however, this seems to be on the decline due to excessive materialism and the self-centered approach of modern urban living. In order to achieve a worthy lifestyle, we have to follow the teachings of Islam, i.e. treating well those with whom we are connected. Everyone should feel responsive to and respect the rights of others.

Qur'anic Verses shows the signs of Social ethics:

1. "The noblest of you in the sight of Allah is the best of you in conduct". (49:13).
2. "And do well to your parents. If either of them or both of them reach old age with thee, say not to them, fie; nor chide them; and speak to them a generous word. And make thyself submissively gentle to them with compassion, and say, My Lord! Have mercy on them as they brought me up when I was little". (17: 23, 24).
3. "And do not kill your children for fear of poverty; we give them sustenance and yourselves too". (17: 31).

4. "And when about the one buried alive it is asked. For what sin was she killed?" (81: 8, 9).
5. "Righteousness is this that one should believe in Allah . . . and give away wealth out of love for Him to the near of kin and the orphans and the needy and the wayfarer and the beggars and for the emancipation of the captives." (2: 17).
6. "And they (the woman) have rights similar to those (men have) over them in a just manner." (2: 228).
7. "And keep them (your wives) in good fellowship." (2: 229, 231).
8. "The believers are but brethren, so make peace between your brethren." (49: 10).
9. "Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah; and those with him are firm of heart against the disbelievers, merciful among themselves" (48: 29).
10. "And the men who speak the truth and the women who speak the truth Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a great reward" (33: 35).
11. "Woe to every slanderer, defamer" (104: 1).
12. "Let not a people deride another people nor let women deride women Neither defame one another, nor call one another by nicknames Shun much suspicion . . . And spy not, nor backbite one another" (49: 11, 12).
13. "And fulfill promise, for the promise shall be questioned about" (17: 34).

14. "And give full measure when you measure out and weigh with a true balance" (17: 35).

15. "And do not kill any one whom Allah has forbidden except for a just cause" (17: 33).

16. "And those who shun the great sins and indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive" (42: 37).

17. "And the recompense of evil is punishment like it; but whoever forgives and amends; he shall have his reward from Allah" (42: 40).

18. "And the servants of the Beneficent are they who walk on earth in humbleness; and when the ignorant address them they say, Peace" (25: 63).

19. "And go not nigh to fornication, for it is an indecency and evil is the way" (17: 32).

20. "Say to the believing men that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts."

"Say to the believing women that they cast down their looks and guard their private parts and not display their beauty except what appears thereof; and let them draw their head-coverings over their bosoms" (24 : 30, 31).

21. "And as for women advanced in years who do not hope for a marriage, it is no sin for them if they put off, their cloaks, not displaying their beauty" (24: 60).

22. "Do not enter houses other than your own houses without permission and saluting their inmates and if it is said to you, Go back, then go back" (24: 27, 28).

Conclusion:

A Muslim is expected to not only be virtuous, but to also enjoy virtue. He/she must not only be morally healthy, but must also contribute to the moral health of society as a whole. 'Social Ethics in Islam' contains information about Islamic rulings on rights of other people, etiquettes of sitting, gathering, hospitality, travelling, dressing, Hijab, being courteous with the parents, children, siblings, spouses, relatives and neighbors. On concluding the paper we can say Islamic Ethics not only provide the man with knowledge to distinguish well from bad, justice from injustice or courage from cowardice theoretically but also acquaints him with practical knowledge and to him an executer of good morals and an abstainer from bad ones. This ethical system is not based on worldly customs and wages but derived from the two main sources of Islam Viz. Qur'an (Devine Revelation) and Sunnah, therefore making it universal, perfect and above all valid for all the times. Ethical Teachings in the Qur'an:-

1. Worship only Allah
2. Be Kind, humble and honorable to one's parents
3. Be neither miserly nor wasteful in one's expenditure
4. Do not engage in mercy killings for fear of starvation
5. Do not commit adultery
6. Do not kill unjustly
7. Care for orphaned children
8. Fulfill promises

9. Be honest and fair in one's interactions
10. Do not walk on earth arrogantly. Etc.

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Teachers' Ethical Duties in Distance Educational Setting Based on Islam

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Abstract

Nowadays, with the increasing use of new communication technologies, distance education is a new field where millions of people are experiencing online courses and educational programs. The importance of the role of teachers in education causes some ethical challenges in cyberspace. These challenges and the differences between the ethical issues in general educational settings and distance educational settings indicate the significance of the studies on "Ethical Practices and Implications in Distance Teachings". The objective of this study is to present the view point of Islam towards the application of ethical practices in distance education setting. Based on the findings of this study, it is more important to pay attention on the ethical issues such as covenant, honoring students, pupil-teacher relationships and privacy preserving, increasing student's awareness, internet ethics and self-reckoning, integration of students, simplification of instruction and

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considering students' level in distance educational settings. The present study tries to present a critical explanation about the ethical duties of teachers in distance education.

Key words: Ethics, Distance education, teaching, Quran, Islam

1. Introduction

The ethical issues can be discussed in the terms of educational programs, teaching, learning and assignments. There are three types of ethical duties for the teachers: ethical duties of teaching in general educational setting in face-to-face teaching environment; Ethical duties of teaching duties in distance educational setting; and ethical duties of teaching in both educational settings. By the growing use of technology as a tool of teaching and learning, it is very vital to discuss about ethical duties of teachers in this field scientifically and identify its borders.

Because of the importance of this issue, to date, there are many publications in the form of books, chapters and articles which tried to study ethics in distance educational settings; however, few of them focused on the Islamic teachings about ethics in teaching in a distance educational setting. The present article tries to fill in this gap by elaborating the view point of Islam and its applications about the ethical issues for teachers in distance education programs.

Based on Demiray (2008), Ethics in distance education can be studied under the various forms. He mentioned some examples which include pupil-teacher relationships, research ethics, cheating in examinations, information and Internet ethics etc. However, the

better classification of ethics in distance education can be done as the ethical issues of teacher, student, management, research, information and Internet. The present article focuses on the teacher's ethics from the point of view of Islam.

In the following parts, after explaining the definitions of ethics, distance education, the importance of learning and teaching in Islam, we divided the ethics of teachers in distance education in two parts. The first part is ethics of teaching in general which is mutual in all kinds of educational settings. The second part includes the issues which are more bolded in distance educational setting. In this article, we will summarize the first part briefly and pay more attention on the second group of issues.

2. The meaning of ethics

The term AKHLAQ is usually used in Islamic texts with the meaning of ethics. This term is the plural form of KHULUQ. In Qur'anic verses there are just two times where God used the word "KHULUQ". In the verse 4 of surah Qalam, the exalted Lord and Allah says to his prophet (s.a.w.a.):

وَإِنَّكَ لَعَلَىٰ خُلُقٍ عَظِيمٍ ﴿٤﴾

And thou [standest] on an exalted standard of character.

And in the second time, when prophet Hud invited people of the tribe of Thamud to obey Allah and be on the right path, they said (26: 137):

ان هذا الا خلق الاولين (١٣٧)

"This is no other than a customary device of the ancients,

Accordingly, the word khuluq in Quran is only used regarding to the Prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h) and prophet Hud (p.b.u.h). In a famous tradition, the prophet of Islam (p.b.u.h) in a tradition mention one of the important goals of him is perfecting good characters.¹ there is a tradition from Prophet (s.a.w.a.):

إِنَّمَا بُعِثْتُ لِأَتَمِّمَ مَا كَانَ مِنَ الْأَخْلَاقِ

I am sent to perfect good character and ethics.

This sentence indicates a huge responsibility of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) about the ethical values in the Islamic society. God sent prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h) to complete the mission which has been started by Prophet Adam. It was the time when the prophet of Islam had to teach humanity the most advanced ethical issues for all the times, all the societies and all the generations. Allah introduces his prophet as a complete exemplar for people. In surah Al-Ahzab says:

لَقَدْ كَانَ لَكُمْ فِي رَسُولِ اللَّهِ أُسْوَةٌ حَسَنَةٌ لِّمَن كَانَ يَرْجُو اللَّهَ وَالْيَوْمَ الْآخِرَ وَكَرِهَ اللَّهُ كَثِيرًا ﴿٢١﴾

Ye have indeed in the Messenger of Allah a beautiful pattern [of conduct] for any one whose hope is in Allah and the Final Day, and who engages much in the Praise of Allah.

On the other hand, Islam directly orders every Muslim and all the people in a society as a compulsory act to invite people to righteousness and stop them from dishonor.

¹ - In MAJMA' AL BAYAN (volume 2, p. 86),

وَلْتَكُنْ مِنْكُمْ أُمَّةٌ يَدْعُونَ إِلَى الْخَيْرِ وَالْأُزُونَ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَيَنْهَوْنَ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ وَأُولَئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ ﴿١٠٤﴾

Let there arise out of you a band of people inviting to all that is good, enjoining what is right,

and forbidding what is wrong: They are the ones to attain felicity.

(104)

Imam Muhammad Baqir (a.s.) indicated that:

الْإِذْرُ بِالْمَعْرُوفِ وَ النَّهْيِ عَنِ الْمُنْكَرِ خُلُقَانِ مِنْ خُلُقِ اللَّهِ

Calling to righteousness and forbidding dishonor are of the ethics of God.¹

Indeed, it is clear that call to righteousness and forbidding dishonor are very general and include different domain such as act of people based on Islamic jurisprudence, beliefs, cultural and social issues, ethics etc.

We can conclude that, although the holy Qur'an only mentioned the word khuluq two times, but the application of the ethical issues should be there for human beings in both Quranic verses and traditions from the Prophet and Ahlulbait (a.s.).

