



## **ETHICS AND HUMANITIES: EXPLORATION OF LINKAGES**

**Dr. Harvinder singh**

Associate professor and Chairman

Department of geography

Sahu Jain College Najibabad, Uttar Pradesh(U.P.)

### **Abstract:**

There has been a phenomenal expansion in epistemology over the globe; ever since the Greek Civilization. Aristotle was considered to be the first exponent of Ethics. He was of the view that, the true self is the rational self. The activity of thorough actualizes the rational self. On the other hand, the monumental historical treatise of Plato on Politics gave rise to the emergence of Political Moralities. Likewise, Herodotus the famous Greek Philosopher and Historian emphasized upon Human Ethics in different Cultural Realms.

Nowadays, no branch of knowledge can be sustained aloof due to the emergence of epistemological linkages. And, the ethics is perhaps no exception to this rule. With, the emergence of Multidisciplinary Approach [as one of the tool of research methodology] probably, during the first half of 20th Century. It becomes possible to explore the linkages inferred from ethics and humanities. The present research article seeks to investigate the relational and functional linkages.

**Key words:** Epistemology, Ethics, Multidisciplinary and Humanities.

### **Statement of the problem:**

With the passage of the time, the traditional aloofness to the functional relation of ethics with humanities tends to be disappeared. Probably, the most influential factor currently sustaining the humanities and ethics dichotomy is the prevailing acceptance of the contention of professional philosophy; that it is logically impossible to determine the ethical priorities from objective facts. Apart from this, with the emergence of multidisciplinary approach [as a well accepted analytical tool of research methodology] of the humanities.

As was observed and reviewed by the various scholars; particularly of education and philosophy. In this context; according to Prof. Nandkar, (2006) “the manageable knowledge about each field of humanities is a must. As the juxtaposition of ideals in different fields of humanities often led to the bridging of the gap

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR:	RESEARCH ARTICLE
<p><b>Dr. Harvinder singh</b> Associate professor and Chairman Department of geography Sahu Jain College Najibabad, U.P. Email: harvindersingh40950@gmail.com</p>	

between different branches of humanities.” Prof. Nandkar opined that the multidisciplinary approach is very beneficial in the re –interpretation of misconceptions prevailing in different segments of epistemology from Indian ethics to modern day myths and misconception.

It is noteworthy that the ethics and humanities are indicative of philosophical orientation in their fundamental and foundational emergence. Each and every parcel of humanities got strengthened by human ethics and political as well as social moralities. Actually, ethics functioned as the bridge of consolidation (linkage) for the establishment of humanities on strong and solid philosophical base.

The exploration of linkages between ethics and humanities has arguable been central to scepticism, at least with in the western canon of philosophical texts. Such scepticism has variously attached itself to the relationship between ‘understanding’ and ‘knowledge’ and between ‘experience’ and ‘knowledge’, and; arguably reached its pinnacle. The circularity root ((i.e. linkages) of epistemology binds ethics and humanities ( Strohmayer, 2003).

The emerging intimate relationship between experience, knowledge and understanding is thus inherently philosophical in its genesis and in its operation. Cultural studies and cultural geography is one of the elements of epistemology. Culture is the mean of understanding the relational and functional linkages.

Moreover, it is crucial to acknowledge that the entanglement of knowledge and its objects is a fundamental dilemma for anyone interested in delimiting knowledge and in assuring the status of cultural forms of learning as a valid form of carrying out research. This dilemma is caused by the standards adopted in the now dominant western and modernist manner of conceptualizing knowledge as that which provides a secure basis from which to understand the ethics and humanities.

More than other words perhaps it is the word ‘fact’ that reflects the novelty of this understanding of ‘knowledge’ ; the currently dominant mode of thinking in western societies dictates that once uncovered and determined , ‘facts’ becomes trustworthy points of departure for the pursuit of future, as yet unknown forms of knowledge (epistemology).

### **Methodology:**

The Research Methodology pertains to the analytical tools adopted by the investigator to carry forward the research process (ranging from collection and gathering of information and data, its analysis and logical interpretation).

The current study is primarily based upon various secondary sources. Under this component of research methodology various published books, digital and e –books available on the theme had been thoroughly scanned in order to construct valid proposition on the theme.

The exploratory and investigative approach will be centered upon:-

1. Inductive Approach,
2. Deductive Approach, and;
3. Generalization of Facts

### **Scheme for exploring linkages:**

Under this segment of the ongoing research paper; the scheme for the exploration of relational and functional linkages with respect to ethics and humanities has been chalked out.