3. Distance education

In the general, when a learner is guided distantly by his master through the media, it is called distant education (Marty, 2015). To define the distance education, we should take a look at the old

¹ - (FORŪ' KAF Ī, VOLUME 5, PAGE 59)

version of distance education and the new version as well. Marty (2015) explained that:

“...there is an old tradition of books as a media but this is only based on contents and method, there is no teacher and no guidance. However, the modern form of distance education which was developed in the 19th century was developed with postal correspondence and industrialized in the second half of the 20th century with the increase use of radio, television and Internet. It is called open education or e-learning today...”

Nowadays, there are many open universities in which learners enjoy online courses and online assignments. In these universities' teachers and masters guide learners online and from distance, test them and after the course time, give them Bachelor, Master or even PHD degrees.

4. The importance of education in Islam

The term (*Ta'leem*), which is derived from *'ilm* (knowledge), means to teach. In Islam both teaching and learning are important. There are different traditions from Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) and the infallible imams (a.s) about the necessity of education. Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) in *nahj al fasaha* says:

“Be a scholar or a student, a listener or a lover of lore, and be not the fifth (of these four), for you'll perish.

Imam Sadigh (a.s) reports a tradion from Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) about that “learning is compolsary for all the muslims.”¹

Learning is necessary for all the Muslims in every Islamic society. Islam orders all Muslim community, including men and women, old and young, in any place, time and situation to take their time teaching or learning. The knowledge should be learnt in any place, any time, any situation and from anybody (Qara’ati, 93). which is a collection of quotations of Imam Ali (a.s), we can see that how Imam Ali (a.s) ordered people to learn wisdom wherever it is:

خُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ أَتَى كَانَتْ، فَإِنَّ الْحِكْمَةَ ضَالَّةٌ كُلِّ مَوْجَان.

Take wisdom from wherever it may be, for verily wisdom is the lost property of every believer.²

There is a very famous tradition from Prophet Muhammad (s.a) which indicates the necessity of learning in any place:

اطلبوا العلم ولو بالصين

Seek knowledge even if as far away as China.³

And we can also mention the tradition from Imam Sadiq (a.s) which says:

الإِنَّا الصَّائِقُ عَلَيْهِ السَّلَامُ : أَطْلُبُوا التَّعَلُّمَ وَلَوْ بِخَوْضِ اللَّجَجِ ...

Seek knowledge even by going to the depth of seas ...⁴

1- ALKAFĪ, VOLUME 1, PAGE 31

2 - In GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM, p. 381

3- BAḌAR AL-ANWAR, VOLUME 1, p. 177

4 - (A’LAM AL-DIN, P. 303)

As the above-mentioned traditions show, Islam not only let people to immigrate for seeking knowledge, but orders them to go wherever the knowledge is and learn it. All these traditions indicate that the knowledge should be learnt even if there is a need for moving and going to the far distances. Nowadays, by the increasing use of technology, we can learn the knowledge by the mean of internet from teachers who are far away from different universities in different countries. Islam has a clear position about distance education and firmly supports it.

Besides, Islam indicates that whoever has knowledge and wisdom can be your teacher. Muslim community is ordered by Imam Ali (a.s) to learn wisdom from who offers it:

خُذِ الْحِكْمَةَ مِمَّنْ أْتَا بِهَا، وَاَنْظُرْ إِلَىٰ مَا قَال، وَا لَا تَنْظُرْهُ إِلَىٰ مَنْ قَال.

Take wisdom from the one who brings it to you, and look at what he is said and do not look at who said it.¹

Unlike many educational institutions, Islam believes that there is no limitation in the time of learning. In Islam a person can learn from the birth to the death. Knowledge is unlimited and people have to seek it all over the life time. Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

اطْلُبُوا الْعِلْمَ مِنَ الْمَهْدِ إِلَى الْوَجْدِ

Search for lore from the birth shore to the grave door².

¹ - GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM, P. 381

² -NAHJ AL-FARQAHA, P. 106

The interesting point is that Islam predicted the new situations of learning in the future and possible questions people would face about those new situations. In one sentence, Imam Sadiq (a.s) summarized the duty of Muslims in new educational settings in any time:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرِيضَةٌ فِي كُلِّ حَالٍ

Knowledge acquisition is obligatory in any case (situation).¹

In Islam there are a few things that people are ordered to do in any situation. After remembering God in any situation, seeking knowledge is one of the few things that should be done in any situation. If we consider online distance education a new educational situation, clearly Islam supports it and encourage people to take advantages from it.

5. Islam encourages teaching

As mentioned earlier, the teaching is as valuable as learning. Islam encourages people to share they knowled and teach wisdom. In Quran, surah Ar-Rahman, verses 1 to 4 we read:

الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾

[Allah] Most Gracious! (1)

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾

It is He Who has taught the Qur'an. (2)

خَلَقَ الْإِنْسَانَ ﴿٣﴾

¹⁻ (BA □AR AL-ANWAR, VOLUME 1, P. 172)

He has created man: (3)

عَلَّمَهُ النَّبِيَانَ ﴿٤﴾

He has taught him speech [and intelligence]. (4)

based on tafsir noor (1376SH), according to these verses, God introduces himself as the first teacher of Quran and this teaching is with merciful. Accordingly teaching and being a teacher is a high position that even God calls himself a teacher. Then God continues and says that he created human and taght him speech. If we ignor the meaning of speech here, it is noteworthy that again God use the word teaching immediately after creation. The word "allam" which means teaching is repeated both befor and after creation. Another point that is mentioned in thia tafseer is that the valuable knowledge is the one which is said and taught. It is why God says "and taght him speech".

About the necessity of teaching, there is a tradition from Imam Sadiq (a.s.) in *Bihar al-Anwar*:

إِنَّ لِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ زَكَاةً، وَزَكَاةَ الْعِلْمِ أَنْ تُعَلِّمَهُ أَهْلَهُ.

'Verily upon everything is its zakat, and the zakat of knowledge is to teach it to those who are worthy of it.'¹

Zakat in islam is one of the obligatory things of Islamic faith, and if a person denies, he is considered to be among the infidels. When Imam Sadiq (a.s.) says the zakat of knowledge is to teach it, it means the importance of teaching in Islam.

¹- *Bihar al-Anwar*, p. 247, no. 77

In the "Treatise of Rights", Imam Sajad (a.s.) counted the rights of the teacher. It is very interesting that delivering the knowledge you learnt from your teacher is counted as the right of your teacher:

"...And you should know that you are his messenger in whatever he teaches you to those people in ignorance who may come to you. So, it is necessary for you to deliver his message [to impart the knowledge] to them beautifully, and not to commit a breach of trust while conveying his message, and to fulfil your duty on his behalf when you have undertaken it."

6. Men and women are equal in learning

A teacher should know that male and female students are equal in learning and he should be just in this case. As we see in Surah Al-Zumar, in Islam the criteria of being master and better is the knowledge you have and it is regardless of being male or female:

... قُلْ هَلْ أَسْتَوِي الَّذِينَ عِلْمُونَ وَالَّذِينَ لَا عِلْمُونَ إِنَّمَا تَذَكَّرُ أُولُو الْأَلْبَابِ ﴿٩﴾

Say: "Are those equal, those who know and those who do not know? It is those who are endowed with understanding that receive admonition. (9)

This verse is a clear comparison between the conscious, the scholars and the ignorant¹. This sentence makes it clear that the position of science and scholars is against the ignorant, and since this inequality is mentioned absolutely, it turns out that these two groups are not

¹- TAFSĪR NEMŪNE, volume 17, page 371

equal in the sight of God, nor are they in the conscious mind, not in the world, and not in the hereafter¹.

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) said:

طَلَبُ الْعِلْمِ فَرَضٌ عَلَى كُلِّ سَلِيمٍ وَسَلِيمَةٍ

Studying is obligatory for all men and women.

(OSŪL KAF, VOLUME 1)

This tradition shows no limitation, boundary or exception between men and women in learning. Hence, teachers should be fair and just in teaching when there are men and women students.

7. The ethical duties of teachers

Some ethical issues are mutual in all kind of educational settings include the traditional face to face classrooms and the modern online classes. In the following parts, we will have a look at how Islam guides teachers to have a more effective teaching and identify the ethical borders for them in detail. First of all, we will talk about the issues which are mutual in both educational settings. Next, the subjects which are more applicable in the distance educational settings will be presented.

1. The ethical duties of teachers in general educational settings

In this part, the issues which are mutual in both Physical classes and online classes will be argued. This includes the importance of intention, humility, forgiving students' mistakes, having patience,

¹ - *ibid*, volume 19, page 395

kindness, being just, being a good listener, the gradual teaching principle and the best methods, time and place.

1. 1.1. The importance of intention

In all of the Islamic obligations including daily prayers, fasting, Khums (paying one-fifth), Zakat, Hajj, etc., it is obligatory to have the intention of closeness to Allah. Without this intention, your act is not valid. Intention is the motive or the stimulant that encourage you to do something. In Islam the intention is even considered more important than the act itself. The first verse which reveled to Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) is:

اقْرَأْ بِاسْمِ رَبِّكَ الَّذِي خَلَقَ ﴿١﴾

read! in the name of thy Lord and Cherisher, who created (1)

The first order of Islam is reading, but immediately it is mentioned that this reading should be in the name of the creator. Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) in a tradition said:

نِيَّةُ الْمُؤْمِنِ خَيْرٌ نَّانِ عَمَلِهِ ، وَ نِيَّةُ الْفَاجِرِ شَرٌّ نَّانِ عَمَلِهِ

The intention of the believer is better than his deeds and the intention of the immoral is worse than his evil deeds.¹

In the book GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM, there is a tradition from Imam Ali (a.s):

كُلُّ حَسَنَةٍ لَا تُرَأَى بِهَا وَجْهَ اللَّهِ تَعَالَى ، فَعَلَيْهَا تُبْحُ الرِّاءُ وَ مَرَّتْهَا تُبْحُ الْجَزَاءُ .

¹-(MIZAN-AL-HIKMAH, volume 12)

Every good deed which is not done with the intention of seeking nearness to Allah, has the ugliness of ostentation in it and its fruit is an ugly requital.¹

2. 1.2. Humility

The first characteristic that is noteworthy is humility. [Quran](#) uses several [Arabic words](#) which convey the meaning of "humility." For example, "TADA'A" and "KHASHA'A" are frequently used in Quran. Humility means to abandon all selfishness and pride and try to be humbled. Surah Luqman directly says that Allah does not like the proud persons:

وَلَا تُصَعِّرْ خَدَّكَ لِلنَّاسِ وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَحًا إِنَّ اللَّهَ لَا يُحِبُّ كُلَّ مُخْتَالٍ فَخُورٍ ﴿١٨﴾

"And swell not thy cheek [for pride] at men, nor walk in insolence through the earth; for Allah loveth not any arrogant boaster. (18)

We have to see how Allah orders his prophet as the greatest teacher of human being in surah Al- Isra:

وَلَا تَمْشِ فِي الْأَرْضِ رَحًا إِنَّكَ لَنْ تَخْرِقَ الْأَرْضَ وَلَنْ تَبْلُغَ الْجِبَالَ طُولًا ﴿٣٧﴾

Nor walk on the earth with insolence: for thou canst not rend the earth asunder, nor reach the mountains in height. (37)

According to the above-mentioned verses and many other verses and traditions, a teacher who should be the best exemplar for his students, should be humble and meek.

¹ - GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM, ٣١٠.p

3. 1.3. Forgiving students' mistakes

The next characteristic of teachers is forgiving students' mistakes. It is important to have patience when students do something wrong and forgive them. In surah Ar-Rahman when God talks about teaching Quran, firstly indicates that he is merciful:

الرَّحْمَنُ ﴿١﴾

[Allah] Most Gracious! (1)

عَلَّمَ الْقُرْآنَ ﴿٢﴾

It is He Who has taught the Qur'an. (2)

Moreover, in surah Al-e-Imran God tell prophet to pardoning and asking forgiveness for people. Allah suggests prophet as follow:

فَبِمَا رَحْمَةٍ مِّنَ اللَّهِ إِنَّتَ لَهُمْ وَلَوْ كُنْتَ فَظًّا غَلِيظَ الْقَلْبِ لَانفَضُّوا مِن حَوْلِكَ فَاعْفُ عَنْهُمْ وَاسْتَغْفِرْ لَهُمْ
وَشَاوِرْهُمْ فِي الْأَمْرِ فَإِذَا عَزَمْتَ فَتَوَكَّلْ عَلَى اللَّهِ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُتَوَكِّلِينَ ﴿١٥٩﴾

It is part of the Mercy of Allah that thou dost deal gently with them Wert thou severe or harshhearted, they would have broken away from about thee: so, pass over [Their faults], and ask for [Allah's] forgiveness for them; and consult them in affairs [of moment]. Then, when thou hast Taken a decision put thy trust in Allah. For Allah loves those who put their trust [in Him]. (159)

4. 1.4. Having patience

A teacher should have patience in the classroom. In surah Al-Asr, God consider human is in loss except those who have patience:

إِنَّ الْإِنْسَانَ لَفِي خُسْرٍ ﴿٢﴾

Verily Man is in loss, (2)

إِلَّا الَّذِينَ آمَنُوا وَعَمِلُوا الصَّالِحَاتِ □ وَتَوَّابًا □ وَالْحَقَّ وَتَوَّابًا □ وَالصَّابِرِينَ □ ﴿٣﴾

Except such as have Faith, and do righteous deeds, and [join together] in the mutual teaching of Truth, and of Patience and Constancy. (3)

Allah also points to the importance of being humble in other verses of Quran. For example, when Allah in surah Al-Furqan counts the characteristics of the worshippers says:

وَعِبَادُ الرَّحْمَنِ الَّذِينَ مَشُورُونَ عَلَى الْأَرْضِ هَوْنًا وَإِذَا خَاطَبَهُمُ الْجَاهِلُونَ قَالُوا سَلَامًا ﴿٦٣﴾

And the servants of [Allah] Most Gracious are those who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them, they say, "Peace!"; (63)

In this verse walk humbly on the earth means living humbly and communicating with people humbly on the earth, which means the worshippers should be humble in front of God and in communicating with people¹. after that Allah explains that when the ignorant address them with bad words and impolitely, they do not answer with ignorance, but say “salama”. The word “Salam” means the word which is not revocation and is not based on ignorance². Another explanation of the word “Salam” is that it is a sign of neglecting with the magnanimity, not because of weakness or salutation, which is the reason for not being confronted with stubborn, not the salutations that mark love and grace, but it is a sign of tolerance and honor (TAFSĪR NEMŪNE, volume 15, page

¹ - (ALMĪZAN, volume 15, page, 331)

² - ibid, p.332

150). In this verse, it is mentioned that in answering people, even those who are ignorant and are against you, a teacher should have patience and tolerance. In other words, based on these interpretations, a teacher in answering the ignorant, should have patient and answer them with his knowledge and wisdom.

5. 1.5. Kindness

The prophet as the greatest teacher of Muslims is introduced in Quran , surah Tauba, as very gentle, kind, mild and merciful to the believers:

لَقَدْ جَاءَكُمْ رَسُولٌ مِّنْ أَنْفُسِكُمْ عَزِيزٌ عَلَيْهِ مَا عَنِتُّمْ حَرِيصٌ عَلَيْكُمْ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ رَءُوفٌ رَّحِيمٌ ﴿١٢٨﴾

Now hath come unto you a Messenger from amongst yourselves: it grieves him that ye should perish: ardently anxious is he over you: to the Believers is he most kind and merciful. (128)

In another situation, in Surah Taha, when God orders Prophet Moses (a.s.) to go to Pharaoh and invite him to the right path, God told the prophet to talk gently and in soft words:

﴿٤٣﴾ هَبَا إِلَىٰ فِرْعَوْنَ إِنَّهُ طَغَىٰ

"Go, both of you, to Pharaoh, for he has indeed transgressed all bounds; (43)

﴿٤٤﴾ فَقُولَا لَهُ قَوْلًا لَّيِّنًا لَّعَلَّهُ تَتَذَكَّرُ أَوْ يَخْشَىٰ

But speak to him mildly; perchance he may take warning or fear [Allah]." (44)

All these verses show that a teacher should be kind to students, have patience in communicating with them, and answer their questions in a good way.

6. 1.6. Being just

Justice and being just is considered very important in Islam and in every situation. God in Surah Zumar says:

﴿۱۷﴾ الَّذِينَ سَمِعُوا الْقَوْلَ فَيَتَّبِعُونَ أَحْسَنَهُ ﴿۱۸﴾

Those who eschew Evil, and fall not into its worship, and turn to Allah [in repentance], for them is Good News: so, announce the Good News to My Servants, 18. Those who listen to the Word, and follow the best [meaning] in it: those are the ones whom Allah has guided, and those are the ones

endued with understanding. About the meaning of these verse, in Tafsir Nemoone it is mentioned that this verses reflect the free thinking of Muslims and their choices on various issues. First says: "so announce the Good News to My Servants" And then introduces these special servants are "Those who listen to the Word, and follow the best, those are the ones whom Allah has guided, and those are the ones endued with understanding." There is no prejudice and obstinacy in their work, and there is no limit to their thoughts. They not only seek the truth for good speech, but also among "good" and "better" choose the second one, in short, they want the best. About the meaning of "Qoul" in the sentence "سَمِعُوا الْقَوْلَ" which means "listen to the Word": The verse seems to include any speech and word. Among all the words, God's Faithful servants choose the one that is the best, and obey it, and apply it in their practice.

Interestingly, in the mentioned verse, Qur'an counts these people as the owners of Allah's guidance, just as the wise men are considered to be of this group. Pointing out that this group is included of outside and inside guidance. Firstly, guiding through wisdom and reason, and then guiding through divine light and divine help. These are two great honors of these freethinker and the truth-seekers (TAFSĪR NEMŪNE).

7. 1.7. Being a good listener

It is very important for a teacher to be a good listener. There are some subjects in teacher training courses that teach teachers how listen to the students effectively and be silent when it is needed. Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

عَوِّدْ أُذُنَكَ حُسْنَ الْإِسْتِمَاعِ

'Accustom your ear to listen effectively.¹

That is, the art of good audition or listening to the students and contemplating in the hidden angles of their speech and hidden or apparent messages of their words. This will increase student's confidence and reinforce their criticality.

8. 1.8. The gradual teaching principle

For an effective teaching, it is important to present the instruction step by step. Imam Ali (a.s.) said:

لَيْلٌ مَدُومٌ عَلَيْهِ خَيْرٌ مِنْ كَثِيرٍ مَمْلُوءٍ مِنْهُ

¹ -(GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM, page 215)

little work that continues is better than doing a lot of works that cause tiredness.¹

This tradition means if you want to achieve educational goals quickly, move gradually.

9. 1.9. The best methods, time and place

First of all, Islam emphasizes that a teacher has to use the best methods. The best methods vary in a different situation, time, place and for different groups of people. In Surah An-Nahl God tells prophet that when you want to invite people to the right path, it should be in the best way:

﴿۱۲۵﴾ اُدْعُ إِلَى سَبِيلِ رَبِّكَ بِالْحُكْمِ وَالْمَوْعِظَةِ الْحَسَنَةِ وَجَادِلْهُمْ بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ...