[I]. What is Ethics?

[II].What is Humanities?

[III]. Which branches of Humanities will be reckon?

[I]. The word 'ethics' is derived from Greek adjective 'ethica' which comes from the substantive 'ethos'. Ethos means customs, usages or habits. Ethics is also called moral philosophy. Thus, literally 'Ethics' means the science of customs or habits of men. Ethics or moral philosophy is a branch of philosophy that involves; "systematizing, defending and recommending concepts of moral philosophy". The field of ethics, along with aesthetics, concerns matter of values and thus comprises the branch of philosophy called axiology. Ethics are the set of epistemology that deals with principles, concepts and philosophy of morality.

Another way of defining ethics is to focus on disciplines that studies standard of conducts and integrity; such as -Philosophy, Theology, Law, Psychology, Sociology and Geography.

One may also explore ethics as a method, procedure or perspective for deciding how to act; and, for analyzing complex problems and issues. For instance, in considering a complex issue like global warming, one may consider economics, ecological, political or ethical perspective of the problem or issue.

The importance of ethical norms in research [particularly maintenance and management] is of five folds are as under:-

- i. First norm promotes the aim of research such as knowledge and truth.
- ii. Secondly, it assures ethical standards in research process.
- iii. The third norm ensures accountability.
- iv. Fourthly, it helps to build public support for research.
- v. It promotes moral and social values and minimizes the ethical lapses.

[II]. Humanities are those independent branches of knowledge (epistemology) that concerns themselves with human beings and their culture, or with analytic and critical methods of inquiry derived from an appreciation of human values and of the unique ability of the human spirit and expressing itself. Thus, humanities are academic disciplines that studies aspects of human society, culture, environment (land and landforms). There are three main branches of knowledge (epistemology) which are as: natural sciences, social sciences and humanities. Technology is the practical extension of natural sciences. On the other hand politics is the practical extension of social sciences. Humanities have their own practical extension called transformative humanities.

- A. Nature – Natural Science – Technology -- Transformation of Nature.
- B. Society – Social Sciences – Politics -- Transformation of Society.
- C. Culture – Human Sciences— Cultronics – Transformation of culture.

[III]. In order to explore the functional and relational linkages between ethics and humanities; some well established and recognized independent and systematic branches of humanities has been reckoned. The functional and relational linkages will be established with reference to the selected branches of the humanities; and, they are as follows:-

1. Psychology
2. Sociology
3. Political Science
4. Economics
5. Geography

#### **Interpretational section:**

Under this segment, interpretation and discussion has been given prominence place. In the upcoming section the interpretation of the generalizations of the facts has been attempted; under the following categories; viza,viz :-

- (A). Bridging Ethics and Humanities; and,
- (B). Functional Interface between Ethics and Humanities.

**(A). Bridging Ethics and Humanities:**

General acceptance of the inadequacy of humanities in the realm of ethical and moral judgment is reflected in old adage; that humanities deals with facts, not with values, and its corollary that value judgment ( i.e. ethics) lies outside the realm of humanities.

Although this, time – honored dichotomy between humanities and ethics has not gone unchallenged, the majority in humanities accept the tradition that humanities as a discipline must by its very nature deals with objective facts; and, that the humanities either as a method or as a body of epistemology, can neither prescribes ethics nor resolve issues in the realms of ethical morality.

When it comes to conflict between ethics and humanities , we were told that we must seeks our answer elsewhere – in philosophy, particularly in religion, long held to be the prime custodian of human ethics.

The basic validity of this traditional separation of humanities and ethics; and the related limitations it has imposed on the role of humanities are today open to question in the context of the emergence of multi – disciplinary approach in humanities.

The ethics and humanities dualism is directly affected in two ways:-

[i] Firstly, the subjective ethical values are in principle no longer excluded from the realm of humanities; and,

[ii] Secondly, the world wide view of humanities and hence the kind of human ethics, supported by humanities are greatly altered humanistic ethics.

Humanities are so fundamental to our lives that we had either taken it for granted or completely misunderstood it. Everyone has some notion about what humanities is, and we all have at least a passing familiarity with the world of humanities. The domain of the humanities is both practical as well as theoretical in its operation.