Invite [all] to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious... (125)

In Surah Al-Ankabut, God says when you are going to argue and discuss with People, it should be in the best manner:

﴿۴۶﴾ وَلَا تَجَادِلُوا أَهْلَ الْكِتَابِ إِلَّا بِالَّتِي هِيَ أَحْسَنُ ...

And dispute ye not with the People of the Book, except with the best manner... (46)

These two verses indicate that in teaching Islam and guiding people to the right path and also in arguing and discussing which

¹ - Vasaail -ul- shia, V.1, p.118, hikma 444.

are the basic parts of an instruction, it is vital to pay enough attention to the manner and the techniques to see the proper result.

Moreover, Based on Qara'ati (93SH.), Islam indicates that it is important to be aware about the appropriate place and time of teaching. In Quran, surah Al-Qadr we read that the best book (Quran) is revealed in the best night of the year (Qadr):

إِنَّا أَنْزَلْنَاهُ فِي لَيْلَةِ الْقَدْرِ ﴿١﴾

We have indeed revealed this [Message] in the Night of Power (1)

And also Quran says when the death came to Prophet Jacob, when his children were very sensitive and they were careful to listen to their father, he used this time and taught her sons the most important lesson about the faith:

﴿... حَضَرَ عَفُوٌّ الْمَوْءُودُ قَالَ لِبَنِيهِ تَعْبُدُونَنِي بَعْدِي...﴾ (١٣٣)

... when death appeared before Jacob, he said to his sons: "What will ye worship after me?"... (133)

Qara'ati (93SH) for the importance of the place in teaching mentioned two parts of Quran. First, when Prophet Moses (a.s.) reached in Towa, God ordered him to take his shoes off:

إِنِّي أَنَا رَبُّكَ فَاحْلَعْ نَعْلَيْكَ إِنَّكَ بِالْوَالِي الْمُقَدَّسِ طُوًى ﴿١٢﴾

"Verily I am thy Lord! therefore [in My presence] put off thy shoes: thou art in the sacred valley Tuwa. (12)

Qaraati continues that the impact of color on a person is mentioned in Quran. God says:

قَالُوا اٰلِغٰلِبِۗنَا رَبَّنَاۙ اَلَا لَوْۤا۟نُهَآءَۙ قَالَ اِنَّهٗۙ قُوْلٌۙ اِنَّهَاۙ بَقْرَةٌۙ ۙ فَرَاۤءَۙ فَاَقْعَ لَوْۤا۟نُهَآءَۙ تَسْرُۙ
النَّارِۙ رَنْ (٦٩)

They said: "Beseech on our behalf Thy Lord to make plain to us Her colour." He said: "He says:

A fawn-coloured heifer, pure and rich in tone, the admiration of beholders!" (69)

All these show the importance of environment and place on the effectiveness of teaching.

As a result, a teacher should be aware of the method, time and the place of instruction and try to prepare an appropriate situation for learners.

8. 2. Ethics in distance educational setting

In distance educational setting, there are some issues that are new and less emphasized in other educational settings. In distance educational settings, there is less control of managers on people, including both teachers and students. They seem to be freer in their communications, actions, decisions etc. in cyberspace, it is easier to hide immoral things and pretend to have high ethical values. There are some ways to look at distance education policies in an ethical manner, using more advanced systems to prevent immorality and so on; however, in such an educational background with less external controls, Islam has a clear definition about internal controls by people themselves. Believing in the existence of God and his supervision of human actions are effective in increasing the ethical and spiritual quality of instruction. In the following parts we will

take a look at some areas which seem to be more important in distance educational settings.

1. 2.1. Covenant and Adherence to rules

In a distance educational setting, there are some rules that people who enroll in the system should obey. For students, the rules would include not cheating in the exams, participating in the online classes, doing the assignments by the students themselves, etc. On the other side, for the teachers, the rules may vary. The rules for the teachers could be teaching the complete syllabus, be on time in the online classes, do not waste students' time in the online classes, answer students questions, check the assignments and give a true mark, do not give students the exam questions before the exam, etc. An advanced cyber system in an online university can partly control the teachers to see how the teachers are adhering to the rules. However, it is very difficult to check the covenant of teachers about most of these rules. Islam considers the rules of a system as a pledge and firmly orders people to preserve their pledges. In surah Al-Muminun, God says:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِآيَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴿٨﴾

Those who faithfully observe their trusts and their covenants;(8)

الَّذِينَ ارْتَابُوا وَفِيهَا خَالِدُونَ ﴿١١﴾

Who will inherit Paradise: they will dwell therein [forever](11)

in these verses the word “A□D” is a general word and it may be the same as what is deposited, whether it's the property, the secrets or the like, it implies all kinds of trusts that exist among the people (ALMĪZAN, volume 15, page, 12). (the interesting point in these verses is that for inheriting Paradise and living there forever, two conditions are mentioned: preserving trusts and pledges and praying. Moreover, preserving the pledges is mentioned before praying which indicates the importance of it. This conditioning to enter paradise is repeated surah

al-Maarij:

وَالَّذِينَ هُمْ لِآيَاتِهِمْ وَعَهْدِهِمْ رَاعُونَ ﴿٣٢﴾

And those who respect their trusts and covenants; (32)

أُولَئِكَ فِي جَنَّاتٍ مُّكْرَّمُونَ ﴿٣٥﴾

And those who stand firm in their testimonies; (35)

In contrary, those who break their covenant are threatened hardly by God in different verses. In Surah Al-e-Emran we read:

إِنَّ الَّذِينَ شَتَرُوا بِعَهْدِ اللَّهِ وَأَمَانِهِمْ مَّا قَلِيلًا أُولَئِكَ لَا خَلَاقَ لَهُمْ فِي الْآخِرَةِ وَلَا يُكَلِّمُهُمُ اللَّهُ وَلَا يُنظَرُ إِلَيْهِمْ وَالْقَبَاةُ وَالْأَزْكَيمَةُ وَالْهُمُ عَذَابٌ أَلِيمٌ ﴿٧٧﴾

As for those who sell the faith they owe to Allah and their own plighted word for a small price, they shall have no portion in the Hereafter: Nor will Allah [Deign to] speak to them or look at them on the Day of Judgment, nor will He clean them [of sin]: They shall have a grievous penalty. (77)

And in Surah Rad God says:

وَالَّذِينَ نَفَضُوا عَهْدَ اللَّهِ مِنْ بَعْدِ يَأْفِكِهِ وَاقْطَعُوا مَا أَمَرَ اللَّهُ بِهِ أَنْ يُوَلَّدَ وَافْسَدُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ أُولَئِكَ لَهُمُ اللَّعْنَةُ وَلَهُمْ سُوءُ الدَّارِ (٢٥)

But those who break the Covenant of Allah, after having plighted their word thereto, and cut asunder those things which Allah has commanded to be joined, and work mischief in the land; on them is the curse; for them is the terrible home! (25)

According to these verses, preserving pledges and keeping the trust is as important as worshipping God and it introduced as a key to enter the paradise. True believers who work as teachers and are considered as exemplars have to adhere to the rules seriously even in the absence of an external controller.

2. 2.2. Honoring students

It is well known that students have to respect their teachers and there are many traditions in Islam that indicates the necessity of respecting teachers and scholars. For example, Imam Sajad (a.s.) in his "Treatise of Rights" orders students to respect and honor their teachers. He said:

"...It is the right of your teacher to respect him/her, listen to him/her and attend with devotion. You should not raise your voice towards him/her. You should not speak whilst she/he is speaking nor speak ill of him/her... If anyone speaks ill of him/her, you should defend him/her... You should not show any enmity or show hostility in friendship. If this is done then Allah's angels will give witness that the knowledge learnt from him/her was for Allah and not for the sake of the

people... You should respect the dignity of his audience, and to listen to him intently facing towards him, presence of mind and purity of heart and clarity of vision, by abstaining from enjoyments and by having few desires....”

On the other hand, Islam also notes that teachers should honor students and respect them as well. In Islamic teachings, we can see how teachers are called up about the students’ rights. Prophet Muhammad (s.a.w.a.) said:

لَيِّنُوا لِمَنْ تُعَلِّمُونَ وَ لِمَنْ تَتَعَلَّمُونَ □ نه

Be gentle and kind towards the person you teach him knowledge and the one you learn from him¹

Imam Hadi (a.s.) said:

الْعَالِمُ وَ الْمُنْعَلِّمُ شَرٌّ □ كَانَ فِي الرُّشْدِ، □ أَوْ رَانَ □ بِالنَّصِيحَةِ، □ نَهْيَانِ □ عَنِ الْعَثْرِ؛
scholars and learners (i.e. Teachers and students), are the growth partner of each other, both are ordered to benevolence and both are forbidden from Deception.²

In distance educational settings, honoring students changes its form, because there is no face to face interaction between teachers and students. To solve this problem, teachers can honor their students by leaving appropriate comments, send students emails, kindly give them feedbacks on their home works and exams, let student know

¹ - (Kafī, volume 1, page 36)

² - (BA □ AR AL-ANWAR, VOLUME 75, PAGE 367)

that he/she is always in touch to answer students' questions, and in sum, let students feel that their teacher consider them as an important factor in the learning system.

3. 2.3. Pupil-teacher relationships and Privacy preserving

The student- teacher relationship is very important for students in the process of learning and for teachers in increasing the effectiveness of instruction. Having close, supportive and positive relationships with students will help students to achieve higher levels of achievement. A strong teacher-student relationship revolves around how it affects the classroom teaching and the learning (GABLINSKE, 2014). Human being is a social being and need to have a social life, in a social life; relations are naturally formed, such as neighbors, students with teachers, students with professors, etc., and it is natural that such social relationships are not always between the same genders (woman with woman, man with man); in many of these cases, the relationship between the two genders (men and women) is also definite. (nikzad, 1383 SH) Islam emphasizes a positive relationship between teacher and student, however, the borders of this relationship is clearly identified and it is tried to protect individuals' privacy. In distance educational background where there is less control on the relationships of people; include teachers, students, managers etc., it is very important to create a healthy and effective relationship in order to prevent corruption, deviation and negative effects of an unhealthy relationship.

In Islam, men and woman have to have hijab. The primary meaning of “hijab” is to cover the parts of body except face and the two arms for women and dressing in not a self-expressing way for men. In surah Al-Ahzab it is defined that:

﴿أَأْمُرُهُمُ النَّبِيُّ قُلْ لِأَزْوَاجِكُمْ وَبَنَاتِكُمْ وَنِسَاءِ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ يُدْنِينَ عَلَيْهِنَّ جَلَابِيبَهُنَّ﴾ لَكَ أَتَى أَنْ
 ﴿عُرْفَنَ فَلَا أُوْءَانَ وَكَانَ اللَّهُ غَفُورًا رَحِيمًا﴾ (٥٩)

O Prophet! Tell thy wives and daughters, and the believing women, that they should cast their outer garments over their persons [when abroad]: that is most convenient, that they should be known [as such] and not molested. And Allah is Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful. (59)

It is noteworthy that in Islam, a female teacher in a class where all the students are female is allowed to use colorful clothes and be present with her accessories, but in a class with male students or in the cyberspace where male students also can download the teaching files should be more aware about her dresses.

However, in the cyberspace, the secondary meaning of hijab is more emphasized. The secondary meaning of hijab is the hijab of eyes, hijab in talking, hijab in communicating and walking. The hijab of eyes is mentioned in surah Al-nur we read:

﴿قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنَاتِ إِذَا مَنَّ اللَّهُ عَلَيْهُنَّ أَنْ يُصَارِهِنَّ﴾ وَحَفْظَنَ فُرُوجَهُنَّ وَلَا يُدْنِينَ رِئَسَهُنَّ إِلَّا مَا هُنَّ عَلَيْهِنَّ
 وَلْيَضْرِبْنَ بِخُمُرِهِنَّ عَلَى جُيُوبِهِنَّ... (٣١)

And say to the believing women that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty; that they should not display their beauty and ornaments except what [must ordinarily] appear thereof; that they should draw their veils over their bosoms ... (31)

Quran also calls men for lowering their gaze and having the hijab of eyes:

قُلْ لِلْمُؤْمِنِينَ غُضُؤًا ۖ نُنْ أَبْصَارِهِمْ وَحَفَظُوا فُرُوجَهُمْ ۚ لَكَ أَزْكَى لَهُمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ خَبِيرٌ بِمَا صَنَعُونَ ﴿٣٠﴾

Say to the believing men that they should lower their gaze and guard their modesty: that will make for greater purity for them: And Allah is well acquainted with all that they do. (30)

In the cyberspace, sharing unsuitable pictures and having an inappropriate dressing in video chats especially in online classes where several students see a teacher is hardly criticized by Islam. A teacher should firstly have the hijab in dressing and secondly lower his/her gaze when has students of other gender.

The next point is the hijab in the way of speaking and talking. In surah Al-Ahzab God says:

ۚ يَا نِسَاءَ النَّبِيِّ لَسْتُنَّ كَأَحَدٍ ۚ نَ النِّسَاءِ إِنِ اتَّقَيْتُنَّ فَلَا تَخْضَعْنَ بِالْقَوْلِ فَيَطْمَعَ الَّذِي فِي قَلْبِهِ رِضٌ وَقُلْنَ قَوْلًا ۚ عَزُوفًا ﴿٣٢﴾

O Consorts of the Prophet! Ye are not like any of the [other] women: if ye do fear [Allah], be not too complacent of speech, lest one in whose heart is a disease should be moved with desire: but speak ye a speech [that is] just (32)

According to this verse, the tone of voice and the speaking of a person should not be attractive for the other gender. A teacher should be very careful about this point especially in the online classes. In many open universities, the voices of teachers are sent for the students or teachers present the lessons by sending the voice for students. Hence, voice is an important tool in communications in

cyberspaces. Islam orders believers to speak honorable and not saying coquetry words. Another point is that the student-teacher communication should be in a predetermined time, especially in the cyberspace where students communicate with the teachers through the media applications, teachers have the right to have their own time for themselves and their families. As a result, it should be clarified by the online educational systems about how and when students are allowed to send message and communicate with their teachers.

4. 2.4. Increasing students' awareness

It is important to mention the objectives of the instruction and provide a clear outcome of the lesson for the students before learning. The teachers should provide the content of the lessons in such a way that the audiences will be aware of the main goals, benefits and usage of it .This will make students more motivated and increase the effectiveness of instruction. Imam Baqir (a.s.) said:

مَنْ عَرَفَ اللَّهَ عَرَفْتُهُ عَلَى الْعَمَلِ وَمَنْ لَمْ يَعْرِفْ فَلَا عَمَلَ لَهُ

Who becomes aware, his knowledge will guide him to action, and whoever does not know, there will be no action for him. ¹

This hadith emphasizes the strong link between "knowledge" and "action" by increasing the awareness of the students. In the distance education, it is important to provide students an outline of what is going to be done and how the teaching will take place.

¹ -(BA AL-ANWAR, VOLUME 75, PAGE 174)

5. 2.5. Internet ethics and Self-reckoning

As mentioned in the previous parts, there is little external control in the cyberspace. Because of this fact, it is important to reinforce Self-reckoning or self-controlling of people. Islam presents a very effective model for the situations where people are out of control but are expected to act ethically. In Islam, a person is never left alone and he or she is always under the control of the creator. First of all, we read in Quran that God is witness of everything himself. In surah Al-Ahzab God says:

وَكَفَىٰ بِاللَّهِ حَسِيبًا ﴿٣٩﴾

And enough is Allah to call [men] to account. (39)

In Surah Saba, it is mentioned that:

وَهُوَ عَلَىٰ كُلِّ شَيْءٍ شَهِيدٌ ﴿٤٧﴾

And He is witness to all things. (47)

And also in Surah Al-Nisa, God says:

...إِنَّ اللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيْكُمْ رَقِيبًا ﴿١﴾

...Allah ever watches over you. (1)

According to these verses, a person is always under the watching of God. A person who believes in God and know that God is looking what he/she does, will never astray even in a situation like the cyberspace where there is less control of external controller.

The second witness is the prophets who see whatever we do, God in Surah An-Nahl says::

وَأَوْ تَبْعَتْ فِي كُلِّ آيَةٍ شَهِيدًا عَلَيْهِمْ أَنْ أَنفُسِهِمْ وَجِئْنَا بِكَ شَهِيدًا عَلَىٰ هَؤُلَاءِ... ﴿٨٩﴾

One day We shall raise from all Peoples a witness against them, from amongst themselves: and We shall bring thee as a witness against these [thy people]: ... (89)

The third group of witnesses is the angles who write every act of a person in the world. God in surah Al-Kahf explains that people see that all they have done in the world are written in a book by angles:

وَوُضِعَ الْكِتَابُ فَتَرَى الْمُجْرِمِينَ شَاقِقِينَ مَا فِيهِمْ وَقُولُونَ يَا أَلَيْسَ هَذَا الْكِتَابُ الَّذِي كُنَّا نَسْتَكْبِرُ بِهِ لَا يُغَيِّرُهُ وَلَا يُغَيِّرُهُ إِلَّا أَحْصَاهَا وَوَجَدُوا أَعْمَلُوا حَاضِرًا وَلَا تَظْلِمُ رَبُّكَ أَحَدًا ﴿٤٩﴾

And the Book [of Deeds] will be placed [before you]; and thou wilt see the sinful in great terror because of what is [recorded] therein; they will say, "Ah! woe to us! what a Book is this! It leaves out nothing small or great, but takes account thereof!" They will find all that they did, placed before them: And not one will thy Lord treat with injustice. (49)

Next, the earth itself is introduced as a witness in hereafter. Whatever you do on the earth will be recorded by it and will be used for or against you. Sura Zilzal indicates that:

وَيَوْمَ يُنذِرُ تَحْدِيثًا أَخْبَارَهَا ﴿٤﴾

On that Day it (earth) will declare its news, (4)

The next witnesses are your parts of body. In the day of judgment, your parts of body will report what you did in details. In surah Al-Nur it is saith that:

وَيَوْمَ تَشْهَدُ عَلَيْهِمْ أَلْسِنُهُمْ وَأَيْدِيهِمْ وَأَرْجُلُهُمْ بِمَا كَانُوا يَعْمَلُونَ ﴿٢٤﴾

On the Day when their tongues, their hands, and their feet will bear witness against them as to their actions. (24)

And also in surah Isra it is said that:

اقْرَأْ كِتَابَكَ كَفَىٰ بِنَفْسِكَ الْيَوْمَ عَلَيْكَ حَسِيبًا ﴿١٤﴾

[It will be said to him:] "Read thine [own] record: Sufficient is thy soul this day to make out an account against thee." (14)

All these verses demonstrate that whatever you do in this world will be recorded and the recordings will be used for or against you. With the knowledge of this fact, a teacher will do teaching and his duties in the best ethical way because he/she knows that he is under the control of God and other mentioned witnesses.

6. 2.6. Integration of students

Nowadays, there are new methods in teaching a subject which emphasize on the integration of student. It is well known that an interaction requires the learner's active involvement in communicative activities in an educational process (Kumaravadivelu, 2006). Islam considers this fact as an important technique in teaching and learning. Imam Ali (a.s.) indicates that gathering and interacting for seeking knowledge is important:

□ دَارِسَةُ الْعِلْمِ لَذَّةُ الْعُلَمَاءِ .