Most precisely the essential characteristics of humanities are as follows:

- A. It has to be explanatory by reference to philosophical orientation or conceptual framework.
- B. Its conclusions are tentative, i.e. are not necessary the final verdict.
- C. It is testable against the empirical world.
- D. It is falsifiable.

**[B]. Functional Interface between Ethics and Humanities:-**

In order to explore the functional interface between ethics and humanities; certain branches of humanities has been selected. The functional relation of ethics will be established with respect to the following academic branches which are as follows:-

1. Ethics and Psychology: - The psychology is the fundamental foundation of ethics. So, the ethics studies the psychological basis of morality. A correct analysis of the nature of volition and the study of its relation to the spring of action, desire, motive, intention, pleasure and the life; and , the distinction between moral and non – moral actions. These are the psychological problems which are deals with in the preview of ethics also. Now a day correct analysis and investigation of violence can also be taken up. Ethics will also involve in the analysis of educational and medical psychology.

Recently, Sports psychology, Criminal and Forensic psychology is closely linked with the theories and principles of ethical morality and ethical conduct.

2. **Ethics and Sociology:** - The sociology investigates the habits, manners, customs and institutions of human society in all its stages of development from primitive stage to the civilized stage. Ethics is closely related to sociology. It seeks to determine the nature of supreme good of the individuals. But the individual is a part and parcel of the human society. Individuals are the interdependent members of the social organization. Thus, the supreme good of the individual depends upon the state and stage of societal ethics and social culture. The personal good must be in the harmony with the common or social goods.

Hence, ethics must depend upon the sociology in determining the nature of the supreme well in his relation to the set –up of the society. Moreover, the implementation of the ethical statute will solely depend upon the recognition by the human and civilized society. The ethical code of conduct is foundational stone of human society.

3. **Ethics and Political Science:**-The Social man is always a member of some kind of community or political organization. Moral life is not lived apart from the political state. It is always lived in some part of political organization. The moral life though not identical with political life, somehow is part (attribute) of it. So, ethics is closely related with political science. Both, ethics and political science deals with conduct. They both consider human actions as determined by social as well as political relations. There might be differences in terms of practice and profession. By and large, political ideology is the motherhood of ethics and ethical norms set up by builders of the national movements. Thus, the democratic ideals and its spirit preserve the mobilization of ethical morality in a political territory.

4. **Ethics and Economics:** - Ethics is the science and philosophy of highest good. Whereas the Economics is the science of goods which satisfy human wants and needs. Economics is the science of wealth. But wealth is not an end in itself; it is a mean to foster human welfare. Production, distribution and consumption of wealth should be so arranged as to contribute to the realization of the greatest welfare of the humanity.

Economics should be guided by ethics. The right to property depends upon the moral rights to personality. Property and personality goes together. The right of exchange and distribution of property also derived from the moral right of ethics. The economics of regional and economic development should minimize the element of biasness and regional bitterness. Therefore, economics and ethics, together work for economic prosperity and economic self – reliance of a state.

5. **Ethics and Geography:** -Well the geography is that macro canvass or the cultural platform upon which ethics and attributes of humanities gets functionally materialized. The geographies and the geographers have been increasingly interested in questioning ethics in the area of geographical research process. The scope and major concern of geography and ethics is to recognize the links of ethics to the geographical imagination by developing geography`s ontological and epistemological process. This approach unites existing professional and substantive ethical concern among geographers.

The philosophical introspection of geography in terms of ethics and ethical conduct is a hallmark of contemporary geography. Perhaps it is the discipline`s sheer diversity or the fundamental questions that geography poses; that leads to reflective aptitude and conduct. Value richness is enhanced in the quantitative approach of geography. Value has been noted for some time to be as much part of

geography. As facts; as a rigorous analysis of value. The ethics has certainly enriches the domain of the geography.

**Endnotes:**

- The philosophical orientation of humanities which is fundamental to human values and human societies act as a facilitator in bridging the so –called dualism.
- Ethics which are more near to human nature and their beliefs are further strengthened by giving pivotal place to habits and customs which are dynamic in nature. But in the regions of diverse social background may give rise to regionalism and social conflicts.
- The functional relation nexus between ethics – psychology, ethics – sociology, ethics – political science, ethics – economics and ethics – geography are so intimately interwoven to each other that it gives the impression of perfect academic harmony. As the five selected branches of humanities are directly related with human beings. As the core of the content of these branches of humanities are humanistic in nature; which involves around psychological, sociological, political, economic and geographical background of human beings and the regional affiliations.

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