Gatherings of knowledge are a bounty.¹

The Quran asks people to express their reasons and invite them for a discussion. In other words, the teaching of the Quran is not a one-way teaching, but God wants an interaction between prophet and

¹ - (GHURAR AL-HIKAM WA DURAR AL-KALIM)

the unbelievers. The Quran believes that through this interaction, prophet can teach Islamic values effectively and answer the ambiguities and questions of the unbelievers. In Surah Al-Naml God asks people a few questions and then invite them to express and prove their ideas:

أَلَمْ يَنْبُأِ الْخَلْقَ مِمَّ عِبِيدُهُ وَنَزَّلْنَا رِزْقَكُم مِّنَ السَّمَاءِ وَالْأَرْضِ أَلَيْسَ إِلَهًا مَّعَ اللَّهِ قُلْ هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ إِن كُنْتُمْ
لِقَائِنَا قَائِلِينَ ﴿٦٤﴾

Or, Who originates creation, then repeats it, and who gives you sustenance from heaven and earth? [Can there be another] god besides Allah? Say, "Bring forth your argument, if ye are telling the truth!" (64)

And also in Surah Al-Qasas God says:

وَنَزَعْنَا مِن كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ شَهِيدًا فَقُلْنَا هَاتُوا بُرْهَانَكُمْ فَعَلِمُوا أَنَّ الْحَقَّ لِلَّهِ وَضَلَّ عَنْهُمْ مَا كَانُوا يَفْتَرُونَ ﴿٧٥﴾

And from each people shall We draw a witness, and We shall say: "Produce your Proof": then shall they know that the Truth is in Allah [alone], and the [lies] which they invented will leave them in lurch. (75)

In an online class, the integration of students would be challenging for the teachers. The solution of this challenge may be in new forms. For example, teachers can integrate the students by asking them to leave some comments and read their comments in the online classes, ask them to do some assignments, give them some opportunities to speak in the online classes, ask them to record a video about the topic of instruction, etc. all in all, it is important to prevent a mono-speaker classroom without considering the presence of the students.

7. 2.7. Simplification of the instruction and using the language of people

The instruction should be in the language of students. It means that firstly it should be in the language that they speak, and secondly it should be in an easy language to understand. Quran in surah Ibrahim indicates that prophets of God used to speak in the language of the people.

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

We sent not a messenger except [to teach] in the language of his [own] people, in order to make [things] clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of Wisdom. (4)

God in surah Maryam says that the Quran is sent in an easy language to be understandable.

فَأَنمَّا أَسْرْنَاَهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لِتُبَشِّرَ بِهِ الْمُتَّقِينَ وَتُنذِرَ بِهِ قَوْمًا لُدًّا ﴿٩٧﴾

So, have We made the [Qur'an] easy in thine own tongue, that with it thou mayest give Glad Tidings to the righteous, and warnings to people given to contention. (97)

Based on ALMĪZAN this verse firstly means that all the messengers of God used to speak in the language of people of their tribes; and secondly, they used to speak in an easy and understandable language. These two points are clarified by other verses of Quran. In surah Ibrahim, God says:

وَمَا أَرْسَلْنَا مِنْ رَسُولٍ إِلَّا بِلِسَانٍ قَوْمِهِ لِيُبَيِّنَ لَهُمْ فَيُضِلُّ اللَّهُ مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَيَهْدِي مَنْ يَشَاءُ وَهُوَ الْعَزِيزُ الْحَكِيمُ ﴿٤﴾

We sent not a messenger except [to teach] in the language of his [own] people, in order to make [things] clear to them. Now Allah leaves straying those whom He pleases and guides whom He pleases: and He is Exalted in power, full of Wisdom. (4)

The second point is explained in another verse in surah Ad-dukhan:

فَإِنَّمَا أَسْرَنَاهُ بِلِسَانِكَ لَعَلَّهُمْ يَتَذَكَّرُونَ ﴿٥٨﴾

Verily, we have made this [Qur'an] easy, in thy tongue, in order that they may give heed. (58)

This verse indicates that although Quran include deep content and its dimensions are vast, it is also simple, comprehensible, and applicable to all corners, its examples are beautiful, its similes are natural and expressive, realistic and stories are informative, its reasons are clear, it includes simple expression, yet sweet and charming, so that it penetrates the depths of human hearts, informs the unbelievers and points out the ready-made hearts (TAFSĪR NEMŪNE, volume 21, page 217).

Based on all these verses, we can conclude that a teacher should simplify the language of instruction for the students and make the teaching content easy and understandable for the students based on their level of maturity and understanding. The messengers of God are the best teachers sent and guided by God to teach the most important knowledge to human. Undoubtedly, the techniques which they used are the best and the most effective. These techniques can be the best guideline for teachers and trainers.

8. 1.8. Considering students' level

Quran indicates that Allah always take into the account that people have different abilities and capacities. The obligations of Islam are as much as a person's capacity and not more. In surah al-Baqara we read:

لَا تُكَلِّفُ اللَّهُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا.. (٢٨٦)

Our Lord! Lay not on us a burden greater than we have strength to bear... (286)

And also, in surah Al-Mumenoon, it is said that:

وَلَا نُكَلِّفُ نَفْسًا إِلَّا وُسْعَهَا وَإِنَّا كِتَابٌ مُّخْتَلَفٌ بِالْحَقِّ وَهُمْ لَا يُظْلَمُونَ (٦٢)

On no soul do We place a burden greater than it can bear: before Us is a record which clearly shows the truth: they will never be wronged. (62)

Raqib Isfahani about the word "wus'" said:

السَّعَةُ تَقَالُ فِي الْأَكْنَةِ، وَفِي الْحَالِ، وَفِي الْفِعْلِ وَالْقُدْرَةِ وَالْجَوْ وَوَسِعَ

It means that the meaning of the word «وسع» is expanded to the place, situation, and the act. Based on TAFSĪR AL-MIZAN (volume 15, page 58), the interpretation of this verse shows that duties and ordinances are according to the abilities of people, and in the case that people do not have the ability of doing an obligation, it would not be obligatory any more. For example, fasting is obligatory in the month of Ramadan, but a person is allowed to give up the fasts for the month of *Ramadan* due to sickness.

Observing the health of the body, mouth and teeth, nails, the use of perfumes, and in the case of only audio teaching other items such as apparel adornment, chastity in sight, etc. are special subjects in the ethics of teaching related to the face-to-face teaching environment.

From the point of view of Islam, intent, trust, humility, heed of right, good audition, observance of the gradual teaching principle and acquaintance with the requirements of time and place are most important duties of common professional ethics in every educational environment.

The necessity to adhere certain ethical guidelines in distance educational settings can be conclude as the following cases: intention, faithfulness, covenant, honoring the students, proper accountability, accepting criticize, allocation of enough time to the student, expressing the usage and need for learning lessons, use of key sentences and avoidance of prorogation, correct use of communication tools, Being updated , attentive to the student's education along with teaching, use of simple and expressive words, paying attention to the cultural, ideological and educational differences of students and finally paying attention to their common needs.

This article tried to investigate the issues which are more important in both face to face classrooms and online classes and also the issued which are specifically more challenging in online classes. Based on the discussions of this article, because of the less external controls in the cyberspace in distance educational settings, there should be a self-control model for teachers to help them act ethically and not

astray from the right path. This model is predicted in Islam and can be used in teacher training courses.

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'Ilm al-Akhlāq: The Qur'anic Paradigm of Ethics

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Abstract:

Ethics or the rules of behaviour based on ideas about what is morally good or bad has been given a thorough treatment by the Qur'ān. These rules of behaviour have been presented as the core philosophy of life put forth by the prophets of God from Adam ('AS) to Muhammad (SA'AS). Although being a branch of philosophy dealing with what is morally right or wrong, ethics, in its pragmatic sense culminated in the precepts of the last Prophet (SA'AS) of God.

As such, the Qur'ān is the ultimate guidebook of the Islamic ethical sciences or *'ilm al-akhlāq*. Thus being the final code of ethics, Qur'ān sums up the precedents of all the prophets of God with the Prophet Muhammad (SA'AS) as the symbol of 'sublime morality' (68:4) and the Qur'ān as 'guardian over' (5:48) the previous books as the codes of divinely ordained ethics.

The Qur'ān, therefore, gives a systematic set of ethics for humankind which has the capability of catering to every realm of

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human existence. And, as such, Qur'anic ethics is a full-fledged philosophy borne out by the practice of all the prophets of God and their sincere followers. This is in quite contrast to the utopian ideas of ethics bereft of any concrete existence on ground in the human society.

This paper, therefore, aims at highlighting the Qur'anic concept of ethics or *'ilm al-akhlāq* as a common legacy of the whole humanity with the prophets of God as the upholders of this ethics. Although the point of reference would indeed be the Qur'ān, the philosophers' views of ethics would also be presented for contrast and comparison.

Key words: Ethics, Morals, Attitude, Akhlāq, Philosophy

Introduction:

Meaning and Definition of Ethics

'Ethics' or 'the science of morals' is said to have been derived from the Latin word 'ethos' which means 'character'.¹ Ethics, as such, covers the morals of human beings and sets rules for the conduct, behaviour, activity and habits of humans. According to Mackenzie, "Ethics is the science or general study of ideal involved in human life."²

¹ *Philosophy: Basic Facts Series*, MPB Publications, Delhi, 2004, p.132.

² *Ibid*, p. 133-4.

Philosophers' Concept of Ethics:

Socrates

So, for a human being to be ideally good, it is very much necessary for her/him to harmonize the conduct with the knowledge which s/he possesses. This is attested to by the Socratic doctrine of ethics:

Socrates' ethical doctrine owes its great attraction to the belief in the power of reason, to the underlying faith in the possibility and even necessity of the harmony of knowledge and conduct. Socrates is convinced that one cannot be evil-minded if he knows the good.¹

Thus, as per Socrates, ethics "consisted in knowing what is good and acting in accordance with this knowledge."² While offering examples, he says that "bravery presupposes the knowledge of how to face danger, justice the knowledge of what to do in relation to the individual and the state,"³ etc.

Plato

The ideal of this life, according to Plato, "is achieved when a man is wise, brave, temperate and just"⁴ on the individual level. And, on

¹ Bogomolov, A. S., *History of Ancient Philosophy*, Progress Publications, Moscow, 1985, p. 134.

² Ibid, p. 133.

³ Ibid, pp. 133-4.

⁴ Sharif, M. M., Ed., *A History of Muslim Philosophy*, 2 vols., Adam Publishers & Distributors, Delhi, 2001, vol. I, p. 97.

the societal level, the society would be morally upright when members of all the classes of the society must be “doing what they are best equipped to do, without usurping the functions of others.”¹

Aristotle

Aristotle also talks about the pragmatic value of ethics when he links happiness with good deeds. He says:

We may therefore join in agreeing that the amount of happiness which falls to each individual man is equal to the amount of his goodness and his wisdom, and the good and wise acts that he does. God himself bears witness to this conclusion.²

Bertrand Russel

Among the modern philosophers, Bertrand Russel declares ethics “traditionally a department of philosophy”³ not identical with morality as such. According to him:

It is not the business of ethics to arrive at actual rules of conduct, such as: ‘Thou shalt not steal.’ This is the province of morals. Ethics is expected to provide a basis from which such rules can be deduced. The rules of morals

¹ Plato, *Republic*, Oxford World’s Classics, Oxford University Press, 2008, p. 133.

² Aristotle, *Politics*, Oxford World’s Classics, Oxford University Press, 2009, p. 253.

³ Bertrand Russel, *An Outline of Philosophy*, Routeledge Classics, 2017, p. 246.

differ according to the age, the race, and the creed of the community concerned.¹

Therefore, the philosophically oriented minds have always been sceptical about the efficacy of the ethics commanded by religion or simply the Divine Command Theory of ethics. Their argument has been:

It is not easy to discuss the Divine Command Theory of right and wrong in a way that will satisfy both believers and non-believers. The latter find the theory hard to take seriously and the former find it hard to think that, if God commanded something, it may still be wrong.²

So, because of this kind of obsession of the modern mind with the religious conception of ethics, not only was the teaching of the Decalogue –Ten Commandments– discontinued (banned) in different western schools³ but the Ethics of Love taught by Christianity has also been deemed only desirable, that too because of the prevalence⁴ of this teaching.

¹ Ibid, p. 247.

² Frankena, Willaim K., *Ethics*, Pearson India, Chennai, 2016, p. 29.

³ Russel, op. cit., p. 249.

⁴ Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first

and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. (Matt, 22:37

-39); See William K., op. cit., p. 56.

Ethics in Christianity

St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-74) put forth two levels of ethics by Christianizing Aristotle's view of ethics. From Aristotle he stressed for a natural level and from the Bible he argued for a supernatural level. That is, he accepts the natural virtues and the natural happiness thereof but, at the same time, argues for a supernatural happiness which, according to Aquinas, consists in the contemplation of God in the hereafter.¹ As such, the Aristotlean classification of ethics into Intellectual Virtues and Moral Virtues² was quite hard to be ignored. Same is the case with Aristotle's "golden mean" principle of "just enough," between twin vices of "too much" and "too little."³

Qur'anic Model of Ethics

The Qur'anic framework of ethics which can be termed as *'Ilm al-Akhlaq* is an inclusive science which gives due place to the common legacy of humanity. That is why, in spite of the Prophets ('AS) from Adam ('AS) to Muhammad (SA'AS) being introduced as the epitomes of morality by the Qur'an, the general contribution of humanity vis-a-vis ethical principles has never been ignored therein. The moral values familiarized by human beings throughout

¹ Gensler, Harry J., *Ethics*, Routledge, New York & London, 2011, p. 143.

² Ibid, p. 141. Intellectual Virtues (about thinking) include examples like philosophy, wisdom, intuition, scientific

knowledge, and practical wisdom (knowing how to live). Moral Virtues (about acting) include examples like

justice, self control, courage, generosity, friendliness, and wittiness.

³ Ibid, p. 141.

the ages are given due importance by the Qur'an. This is how the Qur'an exhorts the obedience of such known values: "Be tolerant; enjoin what is right; and avoid the ignorant."¹

The word used in the text is *'urf* which is same as *ma'ruf*,² that means 'good' as accepted by the humans in general. Its opposite is *munkar* which means 'bad' as abhorred by the humans in general:

Everything that is reasonable and is accepted by human beings who know it is good for them, has been ordained as a mandatory injunction and everything which everyone knows is bad has been forbidden. This is the explanation for two terms *ma'ruf* and *munkar*.³

As such, the Qur'an doesn't introduce any set of ethical values which is totally strange of unknown to human intelligence and conscience. It emphasises the importance of those values which had been neglected by human beings due to ignorance and indifference. That is why the Qur'an, for the moral uplift of the society, enjoins: "Let there be a group among you who call others to good, and enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong: those who do this shall be successful."⁴

¹ Qur'an, 7:199.

² Ibid, 3:110.

³ Muhammad Hamidullah, *The Emergence of Islam*, Adam Publishers & Distributors, Delhi, 2004, p. 270.

⁴ Qur'an, 3:104.

Such people, however, are given moral-cum-intellectual instruction by the Prophet (SA'AS) himself. This function of the Prophet (SA'AS) has been highlighted by the Qur'an four times¹ in unambiguous terms. One of these verses reads:

Indeed, God has conferred a great favour on the believers in sending a Messenger from among themselves, to recite His revelations to them, and purify them, and teach them the Book and wisdom, for, before that they were surely in manifest error.²

This four-fold division of the Prophet's (SA'AS) function vis-a-vis the mankind has the ability to cater to both the theoretical as well as the practical realms of human life. It purifies the human being of all dross through the divine revelation. Side by side it helps a person to follow the commandments enshrined in the revelation voluntarily by understanding the wisdom thereof.

It is by dint of this multi-pronged endeavour of the Prophet (SA'AS) that the scattered, unorganized band of people is transformed into a morally upright and intellectually sound group which the Qur'an calls as a "just nation", a "balanced nation" or a "nation of golden mean"³ the main quality of which, according to Ibn Kathir, is that

¹ Qur'an, 2:129, 2:151, 3:164 & 62:2.

² Ibid, 3:164.

³ Ibid, 2:143.

these people stand as the witnesses or upholders of justice everywhere, individually as well as collectively.¹

The Prophet (SA'AS) took utmost care in the transformation of his followers into a "balanced group" as the symbols of morality. It is reported that a group of Companions of the Prophet (SA'AS) who had gone deep in ascetic observations, was directed by the Prophet (SA'AS) to abstain from the extremes of asceticism and revert to the normal course so as to give everyone, not only their kith and kin, friends, guests, neighbours but also their own beings, their due. The Prophet (SA'AS), for the instruction of these people and his followers in general, is said to have called an emergency meeting in which he gave a sermon to denounce such practices that rob people of their rights by following 'extremes'.² To emphasise the importance of following the "golden mean," the Prophet (SA'AS) is reported to have said: "...and *Al-Qasa* (always adopt a middle, moderate, regular course) whereby you will reach *Al-Qasd* i.e. target (Paradise)."³

¹ The word "wasata" –middle– also stands for "justice"; see Ibn Kathir in *al-Qur'an al-Karim*, Ur. Tr., Maulana

Muhammad Junagarhi, Tafsir, Maulana Salahuddin Yusuf, Shah Fahad Qur'an Karim Printing Complex,

Madfinah, n. d., p. 57.

² *Sahih al-Bukhari* in Dr. Israr Ahmad, *Umm al-Musabbihat*, Areeb Publications, Delhi, 2008, pp. 344-5.

³ *Sahih Bukhari (Mukhtasar)*, Eng. Tr., Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan, Maktabah Dar-us-Salam, Madinah, 1298 A.H., p. 987.

Prophets ('AS): The Epitomes of Akhlaq

Since all the Prophets ('AS) have been the epitomes of this "middle course" of morality, the Qur'an presents their conduct as the best example for the humankind to follow. Prophet Shu'ayb's ('AS) people, for example, were not ready to spend their wealth on those who were in dire need. Moreover, they were not ready to abandon the malpractices in their earnings and expenditure. Shu'ayb ('AS) thus tries to persuade them to abide by the moral principles which had been revealed to him and which he himself was a symbol of:

[Shu'ayb] said, 'O my people! What do you think? If I have clear evidence from my Lord, and He has sustained me with fair sustenance from Himself [should I not guide you?] I have no desire to do, out of opposition to you, what I am asking you not to do. I only want to reform you as far as I can.¹

As such, it is against the principles of ethics to abandon the needy sections of the society but one's preaching what one does not practice is a more serious evil denounced by the Qur'an as: "Is is most hateful to God that you do not practise what you preach."²

Prophet Yusuf ('AS, Joseph) likewise sets yet another standard of ethics for humanity. He is in no way ready to fall in the trap of the Lady, the wife of the 'Aziz, in spite of knowing the danger ahead:

¹ Qur'an, 11:88.

² Ibid, 61:3.

Joseph said, 'O my Lord! I would prefer prison to what these women are inviting me to do. And if You do not avert their guile from me, I may yield to them and so become one of the ignorant.'¹

Therefore, ignorance is not only the reason but also the end or destination of immorality. Since there is nobody save God who can eradicate the ignorance of an individual, therefore, Yusuf ('AS), like a true Prophet ('AS) of God, takes refuge in God alone against his psychological tormentors.

Prophet Muhammad (SA'AS): Embodiment of Qur'anic Akhlaq

This super-structure of ethics formulated by the Prophets ('AS) of God throughout the human history culminated in the person of the Last Prophet (SA'AS) of God in the same manner in which the "religion (of Islam) got completed"² with the termination of his prophethood. As such, the Qur'anic *'Ilm al-Akhlaq* also gets completion with the code of ethics exemplified and symbolized by the Prophet Muhammad (SA'AS). This is how the Qur'an bears out this fact: "By the pen, and all that they write! By the grace of your Lord, you are not a mad man. Most surely, you will have a never ending reward: *For you are truly of a sublime character.*"³

In this regard, when 'A'ishah (R'A), the wife of the Prophet (SA'AS), was asked about the conduct of the Prophet (SA'AS), she is reported

¹ Ibid, 12:33.

² See Ibid, 5:3.

³ Ibid, 68:1-4.

to have replied: "His conduct was the personification of the Qur'an."¹ Since Qur'an surmounts the moral edifice of humanity, therefore, the Prophet (SA'AS) has explained his status as the one who completes this edifice. "I have been sent to complete the code of ethics"² said the Prophet (SA'AS).

Loving the Creator and Serving the Creation

Now, being the divine code of ethics, Qur'an lays the foundation of the ethical structure on the "love of God" which motivates a person to follow the "law of God." So, "those who believe love God most"³ and it is these people who say, "we hear and obey."⁴

Obedience of the law doesn't dampen their devotion to God. Rather, their every action gushes forth from their love of God which turns their every endeavour into real worship. However, such people don't follow any course blindly without understanding the delicacies of such a path:

There are signs in the creation of the heavens and the earth, and in the alteration of night and day for people of understanding, who remember God while standing, sitting and [lying] on their sides, and who ponder over

¹ *Sahih Muslim*, Kitab al-Musafirin in *al-Qur'an al-Karim*, op. cit., p. 1611.

² Imam Malik, *Muwatta* in Muahhamd Faruq Khan, *Kalam-i Nubuwwat*, MMI Publishers, Delhi, Vol. II, 2011, p. 33.

³ Qur'an, 2:165.

⁴ *Ibid*, 2:285.

the creation of the heavens and earth, saying, 'Lord, You have not created all this without purpose. Glory be to You! Save us from the torment of the Fire.'¹

Their ethical standing is proportionate to their understanding and knowledge. After tearing asunder the veils of ignorance, they become aware of their shortcomings in abiding by the ethical standards laid down by God. Now, their love of God gets assistance from the "fear of God" which strengthens their behaviour further on the ethical lines. This love and fear of God connects them horizontally with the creation of God side by side with God Himself vertically:

In like manner, men, beasts, and cattle have their diverse hues too. Only those of His servants, who possess knowledge, fear God. God is almighty and most forgiving. Those who read the Book of God and attend to their prayers and spend in charity in private and in public out of what We have provided them, may hope for a commerce that suffers no loss.²

Side by side loving God, the Qur'anic ethics exhorts an individual to "love the neighbour" as well. However, the neighbour, in the Qur'anic view point, is the extended sphere of whole humanity. And, this whole sphere has to be taken due care of by an individual.

¹ Ibid, 3:190-1.

² Ibid, 35:28-9.

The importance of this care can be understood from the fact that it has been mentioned side by side with the service of the parents and has been clubbed with monotheism and the worship of One God:

Worship God: and do not associate partners with Him. Be good to your parents, to relatives, to orphans, to the needy, and the neighbour who is a kinsman, and the neighbour who is not related to you and your companions and the wayfarers and those whom you rightfully possess. God does not like arrogant, boastful people.¹

Since Qur'anic ethics is never meant for a utopia, therefore, it duly addresses the hot pragmatic issues of the human society. As such, when relations between individuals get strained, it persuades the people concerned to initiate a process of reconciliation. This is how the Qur'an forecasts the result of such an initiative: "Good and evil are not equal. Repel evil with what is better; then you will see that one who was once your enemy has become your dearest friend."²

Treating the Seven Deadly Sins

Qur'an also offers an accurate remedy for 'the worst sins' commonly considered as 'seven deadly sins' by humankind. These sins are pride, greed, lust, wrath, gluttony, envy, and sloth.³

¹ Ibid, 4:36.

² Ibid, 41:34. See also, 4:114, 4:128, 23:96 & 39:18.

³ Gensler, Harry J., op. cit., p. 143.

Pride is an inflated, self-centred view of oneself. This has been done away with by the Qur'an as: "Do not walk proudly on the earth. You cannot cleave the earth, nor can you rival the mountains in height."¹

Greed is an excessive desire for money and possessions. This is denounced by the Qur'an in detail as follows:

The satisfaction of worldly desires through women, and children, and heaped-up treasures of gold and silver, and pedigreed horses, and cattle and lands is attractive to people. All this is the provision of worldly life; but the most excellent abode is with God.²

Lust is excessive sexual desire that is out of control. The Qur'anic treatment for it is: "Do not commit adultery, for it is an indecent thing and an evil course."³

Wrath is a vengeful and hateful anger towards one who has wronged someone. Qur'an thus advises to ward it off:

Let not those who are possessed of means and plenty among you resolve to withhold their bounty from their kindred and the needy and those who have migrated from their homes in

¹ Qur'an, 17:37.

² Ibid, 3:14. See also, 100:8 & 102:1.

³ Ibid, 17:32. See also, 23:5.

the cause of God. Let them forgive and overlook.¹

Gluttony is overindulgence in food. This is treated by the Qur'an as: "O Children of Adam, dress yourself properly whenever you are at worship; and eat and drink but do not be wasteful: God does not like wasteful people."²

Envy is discontent over another's good fortune. This sin has been treated by the Qur'an as: "Do not covet the bounties which God has bestowed more abundantly on some of you than on others."³

Sloth is laziness, an excessive aversion to work. This evil is nipped at the very bud by the Qur'an: "When the prayer is ended, disperse in the land and seek to obtain [something] of God's bounty; and remember God much, so that you may prosper."⁴

Eradicating Falsehood and Murder

Falsehood is also not only condemned by the Qur'an but it has been highlighted that 'servants of the Merciful God' never indulge in it.⁵ However, the "most deadly sin" which has always threatened the very existence of humankind is murder of an innocent person. Although 'Thou shalt not kill' had been upheld by the Decalogue⁶ as one of the principles, the Qur'an has given it a unique effect and

¹ Ibid, 24:22. See also, 2:178.

² Ibid, 7:31.

³ Ibid, 4:32.

⁴ Ibid, 62:10.

⁵ Ibid, 25:72.

⁶ Russel, op. cit., p. 249.

force by making it a cardinal principle in its ethical framework. The very effect, force and appeal created by the Qur'anic injunction is enough to prove the value of human life. The teaching goes as:

That is why We laid down for the Children of Israel that whoever killed a human being – except as a punishment for murder or for spreading corruption in the land– shall be regarded as having killed all mankind, and that whoever saved a human life be regarded as having saved all mankind.¹

Conclusion

As such, having been sent to the world with full guidance and light of knowledge,² human beings have never lost the sight of ethical standards very much necessary for the humans' distinction as the 'cream of creation.'³ In one way or the other, these standards were always upheld by people of distinction –seers, reformers, philosophers, etc. No wonder then that we see St. Augustine (354-430) Christianizing Plato's four natural virtues (Wisdom, Self-control, Courage and Justice) by adding Faith, Hope and Love⁴ to the philosopher's legacy. Likewise, St. Thomas Aquinas (1224-74)

¹ Qur'an, 5:32.

² See Ibid, 2:31.

³ See Ibid, 95:4.

⁴ Gensler, Harry J., op. cit., pp. 140-1.

Christianized Aristotle's natural level of ethics and added a supernatural level of Bible to it.¹

In its ethical framework, Qur'an emphasized the importance of wisdom² so much so that wisdom has been declared as the loftiest component³ taught by the Prophet (SA'AS) to his followers. Moreover, wisdom in general has been declared as the "lost treasure of the believer" by the Prophet (SA'AS)⁴ to be taken wherever found. Therefore, *'Ilm al-Akhlaq* is the culmination and summation of the ethical standards of humanity well preserved by the Qur'an. The Prophet (SA'AS), as the embodiment of these standards, has summed up the intellectual and practical ethical standards of humankind in the following words:

Nine things the Lord has commanded me. Fear of God in private and in public; Justness, whether in anger or in calmness; Moderation in both poverty and affluence; That I should join hands with those who break away from me; and give to those who deprive me; and forgive those who wrong me; and my silence should be meditation; and my words

¹ Ibid, p. 143.

² Qur'an, 2:269.

³ Ibid, 2:129, 2:151, 3:164 & 62:2.

⁴ Farahi, Hamiduddin, *Hikmat-i Qur'an*, Da'irah-i Hamidiyyah, Lucknow, 1996, p. 81.

remembrance of God; and my vision keen observation.¹

Both these dimensions of *'Ilm al-Akhlaq* or the Qur'anic Ethics are explained by different Qur'anic concepts such as *ta'addul*, *tafakkur*, *tadabbur*, *hikmah*, *taqwa*, *khushu'*, *ikhlas*, *islah*, *ihsan*, etc.

¹ *Mishkat al-Masabih* in Maulana Jalil Ahsan Nadwi, *Zad-i Rah*, MMI Publishers, Delhi, 2000, pp. 157-8.



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